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Nietzsche and Asian philosophy: a comparative study

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ABSTRACT

Nietzsche and Asian Philosophy : A Comparative Study M.A. 1994

By Douglas Richard Thomas

This thesis closely examined the similarities and differences between Friedrich Nietzsche and Asian Philosophy. Surprising as this may be, Nietzsche and Asian philosophy share many common philosophical patterns. By examining Nietzsche's main points of his philosophical discourse; such as "Will to Power", "Eternal Occurrence", and the "Übermensch" ideal, whilst comparing these concepts to Hindu, Buddhist and Taoism concepts; we will find that there are, as well, often contrasting and conflicting definitive conclusions between Nietzsche and the "East".

Nevertheless, certain similarities such as the concepts of the Hindu Caste system, the Buddhist notion of the "non-self" and the role of language in their religion, and the Taoist role of nature, to name a few examples, make this study a useful and viable one in comparing Nietzsche to these notions.

Yet, one cannot assume that the many parallels found between Nietzsche and Asian thought are a result of Eastern influence upon Nietzsche's thinking. The purpose of this study is not to discover whether Nietzsche knew an appreciable amount of Asian philosophy - in fact this thesis is based upon the understanding that Nietzsche reached his philosophical conclusions independent of Asian influence. We will, however, notice that Nietzsche used several Asian concepts as models and metaphors in promoting his ideas in an effort to break through and sweep away the social and religious institutions of his time.

This study will also enhance our understanding of Nietzsche, the man, whom is often misconstrued as something other than what he was. In gaining an understanding of our place in the world, sometimes it is important to attempt to comprehend even seemingly opposing opinions. For Nietzsche, in his effort to break out of the traditional "Western" world, such an effort was a necessity. Hence, one understands the importance in contemplating the parallels and patterns, and contrasts and contradictions of Nietzschean and Asian philosophy.

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A Comparative Study

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INTRODUCTION

Surprisingly, Nietzsche and Asian philosophy share many similar philosophical notions. Both are also often misunderstood and misrepresented within Western culture. With Nietzsche this is especially true, in that his philosophy is generally considered to be elitist without reason, and nihilistic to a fault. Yet, as we shall see in this thesis, Nietzsche optimistically asks <u>every</u> man to seek to raise himself, in the conduct and understanding of his life, to become in truth a "poet of his life".

This thesis will closely examine the many similarities between Nietzsche and Asian concepts. At times it would appear that Nietzsche was influenced by Schopenhauer, and his study of Asian philosophy; yet we will find, as always in studying Nietzsche, many contradictions. In fact, several important Asian notions, which are for the Western reader negative in their view of existence, are entirely refuted by the call of Nietzsche's basic tenet for man to grasp his "will to power", in the conduct of his life.

In this thesis, we will examine both the similar, and contrasting concepts to be found within Nietzschean and Asian philosophy. The questions which are asked, often result with conflicting answers, between the two philosophies, and yet we will find a strong pattern of similarity, in what Nietzsche was trying to establish in his philosophical concepts, and the models of Eastern thought found within Hindu (caste system), Buddhist (non-self, role of language), and Taoist (role of nature) precepts. Yet, we cannot assume that the many parallels found between Nietzsche, and Asian thought are a result of Eastern influence upon Nietzsche's thinking. The purpose of this study is not to discover whether Nietzsche knew an appreciable amount of Asian philosophy, in fact this thesis is based upon the understanding that Nietzsche reached his philosophical conclusions independent of Asian influence. We will, however, see that Nietzsche used several Asian concepts, as models and metaphors in promoting his concepts, in his effort to break through and sweep away the social and religious institutions of his time. It was Nietzsche's intention to

dispose of Western culture and religion to enable man to reach his full potential.

This thesis will give close examination to several Asian philosophical concepts, which are used as models in Nietzschean concepts. These include the Hindu Caste system, the several schools of Buddhism, including Madhyamaka Buddhism and the influence of Taoism and Ch'an or Zen. In the first chapter we will investigate the relationship between the Hindu Caste system, and Nietzsche's so called "aristocratic" concepts. It is within these parallels in which we encounter such terms as "herd morality", and ideas suggesting that each man is "better off" living within his "Caste", or position in life. This, of course, has been one of the Nietzschean concepts that have been associated with negative connotations by his critics. This chapter will attempt to clarify this negativism through a review of the meaning of the caste system in Indian culture, and its use as a model in Nietzschean philosophy. Here we will be introduced to Nietzsche's concepts of Übermensch, Eternal Recurrence, and Will to Power, and will see that Nietzsche is dutiful to mankind's advancement toward a truer self. With the Übermensch as the goal, Nietzsche wants man to live more faithfully to his instincts. The chapter will question if this is to be considered an aristocratic idea. Like the Hindu caste system, Nietzsche does stress that it is part of man's nature to live within a hierarchical structure.

Chapter two, will explore Indian asceticism, reviewing both Hindu and Buddhist views on this subject, which Nietzsche uses as examples in clarifying his arguments for a "new beginning" in philosophical thought. Indeed, ascetism is used as a mirror for Nietzsche. This chapter will discuss Nietzsche's dissociation with Schopenhauer's nihilism, and the thinking of the Russian nihilists of the 1850s and 60s. Nevertheless, Nietzsche uses both Indian ascetism and nihilism, as stepping stones in the advancement for a newer philosophy. A comparison will be made between Nietzsche's "Will to Power" and the Indian ascetic model of "Tapas". We will also explore how Nietzsche uses, as a tool, the Buddhist model of philosophy in his attack on Christianity, and his opposition to the dualities of Good and Evil.

Chapter three is devoted to the subject of the "self" and the "non-self" within Nietzschean and Buddhist philosophies. We will find strong similarities between Nietzsche's concept of self (soul, ego) and Buddhist concepts. Calling for a recovery of the "sense of the earth", Nietzsche is shown to favour the Buddhist concept of mind-body as one, as opposed to a Westernized separation of the two, into Body <u>and</u> Soul. For both Nietzsche and Buddhism, the body is instinctively closer to nature. This chapter also gives a background of the basic Buddhist philosophical concepts and religious practices. Examples from Zen Buddhism are shown to highlight Nietzsche's similarities with Buddhist philosophy.

Chapter Four explores in detail the role of language in Nietzsche's philosophy, and that of Nagarjuna, as well as the Madhyamaka sect in Buddhism. This will study the similarities of thought found in Nagarjuna's and Nietzsche's philosophical view of language, as a barrier to understanding the reality of existence. This chapter is important in also studying the beginning of the Mahayana movement within Buddhism, and its spreading to the Far East, as well as confirming the "non-duality" comparisons between Buddhist and Nietzschean philosophy; both state that language misrepresents us, and leads us to believe in a world as object and entity. The chapter shows how Nietzsche is contiguous to Buddhist thought in believing that one has to break down the "metaphysical truths" in order for mankind to mature and grow. Although it is primarily intended for comparison with Nietzsche, this background information is necessary for the Nietzschean scholar to understand the basics of Buddhist philosophy and religion (i.e. Prajnaparamita literature, the Dharmas, Sunyata, Nirvana, Anatman). This chapter also introduces the reader, albeit briefly, to Wittgenstein, and his views on the role of language.

The final chapter, introduces the rather capricious world of Zen and Zen art, compared to Nietzsche's use of art as a metaphor, and example for his Übermensch ideal. This somewhat strange marriage of ideas comes to coagulate in the notion that nature to both Zen and Nietzsche is of great importance, and that it is art,

which can bring the "nature out of man". The chapter highlights all forms of Zen art, from painting to archery. Through art both Zen and Nietzschean philosophy strive for a return to "naivety" and "instinct". We will also follow the transition from traditional Buddhism to Zen and examine Taoism, which is important in its views on nature in comparison with Nietzsche's concepts. From Taoism to Zen, and Zen to Nietzsche, we shall see how closely these different, yet in many ways similar philosophies share certain ideas on how man should live his life.

Note :   The use of any Pali or Sanskrit accents will not be used in this thesis, except for any ambiguities which may occur.

D. R. Thomas

CHAPTER ONE

The Hierarchical Nature of Nietzsche and Indian Religion

This chapter will examine the validity of allegations, which claim that the Caste system in India, and Nietzschean philosophy are aristocratic and elitist.

In many of his works, we find that Nietzsche makes frequent positive references to Brahminical concepts. We must ask ourselves, why this is so, and in what context does he use these concepts? This question will inevitably lead us to a broader discussion concerning moralism. It is the intention of this chapter to introduce Nietzsche, who is strongly known as the instigator in the anti-moralist tradition, and whose philosophical thought leads us beyond conventional concepts of morality, beyond "good and evil" to, he alleges, a greater intellectual appreciation of man's worth.

In this investigation it is important that we dissociate our thinking from currently popular "politically correct" ideals, in comparing the Caste system to Nietzsche's aristocratism. However, shocking and painful it may be to read about such "atrocities" of the human condition, we must also understand why the Caste system was used as a model in Nietzsche's works. Here the word "model" is used most appropriately, for it is important for the reader to understand that Nietzsche used these concepts metaphorically, and not in the literal sense. We must also understand Nietzsche's dissociation from the "democratic" world, the world of the industrialization of Europe, and the Christian work ethic, which indeed created its own system of caste in many respects.

This is not to say that Nietzsche's call for a feudal renaissance is not alarming and disturbing, as is the Brahminical system for the Western reader. Let us examine these concepts in a theoretical sense looking toward the Nietzschean ideal of a successful society without the need of an organized church.

" ..... after all, some men are more suited to design churches than to preach

in them: the best system is that which, each man doing his 'thing', each man can fulfil himself and society can attain its end simultaneously and harmoniously" (A. Danto, Mysticism and Morality, p41).

The intention of this chapter is to examine the relationship of Nietzschean thought and the Indian Caste system, and is not a thorough study of the meaning and effect of Caste within Indian society. The Caste system in India shall be explored from the perspective of the influence it had upon Nietzsche's works, and the relevant importance of this influence in Nietzsche's philosophy being categorised as immoral.

When we encounter such words as "herd morality" and "overman" within Nietzsche's writings, we may think of these words as anticipating the principles of the Third Reich. This is an improper interpretation, which such writers as Kaufmann, Schacht and Danto have attempted to rectify. What we do find in Nietzsche's writings, however, are concepts of social progress within society, which have elitist and selfish overtones and lead to this fascist image. When reading Nietzsche there is a need to approach his philosophy "holistically", and in doing so one understands his ideas, and ideals such as the "herd" and "overman" in a new context. So, too, we must view Nietzsche's thoughts on Caste with this same holistic approach. The Brahminical concepts, as previously mentioned, greatly interested Nietzsche. The reason for this seems quite clear when we get to know more about the man and his philosophical thoughts concerning Caste.

The ideals of Caste highlight and illustrate a system that is meant to serve a higher class, a higher breed of people. For Nietzsche, his interest in this system has to do with the system itself, rather than the participants. Nietzsche would not have thought twice about discarding the idea that the Brahmins were the only class of people who could attain his "Übermensch" ideal (as we will see later in this chapter).

For the present let us describe Nietzsche's concept as follows: Nietzsche's

idea is that mankind can transform itself to a higher level of living, if man understands the role which he plays in the life process. Much like a pyramid there have to be more stones on the bottom, before higher stones, and inevitably the highest stones can ascend to the peak. The Caste system in India, and its hierarchical development ensures that the "highest" remain the highest order, and that those in the lower order, unable to elevate themselves, have only the duty to serve the highest Caste, without hope of achieving any goals outside of one's Caste. What interests Nietzsche about this concept is that it enables us to think in terms of a hierarchical model for mankind. Man's natural state, according to Nietzsche, is to employ such a system, to achieve "cultural" improvement, bringing man back into Nature and its surroundings, and discarding the unnatural moral "anchor" of the Church. Yet, what are the sociological implications for India with the Caste system intact? Why must we disassociate the system from Nietzsche's view?

For a brief description of the concept of Caste in India we will start with the four basic groups of people, which comprise the system [Note: the four basic groups do not include the "untouchables"/"chandalas" or "outcastes"), as they are seen as unworthy of placement in any group].

In first rank are the Brahmins, a group which consists of philosophers, artists, religious leaders, teachers, etc., who are the modern version of what was a priestly caste in the past. Of the second rank are the administrators, those who organize, and supervise the lower castes. This group was originally the warrior caste. Third are the producers, the craftsmen, artisans, farmers, etc., who were originally the trader/agriculture caste. Following are the servant class (follower caste), which now includes unskilled labour, and are traditionally considered incapable of leading.

Without entering into a sociological debate not relevant to this study, the problem many of us find with this arrangement is the total lack of mobility within the system. Once born into a certain group one stays within it. We could argue that this cannot be justified. We could also argue that it gives purpose, and

meaning to Hindu life, which may be unconcerned with benefitting from this material life, as we know it. One can also say that post-Gandhian reform has helped to banish the "Chandala" label, and that India is moving into a democratic, Westernized society, although such reform is not readily accepted, when set against many years of tradition. As Houston Smith states: "We with our democratic sentiments do not like to admit that there are such people by Nature. The orthodox Hindu replies, what you would like people to be is not the point. The question is what they are" (H. Smith, Religions of Man, p70). Metaphorically this is where Nietzsche comes into the picture, for he saw that man cannot live without a distinctive hierarchy and in denying this condition he is lying to himself and his breed (i.e. Mankind).

Nietzsche's hierarchical stance is for the benefit of the human race, and not for the Aryan, the German, "the Blue-eyed Beast", and certainly not for the Protestant Christian alone. Although Smith's quote has some definite undertones of negativity, there is also an underlying positiveness in the fact that man must take a step towards his nature and observe its laws. Man must understand his sense of duty, and accept his fate and place in the order.

Let us explain what Nietzsche means by his hierarchy. Again, the structure of the hierarchical Caste system is appealing to Nietzsche not for its contents, but as a model. Later his thoughts on Indian religion changed toward being rather hostile once he disassociated himself from Schopenhauer. Nevertheless the Caste model, as with the Greek Polis system model remained important for Nietzsche, because he saw within those systems the means for Man to benefit himself and his true Nature.

The laws of Manu within Brahminism offered Nietzsche a subject with which to break from his Christian past. The laws of Manu, given by Manu, the first man, who as the survivor of the great flood became the patriarch of the human race, envisioned the four basic groups we know as Castes. The laws of Manu offered a strong contrast with social systems in Nietzsche's Europe, where a large, diffuse middle-class was coming increasingly to dominate an industrial society.

One might suggest that Nietzsche is "throwing down the gauntlet" with his strong statements which seem to lead from the pages of his works. Nietzsche's style is to attack, the stronger the analogy the better, as we see in <u>Twilight of the Idols</u>, "how wretched is the New Testament compared to Manu, how foul it smells!" (F. Nietzsche, <u>Twilight of the Idols</u> in Kaufmann (Ed.), <u>The Portable Nietzsche</u>, p503). Such an intense statement only highlights Nietzsche's urgent appeal for change. Not a change toward Hindu beliefs, but rather a change from the excesses burdening mankind, during the Industrial Revolution.

Nietzsche's understanding of the Caste system, and of anything Indian, stems largely from his association with Schopenhauer. As Nietzsche's philosophy changed over his relatively brief lifespan, so too does his view of the Indian system and its "pessimistic" outlook. This is surely the reason for Nietzsche rejecting aspects of Hindu religion other than its endorsement of the Caste system. This is rather unfortunate in many respects, for there is much in Nietzsche's philosophical thought, which seems closely linked in many respects to the East. Nietzsche's acceptance of the Caste system is a revolt against the Western model of democracy and his own Christian roots.

Later in this thesis we will discuss the ways in which Nietzsche's philosophy compares to the Eastern tradition, but for the moment it is important to review Nietzsche's thinking on Caste alone, for it opens up many points for discussion.

If we accept, for the time being, that Nietzsche's revolt against the West is exemplified through Brahminism, is it also true that Nietzsche believed that the unequal status between Castes is a necessity for life to function properly? As Nietzsche states in <u>Beyond Good and Evil</u>, the Indians, "as among the Greeks, Persians and Moslems", are correct in believing in the order of rank and, "not equality and equal rights" (F. Nietzsche, <u>Beyond Good and Evil</u>, 30). This statement reflects his thoughts that systems of equality do not benefit the progress of Man. Christianity is considered a "chandala" religion by Nietzsche, while examples of religions and cultures which favour the privileged classes, such as Brahminism

and the Greek Polis system are favoured. Although Nietzsche is known as a philosopher, who supports the concept of individuality and personal freedom from within, he does not seem to have been concerned about the plight of the individual when his writing is given a surface interpretation. Nietzsche is concerned about the individual, but not for one who relinquishes his personal freedom to any deity. Such belief jeopardizes our need to flourish from a higher form of existence, in the here and now. What Nietzsche is concerned with above all is that our society should try to envision an "overman", a superman, in order for us to evolve into a "higher" being. This according to Nietzsche should be the primary reason for living, and if it is necessary to sacrifice oneself to "slavery", this is spiritual submission, not physical.

When Nietzsche calls for a revolution against the democratic state, it is a call for a revolution of the spirit, and of the way in which one thinks about human existence. In this world not many people will be able to fully achieve this higher state of being - only the few will have the privilege of being evolved beings. As previously stated, Nietzsche did find the Caste system, and its subdivisions an attractive alternative to "modern society". Nietzsche's thinking developed in a time when man was sensing a change towards an individual identity, a change toward the way in which one feels about oneself, in terms of class and hierarchy. As L. Dumont states, "In modern society ..... the human being is regarded as the indivisible, elementary man, both a biological being and a thinking subject. Each particular man in a sense incarnates the whole of mankind" (L. Dumont, Homo Hierarchicus, p44).

This so-called "change", stemming from the industrial revolution, and based on a Calvinistic work ethic was not the change that Nietzsche admired. Indeed he was opposed to this concept, for he saw it as weakening the human race due to the imbalance resulting from the absence of a hierarchical system. Nietzsche understood this change to be a revolt of the herd, brought forth by Christianity, which cherished the chandala and became strong by promising salvation to the

masses, and through the industrial revolution.

Nietzsche's hope was for this new "culture" to reverse its direction away from those moral trappings, and to bring it back to its more natural beginnings. As Warren states : "Nietzsche thought that any new culture would and should function for the "herd" as ideology, while serving to individuate and express the powers of the few "higher" types. In this model, culture would be a means of subordinating the "herd" to a dominant class of culturally superior "individuals" (M. Warren, Nietzsche and Political Thought, p67). Hence, we see that Nietzsche's understanding of a hierarchical structure is based on an assumption that those who are the cultural elite should rule the herd, for the herd need to be ruled anyway.

Inevitably the "herd" will find the means to classify themselves in different ways. If it is not the laws of Manu, then it is the class system in Britain, for one example. Certainly once the "polish" has rubbed off the Industrial Revolution as it has now, we find that many societies continue to live in a "feudal" tradition. Although today in the Western world, the middle class does have an opportunity to better itself, by climbing the social scale through work, sound financial judgement and good fortune, we are by no means free from distinctions of social and class superiority. As Dumont writes : "the difference of nature and status between communities is sometimes reasserted in a disastrous way : it is then conceived as proceeding from somatic characteristics - which is racism" (L. Dumont, op. cit., p51).

Indeed current societies, as products of the Industrial Revolution, have created new avenues in which our hierarchical nature can survive. Why is this so? If one were to ask Nietzsche, the answer would be that it is our nature to act in this way. The concept of equality is an unnatural concept for mankind to achieve. It is an unnatural phenomenon fuelled by a moralistic society. As much as equality is an unnatural concept, so too is morality. For Nietzsche morality is a concept, which impedes man's development.

The concept of morality, as a means to an end, was discarded by Nietzsche

as being useless for society. Nietzsche would have agreed that "most of what man understood as moral and metaphysical problems are in fact not problems at all, but merely consequences of confused and self serving manners of thinking" (T. Strong, Nietzsche and the Politics of Transfiguration, p81). Morality according to Nietzsche was a "necessary lie", an Apollonian concept that helps us separate ourselves from the "beasts", the other creatures of this world. When Nietzsche goes "beyond good and evil", he is effectively tearing down the very foundations of morality, which as he sees it, that which feeds upon fear of the unknown and of the possibility that our lives are void of meaning. If man is to be free to choose his own actions and also to be free to choose his development and destiny, then moral thinking must be rejected. Nietzsche in this sense is the philosopher of individuality, responsibility and equality. If so, how can he also be the philosopher who supports power and mastery over people? Can Nietzsche be interpreted as supporting either concept depending upon the judgement of the reader?

The labels of elitism and Aristocratism can be applied to Nietzsche in the sense of their cultural and intellectual importance, and not in terms of their social significance. His call for a feudal restoration and the creation of a nobility should be seen in psychological and phenomenological terms; a way of envisioning reform, totally unlike any sort of social reform (e.g. Caste system).

It is often stated by Western scholars, that morality is not of major concern within Indian tradition, as it is in the Judeao/Christian tradition. Obviously, this is an idea which would be interesting to Nietzsche, especially during the period when he was attracted to Schopenhauer's works. Nevertheless, one comes to understand Nietzsche's dissociation from Eastern religions, and Schopenhauarian pessimism in his later writings, which we shall examine later on in this thesis.

The world for the Hindu, the world as we know it, is a world that is Samsara; attached to the cycle of rebirth, escape from which is the primary concern of Hinduism. This, of course, helps us to understand the background, and total acceptance of the Caste system in India, for it is assumed that although one is born

into a caste, this is only a passing, inessential condition. This life is not considered to be of primary importance. Such thinking would suggest that India and Indian religions do not aspire to a moralistic and ethical society. This is not true and an understanding of the Caste system will clarify this matter.

Caste is a system of subdivisions (Castes or Jati) and "further complicates the class functions, gradually turning them into a discriminatory institution based on birth. The Brahmins profit most from the system and they hold the power-base. A life-affirming, but rigidly authoritarian morality develops" (P. Bilimoria, "Indian Ethics" in P. Singer (Ed.), A Companion to Ethics, p43). This has lead many scholars to believe that the ethical view of India is an irrational one (for example Max Weber). Yet in studying the Vedas in the Brahmin tradition we find that they are indeed concerned with moral ideals such as truthfulness, duty and giving (satya, dharma and dana).

Let us take Dharma, as an example. Dharma, usually translated in the West as duty or law, has several meanings within the Vedas such as duty, right, justice, morality, virtue, etc. (P. Singer (Ed.), op. cit., p46). "It certainly connotes the idea of that which maintains, gives order and cohesion to any given reality, and ultimately to nature, society and the individual" (P. Singer (Ed.), Loc. cit., p46). As Purosottama Bilimoria claims in The Great Ethical Traditions, Dharma takes on a human dimension of morality, much like Hegel's idea of "Sittlichkeit", the actual ethical order that regulates the conduct of the individual, family, civil life, and state" (P. Singer (Ed.), Loc. cit., p46). This is not to say that Dharma suggests anything other than a "form of life" to the Hindu, "whose sanction lies beyond individual, and even group, or collective preferences" (P. Singer (Ed.), Loc. cit., p46). Dharma is the law, and the law changes to meet the requirements for each caste, and its moral regulation. It is evident that dharma plays a role, as an important and cohesive part of the Hindu social system. Dharma is a "frame, for what is ethically proper or desirable at any one time" (P. Singer (Ed.), Loc. cit., p46).

Within this moral frame of Dharma the Hindu accepts his status in life, knowing that if he is born within a low caste, he will remain in this low caste. What gives the Hindu hope? Why bother with acting "correctly", when there is no hope for betterment in life? There is the notion of Karma, which instills this desire for betterment. Both Karma and Dharma link and consequently bring forth a model in which a Caste system can be ethically accepted within the Indian tradition. According to the doctrine of Karma, "every conscious and volitional action an individual engages in generates conditions for more than the visible effect, such that the net effect of an action 'X' may manifest itself at a later time, or perhaps its traces remain in the 'unconscious' and get distributed over another time" (P. Singer (Ed.), Loc. cit., p46). It follows that there are "no accidents of births determining social iniquities; nobility within one lifetime is excluded: one has one's dharma, both as an endowment and as social role" (Creel, Dharma and Justice, p4). The Hindu must aim for a higher rebirth by living in the correct way, and not to complain about his lot in life (unless of course, he is ready to step off "Samsara", and is finally liberated, (moksha). The four pursuits in life for the Hindu are Artha (material interests), Kama (pleasure), Dharma (social duties and individual duties) and Moksha (liberation)). It is often stated that Dharma is the key in connection with moksha.

When comparing Nietzsche's philosophy to Indian ethics, and morality, one should be familiar with the Bhagavad Gita. The Gita's ethics of concern in making this comparison are those that proclaim that "one must do one's duty according to one's nature" (P. Singer (Ed.), op. cit.., p50). The extraordinary similarity to Nietzsche is seen in the fact that the duty which is concerned in this statement depends on one's class or caste. In other words, "better one's duty though imperfect, than another's well-performed" (P. Singer (Ed.), Loc. cit., p50). This corresponds to Nietzsche's call for man to accept his fate for the future building and breeding of the Superman. It is better to live within the herd and to assist in producing the Übermensch ideal, than to live in the herd and think that you are

capable of living out of your nature, and living in a world that chains us to concepts of good and evil.

In examining the <u>Bhagavad Gita</u> model of an ethical person we encounter several concepts similar to Nietzsche's for example : "In Krishna's words : without hatred of any creature, friendly, and compassionate without possessiveness and self-pride, equable in happiness and unhappiness ... who is dependent on nothing, disinterested, unworried ... and who neither hates not rejoices, does not mourn or hanker, and relinquishes both good and evil" (12-13-17) (P. Singer (Ed.), Loc. cit., p50).

Perhaps Nietzsche was attracted to this concept through his reading of Schopenhauer's account of Hinduism. This is only an assumption, but there seems to be a remarkable similarity between Nietzsche's thinking on morality and certain Eastern concepts. Certainly the concept of morality is quite different in Indian and Nietzschean thought, when compared to Christian morality. Nevertheless they both have a strong commitment to duty and a requirement to strive to "do the right thing". And yet as observed through concepts of Christian moral thinking, both Indian and Nietzschean thought are considered to contain strong unethical aspects.

Nietzsche's duty is to mankind's advancement toward a truer self. This is where he is seen as an individualist. He is for the man, who rises out of the ashes of the Industrial Revolution, and who forges a new path. For Nietzsche the label of elitism will continue to apply, and rightly so. His statements advocating the division of the strong from the herd, the concept of a higher man from the slave, has made many enemies for this philosopher. It is difficult for Western society to accept this ideal of the "overman", as an adequate ideal of individuality, when only a few can successfully reach the ideal.

Nietzsche insists that we must value all that is human, and that "value" lies within the concept of the "Übermensch", as being the goal. This means that we must make sacrifices, in reaching our true capabilities. Not all of us will reach the goal with the "baton of true wisdom" in our hands; most of us must pass it on to the

"Übermensch". In this way we reflect the Hindu, few of whom achieve Moksha in their lifetime, and yet through correct, dutiful living, they know that they will be nearer the goal in future lives.

Nietzsche also may be calling on man to live more dutifully toward his own species. Is this an aristocratic idea? Returning to the original question posed at the beginning of this chapter as to Nietzsche's moral model being based on a Brahminical ideal, we conclude that the answer is yes, to a certain extent. Culturally this is so for Nietzsche, but in the case of dividing the world into race or class for example, he cannot be labelled as elitist or Brahminical in this sense.

Unfortunately, the Nazis adopted similar language to Nietzsche's (and of course, adopted him as their philosopher). One example, is the concept of breeding selected individuals to obtain an evolutional "pedigree". Yet in Nietzsche's thinking these so called "supermen", would not be bred to rule the weak, but for attaining the distinction of being the most that we can be for the good of all man and mankind, natural in his world, instinctual to his surroundings.

This is in contrast to the Hindu Caste system, where it is excepted that the "highest" (from birth) reap the rewards of being a privileged class. No such system is found in Nietzsche's work. According to D. E. Cooper, "Nietzsche's 'overman' would not form a 'group' at all, let alone enjoying 'privileges' and 'benefits' of any social kind - wealth, status, political power, 'perks' special protection, or whatever. Nietzsche's 'aristocracy' is one of spirit, not of land or industry; not part of the 'rotted ruling classes' " (D. E. Cooper, Authenticity and Learning, p119).

Nietzsche's philosophical and political thought is illuminated by a form of aristocracy that should not be mistaken, as a call for another Reich, or feudalistic rule. His "aristocracy of the spirit", or as Warren states his "cultural aristocracy" (see Warren, Nietzsche and Political Thought), stems from the inspiration throughout his work, provided by the Greek Polis, the Italian Renaissance, European Feudalism, and the Indian Caste system. For Nietzsche's "cultural aristocratic" revolution, the herd as a subsidiary role player for the "Übermensch" is

as important, as the "Übermensch" concept itself, much as slaves and serfs were for the Greeks and the feudal kings. The difference lies within the question, as to why Nietzsche wanted this division, in the first place. For Nietzsche the separation from the herd is a step or an "aesthetic leap", away from the norm of the industrial bourgeoisie. As Warren suggests : "Nietzsche claims that the political condition for any great culture is a reduction of the mass of humanity to "instruments" so they might serve as scaffolding for a few "noble" producers of culture to elevate themselves" (M. Warren, op. cit., p69).

Although Nietzsche would not care for this comparison, it held true for the Christian layman builder, who in working on the construction of a great cathedral, which he would never see completed, believed that he worked toward the creation of something worthy of God's love. He worked without remorse, because he believed that what he was doing was done for the sake of his religion. He will be remembered through his creation, which may last for centuries. The difference for Nietzsche lies in the purpose of the activity; does man build for himself or for God?

As we have not reached a Nietzschean ideal such as the Übermensch ideal (and because these notions lie within a hypothetical structure) maybe it is easier for us to hypothetically lay down and make way for those who are more intelligent, more in tune with nature and more able to handle true "humanness" and get on with accepting our fate as being inferior for the sake of mankind. One can only wonder at the amount of chaos this might bring forth, and what dilemmas there would be in a real situation.

We have examined why and how Hindu's can accept their "lot in life", because of the greater rewards offered in future lives. We have also concluded, within this chapter, that Nietzsche's elitism is of a cultural or spiritual variety. Between those concepts there is a distinct difference in the interpretation of elitism. Nietzsche was largely uninterested in economic, political, or social differentiation. His call for a hierarchial system may be considered somewhat nostalgic and eccentric, but as mentioned previously this should not be confused with real social

hierarchial systems.

Nietzsche seemed to be in love with the idea of artists and "genuine" philosophers, being pampered and nurtured by a system such as that found in ancient Greek civilization. Such a "new"aristocracy of philosophers would replace the liberal democratic system. Where such a cultural elite would come from was of no importance to Nietzsche, as long as they were allowed to thrive. This is the antithesis of the Caste system, in which there is no freedom of movement.

Nietzsche insists that, "the essential characteristic of a good and healthy aristocracy, is that it experiences itself not as a function, but as their meaning and highest justification - that it therefore accepts with a good conscience the sacrifice of untold human beings who, for its own sake, must be suppressed and diminished to incomplete human beings, to slaves, to instruments" (F. Nietzsche, Beyond Good and Evil, 258). These "instruments" are not just those of a lower caste or slaves in a social sense, nor indeed the working class of the Industrial Revolution. These "instruments" can be anybody. Nietzsche seeks to improve man's lot by searching for the Übermensch prototypes, within all races, classes, etc. Only a few will be accepted within this elite group (one would not be elite if everyone was that prototype). Nietzsche stresses that it is part of our nature to live within a hierarchial structure. What he is saying is that we must allow this elite (be they Jews, Aryans, wealthy, poor), to have the strong attributes with which to achieve this highest of levels. It is stated in Warren's, Nietzsche and Political Thought, that although Nietzsche believed that within our society, class structures were an inevitable and natural occurrence, he personally thought that it was the working class of Europe, who possessed greater potential and strength than the bourgeoisie. By no means was Nietzsche a socialist, but Nietzsche saw the working class as exhibiting the potential to search for something more than what the Christian work ethic provided. In other words, the individual, who rises from the herd has no other identity, but characteristics of strength from the potential in the human spirit. Nietzsche seeks the men, who are at a loss with the identity of the world and do not

wish to conform to society's expectations. He asks for such men to look for something within this world of being and becoming.

What of the rest, those who do not aspire to conceive and grasp the positive nature of life, as Nietzsche envisioned it? In order to understand the Übermensch there must be a division, a herd of those who would by their nature follow. One needs black to understand white. There would be nothing to compare with if there were no herd to contrast with. The Bourgeoisie in Nietzsche's view were a class to contrast the 'aristocracy' with and to recognize as following a sordid path in life. Theirs is a herd mentality which may teach others how not to live.

To conclude what we have examined in this chapter are the concepts of power and morality, which are evident in Nietzsche's philosophy. Nietzsche views power, be it physical, social, political, as something that derives from a "will to power", something within us that wants to obtain strength. The hierarchical division has always existed socially due to material conditions of economic scarcities. Nietzsche believed that we can go in two directions, one of them leading to a mediocre lifestyle, unsearching, moving along with the pack, and taking minimal risks. The other path allows spiritual growth, freedom, and the ultimate challenge of discovering the most which life has to offer. In order for us to realise this difference, there must exist both types. We realise that there does exist a "master type and caste", which is distinct from the herd, the ordinary, and the mundane. As Nietzsche says of "the two futures of mankind", one is "constant growth of mediocrity" and the other is "conscious distinctions self-shaping. A doctrine that creates a gulf : it preserves the highest and the lowest kind (it destroys the mean)" (F. Nietzsche, Will to Power, 953).

Nietzsche's philosophy may be interpreted in part as a belief that denotes power, a philosophy that exploits domination and mastery over the herd. It can also be read as an ideology which instills ideals about man and his ability without the guidance of a moralistic society. Can we accept Nietzsche as embracing both of those concepts? Is it possible for us to believe in the philosopher who stresses

responsibility, positive freedom, equality, but only for a few? From a sociological viewpoint one would not think of Nietzsche's philosophy as being individualistic, yet again, we stress that Nietzsche's stance is "one of spirit".

Nietzsche, I would imagine, was antagonistic towards moral views, in either Eastern or Western philosophical discourse. One has to agree with the Tracy Strong statement that, "for Nietzsche, most of what men understood as moral and metaphysical problems are in fact not problems at all, but merely consequences of confused and self serving manners of thinking" (T. Strong, op. cit., p89).

As human beings it seems we need morality to shield us from the fear of the unknown. Our lives become void of meaning if we take away our moral stance and obligations. Nietzsche is not concerned to promote morality, yet he is concerned with man's actions and duties to himself. Is this not a form of inward morality? Nietzsche is adamant about obtaining a way of life, which is justifiable in our terms. His way is a powerful one. If indeed life is a "Will to Power", then life is harsh and it requires cruelty and immorality. The question we must ask ourselves is whether Nietzsche actually cares - especially if the question gets in the way of human progress.

CHAPTER TWO

Nihilistic and Ascetic Aspects

Nietzsche is often referred to as a nihilistic philosopher who uses the viewpoint of Nihilism as a base from which to develop his philosophical ideas. As Steven Heine has stated Nietzsche, "says 'no' to all conventional attitudes, views, and values in order to achieve a holy 'yea-saying' beyond assertion and denial, optimism and pessimism, tragedy and scepticism - a perpetual process of self-overcoming and self-domination" (S. Heine, "Dionysus Against the Buddha : Nietzsche's 'Yes' and the Buddhist 'No' ", in N. Katz (Ed.), Buddhist and Western Philosophy, p243). This chapter will introduce and examine Nietzsche's three central "yea-saying" doctrines, Eternal Recurrence, Will to Power and the Overman, while continuing to compare Nietzsche's ideology with Asian thought.

Within the latter section of this chapter we will highlight certain aspects of both Hinduism and Buddhism, which are used as examples by Nietzsche, as a means of clarifying his arguments for a "new beginning" in philosophical thought. From Hindu (or Brahmin) belief Nietzsche has been said to have used asceticism as a mirror, "in which to reflect all the ambiguities of Nietzschean nihilism" (M. Hulin, "Nietzsche on the Suffering of the Indian Ascetic", in G. Parkes (Ed.), Nietzsche and Asian Thought, p64). As for Buddhist thought a more philosophical comparison can be made within the concepts that both Nietzschean and Buddhist philosophy seek, "an emancipation from the concepts of good and evil" (S. Heine, op. cit., p245). This analysis will hopefully shed some light upon the question of why Nietzsche dismisses Buddhism at such expense when, as we will understand at the conclusion of this chapter, Buddhism and its philosophy had as much (if not more) to offer Nietzsche as his beloved Brahminical model.

Before we resume our investigation of the nihilistic overtones in Nietzsche's thinking, which were derived from his knowledge of Eastern thought, it is important to note that much of Nietzsche's knowledge of India and its philosophies

stem from his reading of Schopenhauer. Although we can point to several sources of Nietzsche's knowledge of Indian philosophy as the forbearers to the nihilistic overtones in Nietzsche's writings, we can also show that Nietzsche's viewpoint and use of nihilism is an extension of Schopenhauer's "critical pessimism" (Danto). Nietzsche's conclusions are quite different from traditional nihilism.

Because of extreme pessimism (for example : "Blind Will") Schopenhauer believed that life was an empty concept which did not make any sense. Reality, as Danto states, for Schopenhauer, ... "has neither name or form. The world we live in and seem to know has no ultimate reality, and that our attachment to it is an illusion" (A. Danto, Nietzsche as Philosopher, p28). Much the same can be said pertaining to aspects of Hindu and Buddhist thought, but let us not make conclusions at this point. Indeed, arguments will be made later in this chapter that propose the thought that, when examining nihilistic concepts within Asian thought, all is not as it seems at first glance.

Returning to Nietzsche, we can conclude through his "yea-saying" views of life that Schopenhauer's nihilism is not a view shared by Nietzsche. In examining Nietzsche's 'positive' views on life and living, such as his claim of a form of life beyond what is "good and evil", his "will to power", the concept of "eternal recurrence", the "innocence of becoming" and the "overman concept", would it not be safe to say that Nietzsche implies something radically different from Schopenhauer's conclusion and indeed from the thinking of the Russian nihilists of the 1850s and 1860s? Nietzsche saw these men to be against the theory that the "in-itself of things must necessarily be good, blessed, true, and one" (F. Nietzsche, op. cit., 1005) and certainly this is a step in the right direction in Nietzsche's analysis. Nietzsche, however, views Schopenhauer as someone who "did not understand how to defy this will; he remained entangled in the moral-Christian ideal ... see(ing) it as bad, stupid, and absolutely reprehensible. He failed to grasp that there can be an infinite variety of ways of being different, even of being god" (F. Nietzsche, Loc. Cit., 1005).

What is nihilism to Nietzsche? How does he use it, and how can it help his 'new beginning' to flower? M. Blanchot suggests that Nietzsche's nihilism is a sort of "extreme that cannot be gotten around, and yet it is the only true path of going beyond; it is a principle of a new beginning" (M. Blanchot, "The Limits of Experience : Nihilism" in D. B. Allison (Ed.), The New Nietzsche, p121). Nietzsche finds that the world around him is starting to disown God. God is dying, if indeed he isn't already dead, when the Russian nihilists contemplate the "eternal strife of will with will" (A. Danto, op. cit., p30), and so too Kirkegaard's Christianity "or the young Marx's ("I hate all gods") belong to that turning point in the history of the world from which the divine light has withdrawn" (M Blanchot, Loc. Cit., p121).

We start to understand even at this point of the critique something of Nietzsche's suspicions of religions (e.g. Buddhism) in the era of change, the era of devaluating all "highest values" into nothing, but utter nonsense. According to Nietzsche this is where the Russian nihilists and Schopenhauer have gone wrong. They are still tied to the supposition that the will is something which has capacity, that "all that has being is only a willing ..." (F. Nietzsche, Gay Science, 127). Schopenhauer, and the like, assume that there must have been a goal for the world, a meaning for the world, and that it has now been lost. Nietzsche argues that the world is always "becoming", but as Schacht explains in his work, Nietzsche, this view of the world should not be misconstrued as teleological, for Nietzsche realizes that existence does not have any particular goal. Hence, "becoming does not aim at a final state, does not flow into 'being'" (F. Nietzsche, Will to Power, 708). Here we see that Nietzsche breaks away from Schopenhauer's concept that the world is will but since will is blind and irrational, life is devoid of purpose and sense. As Schacht states, "he takes strong objection to Schopenhauer's impressment of it into metaphysical service, in which it becomes the name of that in which the world ultimately consists" (R. Schacht, Nietzsche, p208).

This breakthrough takes form in Nietzsche's dialogues about Will to Power.

As Zarathustra states one must "put your will and your values upon the river of Becoming; what the people believe to be good and evil betrays to me an ancient will to power" (F. Nietzsche, Thus Spoke Zarathustra, II "On Self Overcoming"). This "will to power", or rather this "striving for domination over the next man", (F. Nietzsche, Daybreak, 113) is not some sort of teleological theory, but rather, as Schacht explains in Nietzsche, Nietzsche suggests that "the will to power [is] not a being, not a becoming, but a pathos - the most elemental fact from which a becoming and effecting first emerge -" (F. Nietzsche, Will to Power, 635). Schacht goes on to explain that because will to power is a pathos, Will to Power "cannot be that of which the world itself consists" (R. Schacht, op. cit., p207). Furthermore, "The world, for Nietzsche, ourselves and all else included, is to be conceived neither as some sort of substance or collection of material entities, not as 'spirit' or 'will', but rather as the totality of such dynamic quanta or fields of force, in a condition of internal tension and instability" (R. Schacht, op. cit., p208). In other words, Schacht is describing will to power as a most unnihilistic response from one who is often labelled a nihilistic.

Indeed, Nietzsche is breaking new ground. Danto called Nietzsche's particular brand of nihility, extreme nihilism. Call it what you will, but to call Nietzsche purely a nihilist is missing the point. Certainly, Danto and other writers of note place Nietzsche in a different category than Dostoevsky for example, but surely if one were to identify Nietzsche as a pure and steadfast pessimist then too one must also take into account his positiveness.

The first step is to announce that God is dead, ("this means God, but also everything that, in rapid succession, has tried to take his place - e.g. the ideal, consciousness, reason, the certainty of progress, the happiness of the mass, culture, etc." (M. Blanchot, Loc.. Cit., p121) and conceive and acknowledge that, "a more manly, warlike age is coming, which will, above all, bring valour again into honour ..... to that end many brave pioneers are needed now ..... the secret of realizing the greatest fruitfulness and the greatest enjoyment of existence is : to live

dangerously!" (F. Nietzsche, <u>Gay Science</u>, 283).

It would seem that Nietzsche's concept of nihilism is contradictory. By disowning God and current society Nietzsche is actually attempting to create a more positive aspect of reality; from an extreme negative concept he seems to construct a positive. Nietzsche never lets one ponder mundaneness in anything, certainly not when writing about his positive feelings towards our existence, concepts such as the "will to power", or the "overman" ideal. Yet we realize that this dichotomy of thought exists for Nietzsche to arrive at a more extreme form of nihilism. Blanchot sums up Nietzsche's thoughts on this subject when he states that, "nihilism is the impossibility of coming to an end and finding an outcome in this end. It tells of the importance of nothingness, the false renown of its victories; it tells us that when we think of nothingness, we are still thinking being. Nothing ends, all begins again, the other is still the same, midnight is only a covered over moon, and the highest noon is the abyss of light from which we can never escape - even through death and that glorious suicide Nietzsche recommends. Nihilism here tells us its final and rather grim truth: It tells of the impossibility of nihilism" (M. Blanchot, op. cit., p126).

Although many aspects of Nietzsche's view of nihilism will seem optimistic to those steeped in the pessimism of the East, to followers of Western morality Nietzsche's convictions are frightening. Although with Zarathustra, Nietzsche introduces the concept of the "Übermensch" (overman), he also introduces "eternal recurrence", which gives him a reputation for extreme nihilistic beliefs. What is "eternal recurrence", and can we agree with Nietzsche that this is a "yea-saying" concept? In our interpretation of "eternal recurrence" we must understand that, although Nietzsche <u>did</u> intend the concept to be accepted as a cosmological truth (which is rather difficult to swallow) the importance lies within the context of the "overman" idea. "For Nietzsche, the overman is he who experiences eternal recurrence of the same events as his own innerbeing - the "same", the sameness of man and cosmos, power and bliss in the total character of life" (S. Heine, op. cit.,

p258).

"Eternal recurrence" for Nietzsche's "overman" is the belief that all events in the universe have occurred an infinite number of times in the past and will continue to occur in the future, an infinite number of times. Once this concept is understood man can appreciate his underline attachment to his world and in doing so he can also appreciate an acceptance of his existence. The question one must ask is whether this independence can give comfort for the human condition, which, "wants deep, deep, deep, eternity" (F. Nietzsche, Thus Spoke Zarathustra IV "The Drunken Song").

For Nietzsche this was an attempt at solving the "riddle of life", positively, through an extensive search for a new path. This concept, of course, was visualised as having a focal point (i.e. "overman") to instigate man's new role in life. Once the "overman" is envisioned, man will be able to walk over "the abyss" for man's worth "is that he is a bridge and not a goal" (F. Nietzsche, op. cit., Prologue 3-4). Certainly Nietzsche is asking a great deal. Specifically he is asking for a reconsideration of the pure nihilistic viewpoint that the "will" for life ceases to exist, because life itself is not everlasting. Schopenhauer capitulates in stating that "everything passes away, therefore everything deserves to pass away. And this is justice, this law of time. That it must devour its children" (O. Schutte, Beyond Nihilism, p44).

Nietzsche's revamped association with the Heraclitean world in flux lets us consider our lot as not such a bad one after all. With this background information, this chapter will attempt to explore some relevant comparisons between Nietzsche and Asian philosophy. In doing so, it is also important to understand what Nietzsche uses (symbolically) from India. Therefore part two of this chapter will examine the link between Nietzsche and Indian asceticism and its use as "a mirror" (see p1) of Nietzschean Nihilism. After this expose, the content of argument will shift over to a more philosophical comparison between Nietzschean thought and Buddhist philosophy, exploring the similarities and differences in their nihilistic

overtones.

II

"Brahminism and Christianity - there are recipes for the feeling of power, firstly for those who can control themselves and who are thereby accustomed to a feeling of power; then for those in whom precisely this is lacking. Brahminism has catered for men of the former sort, Christianity for men of the latter" (F. Nietzsche, <u>Daybreak</u>, 65).

When comparing Nietzsche and Brahminism we must understand its (Brahminism) value as a model, as a metaphor for Nietzsche's philosophy of power (see Chapter One). The "model" of the Indian ascetic is quite significant in Nietzsche's work. Nietzsche, to say the least, was fascinated by Indological ideas such as Brahminism. Although he was fascinated by the subject we must understand, before launching into this study, that "Nietzsche was ultimately a victim of the lacunae in his information concerning Indological matters, and a prisoner of a certain stereotypical image of India carried by the culture of his time" (M. Hulin, op. cit., p66). So we must understand this comparison in this light, as a late nineteenth century opinion, and not as a diagnosis of what Brahminism is today.

In Chapter One we discussed the notions of the Cultural Aristocraticism of Nietzsche in light of Indian Brahminism and the Laws of Manu. As early as 1876 (<u>Human All Too Human</u>), Nietzsche was concerned with the phenomenon of asceticism. From the first chapter we know that Nietzsche was infatuated by the "network" of rules and regulations of the Brahminical system in terms of asceticism. Because Nietzsche viewed the Brahmins favourably within the hierarchical context he saw Brahminism as a model of successful living, breaking away from the grip of God, into a society which first regulates their <u>own</u> living. Asceticism for the

Brahmin in Nietzsche's eyes is, "above all an aspiration to the complete elimination of suffering" (M. Hulin, op. cit., p67). Through the Vedic (i.e. the study of King Visvamitra) hymns, Nietzsche saw within the Indian ascetic tradition something that seemed strikingly like his "will to power". The concept is called Tapas, which literally means "heat". Not only does the ascetic generate this enigmatic heat he also gains a certain kind of power, a power not only over himself, but a power which even the gods fear from the ascetic yogi. As Smart states :

"This idea, that even the gods can be surpassed by the yogi and ascetic, is a colourful way of indicating what runs deep in the stream of Indian religious consciousness - the belief that the popular cults of the gods themselves cannot bring final salvation. They can be implored for worldly boons, but it is the religious teacher who knows the secret of immortality" (N. Smart, Religious Experience of Mankind, p91).

Hulin suggests that if Nietzsche were only concerned with Brahminic asceticism, as representing an aspiration to the complete elimination of suffering and the hope for "supreme liberation" (Moksa), then these findings would not have been very original (see Hegel's review of Wilhelm von Humboldt's Study of the Bhagavad Gita, 1826). For Nietzsche the idea of asceticism, primarily Brahminical asceticism, is important in comprehending a kind of self-generating power (will to power in association with Tapas) or rather, "asceticism as an accumulation of energy which allows its possessor to escape from the destiny of the so called will of the gods" (M. Hulin, op. cit., p71-72). This indeed is an extreme sort of asceticism, known to be found especially in the Vedanta tradition, and it is not surprising that Nietzsche favoured it as a model for his own extremist views.

This Indian model of asceticism highlights for Nietzsche mankind's drive for independence, his "striving for distinction". According to Nietzsche man ultimately

wants to elevate himself over the next man ("will to power"), and the ascetic of the vedanta achieves this function splendidly. As Nietzsche suggests this man achieves the feeling of power, of "self-enjoyment" of the thought that one can control oneself and ultimately others.

It is quite obvious why Nietzsche used the Indian ascetic model for his advances in the philosophy of "power". Yet, at times it is puzzling as to why Nietzsche disassociated himself from Buddhism and not complete a possible Pan-Indian comparison within his philosophy. This question will be addressed in the third section of this chapter. However, as we mentioned previously in Chapter One, Nietzsche's extremist views and radical writings favoured Brahminism more when held next to the Christian culture from which he so desperately wanted to break away. We must ask whether Buddhism held for Nietzsche a similar powerful contrast.

III

Why did Nietzsche rarely draw parallels between Brahminism and Buddhism? Hulin writes that although Nietzsche was familiar with the concepts of Buddhist philosophy, "he hardly ever draws the parallels between Buddhism and Brahminism" (M. Hulin, Loc. Cit., p71). Hulin goes on to suggest that the reason for Nietzsche's failure to contrast Brahminism to Buddhism is this : "the fact that Buddhism had a historically attested founder, conjoined with its "missionary character", leads Nietzsche like many of his contemporaries, to see it constantly as comparable with Christianity, whereas Brahminism lends itself less comfortably to such an approach" (M. Hulin, Loc. Cit., p71).

Although the Brahminical system goes to more extremes when comparing Ascetic life to Buddhism; a Buddhist's life can still be seen in our Western eyes as being ascetic. Although Buddhism claims to follow a "middle path" (between asceticism and hedonism) we know that compared to our own western lifestyle Buddhist monks live a life of strong ascetic principle. Nietzsche seems to

"domesticate" Buddhism, in rejecting the notion of strict monastic ascetic practice, which he certainly must have known to exist. Hulin suggests that the reason for this may be, "because he needs it (Buddhism) as a foil in his interminable polemic against Christianity" (M. Hulin, Op. Cit., p73). The parallel that Hulin envisions is with early Christianity, which as Nietzsche admits it, "basically was aiming at the same thing as Buddhism" (F. Nietzsche, Sämliche Briefe; Kritische Studienausgabe, p367).

Hulin sees early Christianity, "as a retreat from the tumult of the city, on abandoning of worldly ambition, and a return to the delights of inferiority -but that it lost its way ... " (M. Hulin, Loc. Cit., p73). He suggests that the problem lay within the lack of cultural awareness of the lower classes, the "Chandala" type, and all their misery. So the Buddha, for Nietzsche, is used as a model to show a more successful saviour than Christ, for he, "obtained for himself and made accessible to his disciples the kind of atamaxy that Jesus knew for a moment, but which he had to abandon on the cross and of which the church subsequently lost even the memory" (M. Hulin, Loc. Cit., p73).

Here Nietzsche's well known attack on Saul (or Paul), the precursor to the "routinization" (see Weber) of religion, takes on an Eastern parallel. Nietzsche in the "Antichrist" tells us that Buddhism does not make the promises of early Christianity, but fulfils them, whereas Christianity makes promises, and does not keep them (see "Antichrist", 42). The rantings and ravings of Nietzsche's attack are well documented and there is no need, or indeed, there is no advantage in discussing them in this chapter outside of the context mentioned above. But what is interesting for us, who are looking at Nietzsche through a Pan-Asian eye, is that we see Nietzsche's philosophy as having been greatly enhanced by his knowledge of India and the East. What is alarming, however, is his choices and manipulations of ideas from Asian philosophy. Above all one has to notice that at times Nietzsche selects only those aspects of Asian thought, which best suit its own philosophical points. His primary objective is to bring his philosophy to life, and if needed, to

attack the concepts of his time in an effort to accelerate change.

What this chapter intends to suggest is that a parallel may be found between Nietzsche's concepts and Buddhism in their respective attempts to surpass "good and evil". Nietzsche may have commended the Buddhist spirit, this we may never know for fact, but certainly he was inspired enough to announce that Buddhism was an example for a new European spiritualism to duplicate. Why then do those philosophies disagree in their respective conclusive arguments on the nihilistic stance?

As mentioned previously in this chapter, Nietzsche may be looked upon as a philosopher who ultimately surfaces as someone who is optimistic. The reason for this seemingly optimistic view is due to his three central affirmative doctrines, "eternal recurrence", "will to power", the "overman", and the idea that man can achieve innocence at becoming what he is. As Heine was quoted previously as saying, Nietzsche's views were meant to achieve, "a holy yea-saying beyond assertion and denial, optimism and pessimism, tragedy and scepticism - a perpetual process of self-overcoming and self-domination" (S. Heine, op. cit., p243).

What Buddhism is for Nietzsche stands as an important piece of the puzzle in understanding Nietzschean nihilism. Buddhism for Nietzsche is yet another subject, which is full of contrasting literature. We find that at times Nietzsche compares Buddhism to his own positive concepts as something that "represents an emancipation from the concepts of good and evil" (S. Heine, op. cit., p245). But on the other hand, as Heine explains, "he dismisses Buddhism as a 'weary pessimism', merely a tonic to soothe over-sensitized nerves rather than strengthen the spirit" (S. Heine, Loc. Cit., p245). One can scan through the pertinent literature from Nietzsche on Buddhism and find that, like most of his opinions, there are contadictions.

One particular, and rather important, passage from the Will to Power tells us of his (perhaps hidden) respect for Buddhism when he suggests that "Eternal Recurrence" is, "the European form of Buddhism : the energy of knowledge and

strength compels this belief" (F. Nietzsche, <u>Will to Power</u>, 55). Obviously this suggests to us a Nietzsche who sees Buddhism as something that also endures our nihilistic state of being, our aimlessness in the world, and tries to achieve something from this structure. This is where Nietzsche denies his Western upbringing. <u>His</u> structure can be seen as kindred to the Indian response to life and living. It is understood that the importance and significance of nihility, of negativity was realized before the Buddhist movement. Yet the Buddhist philosophies would seem an ample place for comparison for Nietzsche. As Abe suggests: "The negativity of human life is felt more seriously and deeply in Buddhism than among the followers of western intellectual traditions. This is true to such an extent that it is not considered inferior but equal to positivity" (M. Abe, <u>Zen and Western Thought</u>, p130).

Not only would Nietzsche have been impressed with this notion of nihilism, but also with Buddhism's use of it as a proverbial "stepping stone" to something far beyond quibbling over the virtues of "good" and "evil". Again M. Abe states :

"However imperative it may be from the ethical point of view, it is, according to Buddhism, illusory to believe it possible to overcome evil with good and to thereby attain the highest good. Since good and evil are mutually negating principles with equal power, an ethical effort to overcome evil with good never succeeds and results in a serious dilemma" (M. Abe, <u>Zen and Western Thought</u>, p132).

Nevertheless, this is where the difference between Buddhism and the Nietzschean "yes" lies within the Buddhist philosophy (which will be discussed in detail in Chapters Three to Five). In Buddhism one wants to achieve emancipation, "from the existential antinomy of good and evil and to awaken to emptiness prior to the opposition between good and evil" (M. Abe, op. cit., p132). Whereas Nietzsche wants to go <u>beyond</u> good and evil, we see that with Buddhism the aim is

to go back to emptiness, a non-being. This is quite a different stance from Nietzsche's "active" nihilism, which accepts life as not being empty, but concurs that nihilism helps in the conclusion. Nietzsche's revaluation of all values (unwertung alle werte) attacks the traditional positivist principles (Western) with a vengeance, yet vindicates his own positivist principles, incorporating the Übermensch, as his role model in "active" nihilism. This had led to Nietzsche being "regarded with suspicion in the West" (M. Abe, op. cit., p134), and a traitor to Western philosophical tradition.

Is this actually true considering Nietzsche's past nihilistic positivism? The idea of nothingness is the ultimate idea in Buddhism, and to think that Nietzsche accepts this extreme form of Eastern philosophical discourse would be incorrect. Nietzsche is neither from the East or the West philosophically speaking. He forges ahead positively, even if man's fate is nothing more than the here and now. As Heine suggests, Nietzsche may have given a veiled reference to Buddhism in "Zarathustra", when he states :

"hardly are they born when they begin to die and to long for doctrines of weariness and renunciation ..... They encounter a sick man or an old man or a corpse, and immediately they say, 'life is refuted .....' " (F. Nietzsche, Thus Spoke Zarathustra, p4-5, in N. Katz (Ed.), Buddhist and Western Thought, p245).

Undoubtedly, Nietzsche is on the extreme of traditionalist Western philosophy, and influenced by Schopenhauer, he sought knowledge of the Eastern philosophies. Nietzsche was a man and philosopher who wasn't afraid to forge a new path into an unknown wood, as long as it was his path. The tools he uses to forge this path are obviously from different ideas and concepts but it is the way in which he uses them, and the manner in which he finds his conclusions, that marks him an extremist in the Western eye. This is not to say that he sides with the East

(in the style of Schopenhauer), his stance backs his own ideals.

It is true, as Heine states that, "Nietzsche and Buddhism both recognize that the individual, uneasy in the flux of impermanence and interrelations, reacts by objectifying his hopes in illusory fixed objects which he tries to grasp and stymie in an ultimately futile fashion, and that this obsession gives rise to an endless round of suffering and recurrence" (S. Heine, op. cit., p248). Nietzsche's ideals may be ultimately seen as Heine suggests as "the awakening of a courageous attitude, amor fati (love of fate), the new formula for saying yes by which one internalizes fate -it becomes the supreme possibility of man, identical with his creativity" (S. Heine, op. cit., p253). So there is possibility with time, there is the chance to become your own God, if you are to trust in Nietzsche's optimism. The Buddhist stance would not be favourable to this concept, for time, all time, is a disease and one should try to find ways to alleviate oneself from this trap.

Nietzsche's "job" is to alert us to the possibilities of living to the fullest and most energetic that we can in the here and now. By doing so he must try to establish a way beyond Christian moralism, the good and evil that Buddhism also transcends. A suggestion for Nietzsche's placing on the philosophical scale is that he, like man to Übermensch, is a possible bridge between East and West, shrinking the differences between the two, or at the very least, acknowledging a better understanding between the two traditions. We are not thinking of moralistic philosophy trying to understand Eastern negativism, but nevertheless Nietzsche came out of this structure to proclaim a new beginning. He leaves behind the Western presumption that good is superior to evil and looks beyond both of them for a richer understanding. We will also see in Chapter Four that Buddhist philosophers, such as Nagarjuna have a different understanding of traditional Buddhist negativity. For now, we must be satisfied in thinking that, "Although Buddhism and Nietzsche travel comparable paths of negativism to freedom, both finally negating the distinction between negativism and affirmation, traditional Buddhism assumedly does not conclude with a "yes" " (S. Heine, Op. Cit., p259),

as Nietzsche's conclusions claim to.

CHAPTER THREE

"A Sense of the Earth"

"[.....] life becomes vacant, unintelligible, and we like to have something which we can grasp and take as final. This something final we generally like to represent by the notion of soul or self" (D. T. Suzuki, The Field of Zen, p57).

This chapter will investigate the notions generally referred to as the "self", the "soul", the "ego", the conceptions belonging to the interpretation of our existence, in the world as we know it, as found within Nietzschean and Buddhist thought. Within this context we shall see why Nietzsche and the Buddhists, for the most part, reject the traditional Western notion that the self must exist and that there must be an object, or "thing", corresponding to a noun.

The implications of this study are extremely relevant in a comparison between Nietzsche and Buddhism. Indeed this thesis would be incomplete without devoting significant chapters to this subject. Because of the momentous relation between Nietzsche's "self" and the Buddhist "not-self" it is necessary to split the revelations of "self" between Chapters Three and Four. The latter will concentrate solely on the subject of language and causality within Nietzschean and Buddhist thought, including the Madhyamaka school and their primary philosopher Nagarjuna.

Although the concept of language is relevant in this chapter, it is initially important to stress the basic principles of "self", and what it means to Nietzsche and the Buddhists, before we ponder their use of language. This chapter will give a detailed account on "self" by familiarizing the reader with the different "mind set" between East and West in establishing the concepts of mind and body respectively, as something whole or separated. Of course, the question will be asked as to where

Nietzschean thought fits within these categories, if at all. As we have seen from past comparisons between Nietzsche and Asian thought in previous chapters, Nietzsche is a difficult philosopher to categorize. It is the intention of this chapter, as in the previous chapters, to keep an open mind, not only in categorizing Nietzsche's philosophy, but also in looking at the various sects and divisions within the Buddhist tradition, as we explore the concept of "self". For the sake of comparison Zen Buddhist thought will be introduced later because of the significant role it plays in comparison with Nietzsche.

Before we begin with Nietzsche's ideas of the "self" it is important to initially understand what we mean, and to an equal extent, what Nietzsche means by the term "self" or "soul". Throughout Nietzsche's writings we often find the concept of the "soul" or the "ego", in this study we will only be interested in these subjects in their relationship and interpretation of the concept of the "self". This concept can be confusing, and it is perhaps best explained by Schacht, "this postulated entity is frequently denoted by a considerable number of names or labels other than the more traditional one of "soul", such as "the ego", "the subject", and also "the mind" or "spirit". It does not greatly matter to him (Nietzsche), which of them one might prefer to use, what concerns him is the idea of the existence of any such entity" (R. Schacht, op. cit., p130). For our purposes we shall use the term "self" in a philosophical context not to be confused with any psychological terminology of what "ego" is, or "self" is, to the person. As Schacht so readily admits, "Nietzsche would only be interested in the notion of our rejecting the idea as a "fiction", that is "of no use" ", (R. Schacht, op. cit., p130), and something which leads us to the dilemmas of which both Nietzsche and Buddhism (as we shall see) wish to be free.

Why does Nietzsche attack the notion of "self"? In the Western sense of the word Nietzsche argues against the philosophical tradition of subjectivity, which in our Western world subsequently separates the mind from the body. His denial of the Western philosophical notion that the self is something that can be known, a

something that is "real", stems largely from the Socratic notions of the "self" as being the centre of content in life itself [1]. Nietzsche is noted for his views on the subject of the "self" as having no real subject. The concept of the "self" as an agent (the "doer of deeds") is rejected. Because, according to Nietzsche, the "self", or the "I" stands or falls within a logistical and metaphysical context. Nietzsche believed that it placed too much emphasis on something that can obtain complete objectivity in its knowledge. The "self" concept turns away from a more primordial, or a more instinctual, existence of mind/body. Belief in a Cartesian "self", as being the most "excellent of all finite things", leads to this separation of mind/body as a whole.

Indeed, Nietzsche believed that the instinctive behaviour of animals and plants offer a model for the conduct of human existence. Hence, "the more [the] emphasis is placed on the rationality of the thinking I, the more one tends to forget the importance of the senses as natural human capabilities" (A. Kogaku, "The Problem of the Body in Nietzsche and Dogen", in G. Parkes (Ed.), Nietzsche and Asian Thought, p215). Nietzsche understood that the idea of "consciousness", the notion that we think, that we understand what we are, was a necessity for man's evolution, whereas "the solitary and predatory man would not have needed it" (F. Nietzsche, Gay Science, 354). The point that Nietzsche stresses is that our notion of the "self" can be a restrictive one, and we are certainly nowhere near any evolutional perfection on behalf of mankind. The separation of "doer and deed" lets us believe that we are "above" our natural instincts, and that we perceive ourselves as not only being responsible for our deeds but also subject to punishment for them (see Nietzsche, "Metaphysics of the Hangman"). Hence, we give birth to such notions as morals and the concepts of truth, error, good and evil, ignorance and learning and so on. Nietzsche rejects such oppositions and "imagines them as points along a single continuum" (A. Nehamas, Nietzsche: Life and Literature, p44).

Nietzsche believed that the world that we construct is a world which we should not feel guilty about, "we are not in error to live in it, to think and talk

about it as we do, and to continue to do so" (A. Nehamas, op. cit., p95). The error that we make lies within our belief of what is the real nature of the world. It is this metaphysical perception which is our true error, for according to Nietzsche any metaphysical "truth" (including science, mathematics, and language) grossly hinders our progression towards an Übermensch.

Along with these metaphysical concepts, Nietzsche also attacks the concept of God, as being guilty of "anti-nature", or "anti-life". Like Buddhism, Nietzsche believes strongly that in order for us to return back to "nature" one must see the whole of mind/body as the true path to our progression, as he tries to halt the metaphysical attempt of separating the two. According to M. Abe, "It was Nietzsche's intention to cause the value judgements of "true" and "false", which had been inverted in the name of God to be again reversed, and thus to recover life and naturalness, which had been robbed in the name of God" (M. Abe, "Zen and Nietzsche", in N. Katz (Ed.), Buddhism and Western Philosophy, p3).

Nietzsche calls for a recovery of the "sense of the earth", when he calls for a "higher body" to emerge from the present one. If one develops the body one must comprehend the importance of being closer to nature. This notion fits in with all of Nietzsche's concepts, which so often are seen as enemies to the moralist tradition. When Nietzsche calls upon man to return to nature he undeniably asks man to give up the concept of God. This leaves man alone, able to boldly achieve a viable understanding of how he stands within this world and how he is intrinsically a part of the world. Man does not need the promise of something unimaginable to make his life purposeful and full of meaning. Nietzsche's ideal man is at one with this world in all its finality. Unlike Camus' portrayal of man as an isolated being in an irrational and meaningless world Nietzsche's Übermensch accepts not only his fate in the existential surroundings, but relishes the idea, as an opportunity to live a freer life without a world full of metaphysical "truths", "morals" and so on.

As usual with Nietzsche there seems to be an underlying attack on the church in many of his writings. This subject, of course, is of no exception. As

Schacht states, "Nietzsche is a rather enthusiastic participant in what he terms the attempt "to assassinate the old soul concept" " (R. Schacht, op. cit., p131). Schacht points out that Nietzsche sees a connection between the "soul hypothesis" and the "God-hypothesis". "The soul hypothesis leaning upon the God-hypothesis for its philosophical and theological intelligibility, and the God-hypothesis leaning upon the soul-hypothesis for much of its evidence and intuitive appeal (and perhaps even being modelled upon it)" (R. Schacht, Loc. cit., p131). Again we see Nietzsche's distrust of the duality (A exists, therefore B must exist).

In the Gay Science, Nietzsche initiates distrust with those who are in need of a God and those who refuse to follow his advice to "de-deify" nature and proceed to naturalize ourselves within this world (109, Gay Science). Nietzsche believed that man was starting to abandon the concept of God ("God is dead", Gay Science, 343) and was looking for an alternative to Christianity and the church. Once Nietzsche announces the death of God, he is also condemning all Judeao-Christian morality and values and this, one has to believe, is the most important point of the condemnation of God. Nietzsche needs to be rid of the Judeao-Christian world in order for advances to take place, within his philosophy of change. Nietzsche wants to emphasize the urgent need for reform in the way humans live, and for what they actually lived for. In Daybreak Nietzsche concludes :

> "- How many there are who still conclude : 'Life could not be endured if there were no God!' [.....] - therefore there must be a God (or existence must have an ethical significance)! The truth, however, is merely that he who is accustomed to these notions does not desire a life without them : that these notions may therefore be necessary to him and for his preservation - but what presumption it is to decree that whatever is necessary for my preservation must actually exist! As if my preservation were something necessary! ..... " (F. Nietzsche, Daybreak, 90).

In short, Nietzsche sees man's incapability to live naturally, and his false

need to live within rules and regulations, as a hindrance to his development.

According to Nietzsche metaphysics was something that came out of a "barbarious primordial" cultural belief that when one dreams one is learning about a second real world. This was the origin of metaphysics, the breaking of the single line, the breaking of the continuum. According to Nietzsche, "without the dream, one would have had no occasion to divide the world into two. The dissection into soul and body is also connected with the oldest idea of the dream, likewise the postulation of a life of the soul ..... " (F. Nietzsche, Human All Too Human, 5).

At this point, we must ask ourselves what keeps this separation intact, even today, in our Western world? One could say that our society is based upon a workable model (for the privileged?), which serves to protect a happy medium, and confronts any extremist movements with vengeance. According to Nietzsche, we have made ourselves into "calculable" people; those who need to know why we are here, and for what purpose. A people who have to understand the role they play within society, as well as what they have to achieve to reach over to God's world. In order for us to reach this "other-world" Nietzsche argues that we created within ourselves a human being who agrees with a societal functioning role, a role which creates, through cause and effect an image of how things become (Gay Science, 112).

Unfortunately for man Nietzsche concludes that we have been unable to get past this image (or for that matter, behind it). Man's "instinct of weakness" (Gay Science, 347), encourages this lack of confidence to challenge these so-called metaphysical "truths" in order to obtain an affirmative life in this world. Man clings to the notion of a "self", or a "soul entity", because he believes in the separation of doer and deed, of thing and property. The concept of the soul is fundamentally conceived and preserved throughout time because of a belief in "language" (that there must be an object or thing corresponding to a noun). For Nietzsche (like Wittgenstein) belief in words or grammar leads to the belief in the

self, as something real, and imaginable. As mentioned in the introduction of this chapter, we will later deal with the question of language and causality in great detail. Nevertheless it is important to understand language's function, "the grammatical habit", within Nietzsche's argument in order to comprehend how the concept of the "self" or "soul" has existed and persevered for so long. Language fuels our need for wanting to belong to society, according to Nietzsche; it gives us "purpose" and stability. Yet as Schacht states, it "does not warrant the conclusion that the interpretation of these events as "deeds" of which some sort of soul-entity is the "doer" is sound" (R. Schacht, op. cit., p135).

Language gives man the strength to believe in his reasoning, it gives structure, and balance, for it conceives all effects as conditioned by a subject. Nietzsche finds that the problem with language lies within the objectification of words and their meanings. As Nietzsche summarises, "we operate with nothing but things which do not exist, with lines, planes, bodies, atoms, divisible time, divisible space - how should explanation even be possible when we first make everything into an image, into our own image" (F. Nietzsche, Gay Science, 112). It is precisely language's effect which keeps man "pinned down" within a metaphysical stranglehold.

Schacht does suggest that Nietzsche does not deny the existence of mental acts (i.e. thinking, willing, etc.), but suggests that such "events" are misinterpreted by man when conceived as "internal acts logically distinct from bodily behaviour" (as was primordial man's interpretation of dreams) (R. Schacht, Loc. cit., p135). He further suggests that Nietzsche sees that, "it is this misinterpretation which is at least immediately and most directly responsible for the further erroneous interpretation of the occurrence of these events as involving the existence of a mental entity to perform these putative "acts" " (R. Schacht, Loc. cit., p135), and that man "simply assimilates it, as a single general 'doer-deed' mode of conceptualization and self-interpretation, along with the structure of the language they learn" (R. Schacht, op. cit., p136).

Thus we have Nietzsche's interpretation of the problem of the separation of mind/body. It is apparent that a comparison can be made with Buddhism, as we shall see in the second section of this chapter. But, it is also important to signify the relation that this comparison presents. In as much as it adds to a belief that Nietzsche was a "keen" student of the East the comparison will also show a cogent argument to the effect that he was not a "champion" of the Buddhist view of "not-self", after all. Nevertheless, he can be compared with the Buddhist "I-lessness" or "emptiness" in the world (which is believed to be the "way of being of everything"). This is not, however, a view found among some Buddhist sects which assume an existence in some other heavenly world. "On this point" as Kogaku suggests, "it is far from Platonism, and Christianity - and indeed quite close to Nietzsche's active nihilism" (A. Kogaku, op. cit., p216). The second part of this chapter will indeed try to understand this odd marriage of the two respective philosophies on the problem of the body, and will present a closer association between Nietzsche and Buddhism on the subject of nature and the "sense of the earth".

II

With respect to the principle of the "self", the philosophical understanding in Buddhism is that it (the self) must "dissolve" by means of meditative introspection in order for someone to attain enlightenment and to be free from mind, and free from the "bondage of ignorance and craving". This should for the Buddhist result in the complete rejection of the notion of "person substance". Once a Buddhist refutes the concept of "person" he is not permitted to assume the existence of anything else that does not relate to a fact, or anything that is not based on experiential evidence. Subsequently, the "I" does not refer to any real subject.

Hence, the self is rejected, and the notion of self, as an "agent" (i.e. Nietzsche's "doer of deeds"), is rejected as well.

Of course, this is very similar to Nietzsche's idea that consciousness is not experienced as a separate element, because it never appears in its truest form. Obviously there is a strong resemblance to Nietzsche's work when compared with the Buddhist's principles of the self. For Nietzsche losing one's belief in the metaphysical "self" or the belief in a "soul" as separate from the body, is for the Buddhist quite similar to "losing personality belief constitut[ing] the attainment of stream winner status" (p94, Selfless Persons, Collins). (The Buddhists believe that there is just a sequence of perceptions, thoughts, etc., with no persistent entity (a self) underlying these. See Chapter Four). The problem of life for the Buddhist, and for Nietzsche, is this "separateness". "In Buddhism", as Kogaku suggests, "one can naturally learn the Buddha way both through the body and the mind. But if one strives with the mind alone, one will never in all eternity attain the Buddha way" (A. Kogaku, op. cit., p220). As we will see later, many Buddhists practice to attain enlightenment through somatic practice, as in the case of Zen. Mind is most definitely seen as a subsidiary, as a part of the whole, in understanding Zen meditation, but let us go back to the question of "self" within the whole of Buddhism.

Primarily, the Buddhist doctrine is the doctrine of becoming, for all things are composite. Hence all things are prone to decomposition, which means everything is in flux. In the Buddha's "Four Holy Truths" (the structural framework for all his teachings), we find with his first truth that all life is dukha (suffering), and we are all subject to this condition. The second truth is that the cause of our illness is craving, the third states that if we remove our craving, a cure is possible, and lastly the fourth points to a recovery through the eightfold path (the middle way).

Within the "Four Holy Truths", man is described as being composed of five groups of attributes (skhandhas). These five groups have significant importance as

to how the Buddhists view the "self", and a detailed account is necessary at this point. First there is <u>Rupa</u>, translated as body, or form, in the sense of the physical body. Second there is <u>Vedana</u>, which are feelings, or the sensations that one has in living, be they pleasant feelings, or unpleasant ones. <u>Sanna</u> is translated roughly as the concept of perception, mental or sensuous. Generally it is described as "reaction to sense stimuli, described as 'awareness with recognition' or the idea which arises from such reaction" (C. Humphries, <u>Buddhism</u>, p94). The fourth group is <u>Sankhara</u>, which is thought of as including all tendencies both mental and physical or elements in consciousness ("all moral and immoral volitional activity") (C. Humphries, Loc. cit., p94). Lastly, there is <u>Vinnana</u>, translated as consciousness, in a constant state of flux. ("It is the centre of conscious existence in its ever changing forms") (C. Humphries, Loc. cit., p94). Whilst all of the Skhandas are in a state of flux, and impermanent (hence, not "true self"), it is the last one (Vinnana) that we want to concentrate on, in showing the Eastern-mindset, as being opposed to the Western tradition.

Vinnana, as defined by Humphries, is the equivalent to "self-consciousness", the perception by the individual that he is at the moment different from his neighbour; the belief that " 'I' am I, not you" (C. Humphries, Loc. cit., p94). Because it is still imbedded in the concept of a "self", and impermanent, it is one of the "fetters which have to be broken" (C. Humphries, Loc. cit., p94) before one attains enlightenment and achieves the state of Nirvana. This idea is otherwise known as "Sakkayaditti" (that is, the error of thinking that one is of separate existence to the world). Nevertheless, as Humphries suggests, it is something which is acceptable (like Nietzsche's acceptance of "consciousness" as necessary for man's evolution) among Buddhists, as something to live with whilst working on the long journey towards enlightenment : "to this extent <u>only</u> it is the soul of man, always remembering that it is impermanent and changing every moment of the day" (C. Humphries, Loc. cit., p94). Hence, we understand that the Buddhist describes all phenomena as impermanent, and in doing so they grasp the notion of not-self.

As Harvey affirms, "Buddhism emphasises that change and impermanence are fundamental features of everything, bar Nibbana. Mountains wear down, material goods wear out, and all beings, even God, die" (P. Harvey, <u>An Introduction to Buddhism</u>, p50).

The question that we must ask ourselves, is Nietzsche as extreme in his philosophy on the question of the "self"?

To highlight the above questions, and other comparisons between Nietzsche and Buddhism, Zen philosophy will be examined, especially its emphasis on the use of somatic practice, as a means of liberation from the world (see Chapter Five).

Both the Zen tradition and Nietzschean thought view the world and the self as 'false', as "not fact". The Zen Buddhists offer a rather similar account as to why we believe in the world the way we do (that is, through craving) to Nietzsche's idea that the value-interpretations concerning the world (which he saw as empty and deceptive) had a positive aspect (a "silver lining") in so much as they preserved life through a disguised "will to power". Indeed, there is no such "silver lining" in the Buddhist tradition, as there is in Nietzsche's philosophy. For the Buddhist, as we mentioned above, all the world is "ignorance and deception" and, as one cannot find any positiveness in this world, then it must be absolutely negated. Nietzsche seems to hold on to hope, that at least there may be an answer to life disguised amongst what he saw as deceptive and empty constructs (such as the self). In <u>Will to Power</u>, Nietzsche calls for something positive out of 'our' interpretation of the world, and :

" ..... that previous interpretations have been perspective valuations by virtue of which we can survive in life, i.e. in the will to power, for the growth of power; that every elevation of man brings with it the overcoming of narrower interpretations; that every strengthening and increase of power opens up new perspectives and means believing in new horizons ..... " (F. Nietzsche, <u>Will to Power</u>, 616).

And yet, Nietzsche later admits that because the world is constantly in flux, "as something in a state of becoming" (F. Nietzsche, Loc. cit., 616), there is no truth to life (see Chapter Four, on a "new hermeneutic"). This calls to mind Buddhism's "triple world of deception" conception of the world of transmigration, consisting of three notions: (1) sensuous desire; (2) form; and (3) formless pure spirit (i.e. the world is merely a creation of the mind, a mind that distinguishes between right and wrong, good and evil and so on). This also calls to mind, seemingly, a connection between Zen and Nietzsche for both conclude that it is the "discriminating" mind from which everything arises. "For when there is discrimination", says M. Abe, "value interpretation is involved" (M. Abe, op. cit., p4).

Let us return to this "fork in the road", where Nietzsche's "positiveness" seems to clash with Buddhism's "world of deception". This "road" does indeed split into new paths for both philosophies when we compare the world of Zen "non-awakening" to Nietzsche's "will to power" ideal, "an impulse and a drive to impose upon an essentially chaotic reality, a form or structure, to shape it into a world congenial to human understanding, while habitable by human intelligence" (A. Danto, Loc. cit., p30).

Interpreting Zen, we understand that it is impossible to look at the world objectively, because the mind cannot be objectively grasped. The Buddhist principle of the "triple world of deception" cannot be objectively realized, for if we did realize this, it would be from our mind, our interpretation, hence the world is then merely an illusion. This is probably why so much of Zen Buddhist practice is concerned with the somatic, that of the body, which we will discuss later in this chapter.

To look further into this difference between Nietzsche and Zen, we find that Nietzsche is problematic for the Buddhist philosopher in that his "will to power" model seems to be stuck in the mire of the deceptive world. With Zen, for example, when one realizes his enlightenment, and is free of illusion and all its

trappings, does he not abandon any notion of positiveness in the world? The state which the Zen Buddhist wants to attain only happens, "when seeing, hearing, perception, and consciousness are simply abandoned" (M. Abe, Loc. cit., p14). But with Nietzsche, is not "will to power" the attempt to see, hear and perceive in certain ways? As Abe states:

"Zen, like Nietzsche, emphasises the delusory nature of the world and severely admonishes against seeking for Buddha and setting up Buddha. Unlike Nietzsche, however, Zen does not affirmatively establish anything in the background of either the world of Buddha - Zen establishes "nothing" in their background" (M. Abe, op. cit., p14).

Using this "extremist" example may seem unfair to Nietzsche, and yet Nietzsche merits such an extremist comparison to complement his own unconventional discourse. Nietzsche's philosophy has finally been exposed (as anything would be with Zen), as having concepts of objectification. This is not to say that he betrayed the "body and mind = whole concept". Both philosophies wish to cultivate a higher body. The Nietzschean way is development of the spirit, if you will, through the body to reach the ideal (Übermensch). The Buddhist way is to practice with the body only, in order to realize an "overhuman body". Both want to cultivate a "sense of the earth", and at least gain knowledge of how we are so intrinsically tied in with the natural world.

In order for us to realize the somatic practices of obtaining enlightenment, let us use Zen again, as an example for mind/body wholeness. With D. T. Suzuki's definition of the self in mind, "that something substantial which is continuous as an individual entity even after what we call death" (D. T. Suzuki, Loc. cit., p57), let us focus closely on what the "self" is according to Zen philosophy.

As we know, Western religious belief generally assumes the survival of the soul, and Zen Buddhism denies that a "soul" or "self" makes any sense once

analytically examined. In the West, the idea of selflessness leads us to believe that life would be vacant and frightening for there is nothing to grasp onto unless we have an idea of a "soul" or "self" to contemplate. Indeed, according to Nietzsche and others, morality would cease to exist if we were to discard the notion of the self, or kill the concepts of "soul" or God. Yet this is also true in Zen, as D. T. Suzuki points out that, "without the notion of self, our social structure itself would dissolve, so there must be some sort of self, but this method does not bring us to any substantial notion of the self. It is like the method of elimination, when one thing is eliminated by saying it is not this and not that, it disappears altogether, like peeling an onion, when skin after skin is taken off, we finally come to nothing, and there is no onion. But we still think of the onion as something individual, as far as the senses are concerned, exists. But when we analyze it, it ceases to exist" (D. T. Suzuki, op. cit., p58).

Suzuki's statement, with its overtones from the Debate of King Milanda, analytically explores the notion of self, and at first seemingly leaves us with the conclusion of self equalling negation. Indeed, this self that is made up of metaphysical errors and not the "true self". This, although incomprehensible, still exists, and is obtainable. The Buddhist theory of "anatman" (i.e. non-self) demands more than the hopeless negation that occurs when examining the "self" closely. "Non-atman", or "absolute emptiness" is beyond our comprehension (Gotama Buddha himself refused to answer the ultimate problem of reality, for he thought it was beyond reach of our "ordinary mind"). Suzuki argues on behalf on Zen, that by looking analytically at the self, one is able to "dissect" the self to see of what it actually consists. This "dissection" of the self eventually shows us the significance of the non-ego, which the Buddha emphasised in his teachings, and that this emphasis is the way in which all Buddhists should follow. Indeed, the main problem with life, for a Zen Buddhist is with attachment: once rid of it one is also rid of the "ego-substance". There is no real self, as we have learned, according to Buddhists that we can actually realize, here and now.

So we now venture on, into the "world of becoming" as the only truth there is. One may ask how the Zen Buddhists attain truth when there is only this "truth of becoming". For all Buddhists, there must be a learning towards the Buddha way. The Buddhist must go beyond the standpoint of the 'I' in order to become enlightened. So - "to learn the Buddha way is to learn the self. To learn the self is to forget the self. To forget the self is to be enlightened by all things. To be enlightened by all things is to liberate one's own body/mind, as well as other body/minds from the bondage of the small 'I' " (Dogen, Shobogenzo, p28).

The Zen Buddhist goes about this learning of the Buddha way by spiritual practice (mind and the somatic (body)). Yet, in Zen, the body has a specific edge on mind practice, and can be experienced through examples in Zen such as the Tea ceremony, Noh Drama and so on (see Chapter Five). A. Kogaku spells out the seven steps in which one should proceed somatically to obtain enlightenment:

(1)   to understand the human body is a part of nature (as we have seen from above)

(2)   it is through the body that the human world and the natural world is connected

(3)   one must give up the "small-egotistical", "I" because the "I" .....

(4)   divides itself from nature and .....

(5)   by doing this, one realizes that there is only one "great I", which is inseparable from nature

(6)   the way to this realization is understanding that the body human is a sort of gate that can be used to attain this

(7)   and lastly, at every moment the self lives as the body, in relationship with the entire universe, but for the most part we tend to forget this and lose awareness of our constant relationship to the whole.

Zen Buddhists call the following of these steps "Zazen" which it advocates, as a way of using the "gate" or body, to go beyond the self, toward the greater 'I-less' self. As we know, Nietzsche argues for man to understand and encourage the instinctual nature of body, "a realization of the body as a "great" reason which does "I" rather says "I" " (A. Kogaku, op. cit., p224). Zazen is different, for it is the "procedure by means of which the self is able to transform itself into the pure-body self" (A. Kogaku, Loc. cit., p224). In Zazen practice there cannot be <u>any</u> intrusion of the mind permitted. This is a self-projecting leap of the body into the world, the cosmos. One tries to overcome one's restrictive body through this meditation in order to conceive the idea of "superbody", or an "overhuman" body.

For both philosophies, the body is instinctively closer to nature, but for Nietzsche, the belief is that the body is the <u>true</u> self once separated from the "I" -it rules the "I", and once it is beyond the "instruments and toys" (sense and spirit), the self is realized as what Nietzsche calls the "unknown sage". This is "self" stripped naked from the "I". Nietzsche's self is stripped, clean and free from metaphysical trappings, and man can now fully understand his own existence independently and freely.

In conclusion, we have noticed that the similarities found in both philosophies is how they view the nature of the thinking mind, and adopt a stance which emphasizes body over mind. Nietzsche still retains a certain individuality of the self, however, and is not keen on identifying wholly with the concept of the "I-less self", not being attainable in this world. This is not to say that Nietzsche found wholeness of earth or nature a subject for deep admiration, as the Zen Buddhists do. But he does, to some extent, separate himself from the notion that man cannot live independently from nature. Perhaps this is the truest side of Nietzsche's philosophy, an individualist stance, and an existential "awareness" showing through, saying that one is to be conscious of choice; choosing meaning creating, and expressing one's self identity in the process of acting and choosing responsibly. Can Nietzsche's Übermensch sustain responsibility in the face of Zen's "I-less

self"? Certainly, the proximity between Nietzsche and concepts such as Zen thrive because of his "condemnation of the traditional exaltation of rational spirit" (A. Kogaku, Loc. cit., p224), which inevitably helped Nietzsche to develop his _own_ "metaphysics" of the body.

Nietzsche still retains his title as an "Extreme-Nihilist", a Nihilist who creates his own positiveness from nothing. For Nietzsche man is "the strong individual, self-sufficient" (F. Nietzsche, Will to Power, 97), and this individualism must indeed "rub against the grain" when compared to Buddhist thought. This inevitably separates Nietzsche's thoughts from the Buddhist's, but it seems evident that Nietzsche has much to applaud in the nature of "selflessness", and that they make suitable, yet odd bedfellows within this context.

Footnotes:

1. Nietzsche saw Socrates as forerunner to the Westernized notion that self-knowledge was the very content of "the good life".

2. The first truth emphasizes _dukha_ (suffering), yet as we shall see later dukha is only one of the "three marks" of conditional phenomena. The other two marks are anicca (impermanence), and anatta (not-self). Within the five Skhandha's, one will notice that the Buddhists stress that change and flux is a fundamental feature in everything of this world.

CHAPTER FOUR

"Caves Within Caves"

The Role of Language in Nagarjuna's and Nietzsche's Philosophy

"Philosophy is a battle against the bewitchment of our intelligence by means of language" (L. Wittgenstein, Philosophical Investigations, 109).

As mentioned in Chapter Three, in this chapter we will specifically examine the contrasts, and the similarity of thought found in Nagarjuna's and Nietzsche's philosophical view of language, as a barrier to overcome if we are to understand the reality of existence. For this study it is important that we review the beginnings of the Mahayana/Madhyamaka movement. Therefore, a brief historical account will be necessary in preparation for a philosophical discourse of Nagarjuna's works.

In this chapter we will examine the non-dualistic view of the Madhyamaka school, as a radical breakthrough from traditional Buddhist discourse (especially Hinyayana), which compares favourably to Nietzsche's "spiritual breakthrough", and his new hermeneutic. The primary area for comparison lies within the two philosophers' discourse on language, concentrating on the notion that language encourages us to believe that there is substance and reality in the concept of the "self". Both Nagarjuna and Nietzsche insist that language assists in this misrepresentation, for it leads us into believing in a world as object and entity.

Although we are primarily concerned with the thought of Nagarjuna and Nietzsche and their notions of language and causality, it is important that we also examine the views of Ludwig Wittgenstein for his relevant discourse on language, and his favourable comparisons to Buddhist ideology. By comparing both Nietzsche's, and to a lesser extent Wittgenstein's, attack on the traditional metaphysical traditions in Western philosophy to that of the Madhyamaka's crusade, led by Nagarjuna, and the transformation of the historical and traditional Buddha to

a more fundamental Buddha, we hope to bridge the vast gap between Eastern and Western philosophical differences. Indeed this study is perhaps the most important within this thesis, for here one finds the heart of the comparison between Asian thought and the philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche.

For Nietzsche breaking down the "metaphysical truths" is important for mankind's maturity and growth. The Madhyamaka Buddhist's attack on language and causality is an exercise in obtaining "ultimate truth". Hence, their belief takes on a personal responsibility on behalf of those, who "mistakenly cling to the entities which confront them in phenomenal reality" and hence to something "epistemologically and metaphysically groundless" (G. T. Martin, "Deconstruction and Breakthrough in Nietzsche and Nagarjuna", in G. Parkes (Ed.), Nietzsche and Asian Thought, p104). In a sense, if this chapter strengthens the idea of Nietzsche as a radical philosopher, it also shows the Madhyamaka religion as the "prime mover" toward a "dialectical deconstructive" side of the Buddha and Buddhism, shifting away from any recognition as a historical religion. In short, the Madhyamakas and Nagarjuna, become the catalyst to the more radical side of Buddhism.

Part one of this chapter will deal with the historical side of the Mahayana/Madhyamaka movement, culminating with the main points in the Madhyamaka philosophy. The second part will discuss, in detail, Nagarjuna's stance on language and causality by using examples from his "Karika", and the "Twelve Gate Treatise". The third part of this chapter will link Nietzsche, and to some extent Wittgenstein, to the obvious association within their respective philosophies to that of Nagarjuna.

I

"Ask any Buddhist, practising or professed, to explain the doctrine or its rudiments and chances are he will not be able to convey to you its full meaning and significance in any satisfactory manner ... This is as it should

be. For any positive or objective accounting of the doctrine would surely be held suspect".

<div style="text-align: right">

(K. Inada, "Problematics of the Buddhist Nature of Self",

in N. Katz (Ed.), <u>Buddhist and Western Philosophy</u>, p267)

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Within all Buddhist traditions, sects, cults, etc., one concept stands alone, as one of the primal and principal notions to grasp in order to understand Buddhism and Buddhists. This is the concept of Anatman (non-self). This concept, at first, seems to be an example of the frequently mentioned "negativism" in Buddhism, which Western thinkers find difficult to fathom. Yet "to say that there is a soul or self, or that the soul or self is negated, does not really advance the true understanding of the concept of Anatman, except on the linguistic and logical levels" (K. Inada, op. cit., pp271-272). This is precisely what this chapter intends <u>not</u> to do : relying on linguistic, Western logical explanations. In order to understand the Madhyamaka's viewpoint, it is important to abandon <u>our</u> Westernized notion of the self; thinking that it exists only because we refer linguistically to it. Later, we will discuss this dilemma in considerable detail, however, it is necessary to first gain a historical perspective as to how and why the concept of Anatman developed within the Mahayana/Madhyamaka philosophies.

The concept of Anatman is an anti-metaphysical statement developed to realign what we view as the human experience. Of course, Buddhism succeeded Hinduism, and it is well known that "the atman concept still remains in the province of the Hindu, who has his own metaphysics and the faith and will to pursue it. What the Buddhist or the Historical Buddha reacted against was the inadequacy of the Hinduistic metaphysics to account for the so-called worldly empirical nature of things. It was not a simple overturn of the atman concept into nullity, but a unique overhaul of the understanding of human experience" (K. Inada, loc. cit., p272). This chapter does not want to discuss the differences between Buddhist and Hindu philosophy in any great detail other than showing that Buddhism itself was a

religion based on the matters of change within the human experience and condition. From the early teachings of the Historical Buddha (Gotama), we find an important aspect in his teaching of anatman in that his response when questioned concerning this concept, is often silence.

As previously stated, pre-Mahayana Buddhist thinking, like the Hindu religion and the Hinyanists, maintained the theory of self-causation that cause and effect are identical in essence. The Buddha rejects this view on the grounds that it is a metaphysical assumption not verified by observation. Self-causation was always in the forefront of Buddhism's attacks, yet when confronted with the question as to why one should disassociate with Atman, and all metaphysics of the world, the Historical Buddha remained silent. This led philosophers such as Nagarjuna and Candrakirti to question the reason of this silence from the Buddha.

Candrakirti (the Madhyamaka philosopher who followed in the tradition of Nagarjuna) sought an answer for the Buddha's continual silence to such questions as, is the world eternal, is it finite or infinite, or is the soul identical with the body, or not, and does the Tathagata (a title of the Buddha) exist after death? All such questions, indeed those most pertinent for any religion or philosophy, were left unanswered by the historical Gotama Buddha. Candrakirti assumed, as did Nagarjuna and other prominent Mahayanists, that the Gotama Buddha had a reason for this silence. The reason itself leads the Buddhist to an answer and understanding which cannot be expressed. This is not to say that the Historical Buddha was mute concerning all philosophical questions.

The Buddha and his teachings of the "middle path" [the early Buddhist theory of causation which avoided the extremes of existence such as atthita and non-existence, natthita. The Buddha avoided those extremes because of notions that would lead to believing in eternalism (sassata) and annihilationism (uccheda)] are indicators that this was a philosophically "searching" religion. Certainly Buddha's theory of causation was formulated to answer the questions about the arising

(utpada) and the passing away (niradha) of things. Most importantly for the Madhyamaka religion, the Buddha's teaching of the Pratityasamutpada, which declares that all entities in the world are conditioned, are devoid of real, independent existence, highlights a reluctance to use the spoken word, as an escape, or as an excuse to mislead his followers. As K. Inada states : "Even the Historical Buddha, it will be recalled, was quite mindful and cautious regarding this matter, and yet he had no recourse but to use the prevailing language to convey the intent and purpose of seeking that concrete nature of reality. In essence, then, we are in search of that reality within the matrix of things, however laden it may be with the elements of the provisional and conventional natures" (K. Inada, op. cit., p273).

As Inada suggests there seems to be a reluctance to use language from the Historical Buddha and it is this reluctance which the Mahyanists and especially the Madhyamaka sect regard as the true nature of Buddhism as a leap forward from the "lesser wheel" of Hinyayana to the "greater wheel", Mahayana, within Buddhist history. Again, Inada suggests in his introduction to the translation of the Mulamadhyamakkarika by Nagarjuna that, "the very refusal to answer categorically the metaphysically grounded questions by the Buddha himself should be a constant warning to those who facilely resort to labelling any doctrine or facet of Buddhism into convenient forms of monism or absolutism" (K. Inada (Trans.), in Nagarjuna, Mulamadhyamakkarika, p10).

The main difference between the Mahayanists and the Hinayanists was their interpretation of the Dharmas (in the sense of elements of existence, mental states, and things). The Hinayanists believed that the Dharmas had a separate reality of their own. The Madhyamaka school declares that because all Dharmas are relative they do not hold any separate reality, as the doctrine of the Prajnaparamita suggested. According to Nagarjuna, the Buddha's enlightenment consisted of the discovery of the causal principle from the Prajnaparamita literature. This literature, which appeared first in the first century B.C., remained important until the end of Buddhism as the prominent religion in India in the twelfth century A.D.

Nagarjuna, one might say, appeared at the "right time and in the right place" to rekindle interest in these ancient doctrines, "to provide the necessary corrective measures to Buddhist philosophical analysis of man's nature and thereby initiated a "new" movement within the Mahayana tradition" (K. Inada, op. cit., p11). The task undertaken was the subject of "reality" and its interpretation through the use of language. The passing away of the Buddha had created for Nagarjuna, and for all Buddhists a huge vacuum, which contributed to the need to develop the conception of an eternal spiritual body. Henceforth, in the Mahayana tradition, the Buddha becomes something that is "forever", something that never dies. Because of the death of the Gotama Buddha it was important to stress that his physical body was not his _true_ body. The Mahayanists believe that the Gotama Buddha's real body is his spiritual body (dharmaka) as well as his cosmic body (considered to be the same as "Absolute Reality", or Tathata). Hence, Nagarjuna transforms the Prajnaparamita literature into the nucleus of all Mahayana belief. As D. J. Kulapanuna suggests of the Prajnaparamita literature, "Running through that literature is a conflict between absolute reality, the dharmakaya, considered to be non-dual (advaya) and phenomenal reality, which is plurality" (D. J. Kulapanuna, Causality : The Central Philosophy of Buddhism, p156). We shall see how Nagarjuna adopts the non-duality (advaya) into a leading concept within the Madhyamaka philosophy.

Here we shift from the early Buddhists theories of causation, which was employed to explain all types of causation within our world (including "other worldly" concepts such as Nirvana) to a Mahayanist explanation of causation relevant only to that of the phenomenal world (the actual theory, being considered a transcendental theory). For Nagarjuna "reality" in the sense of what we see and know "is like a maze ... If one is caught up in the elements of the maze, one is prevented from seeing the passageway and contrawise, if one is not, then the passageway is there without the usual obstructive elements, and thus one is able to move freely and easily" (K. Inada, "Problematics of the Buddhist Nature of Self",

in N. Katz (Ed.), <u>Buddhist and Western Philosophy</u>, p273).

For Westerners, the concept of the denial of substance is one which produces strong feelings of frustration and mistrust, for we are weaned on notions of finite things, clear cut and focused on possibilities. The Madhyamaka Buddhists deny that we, as human beings, can see the "other side" to life, let alone conceive the concept. All that the Buddhist can do is to prepare himself through meditation, and to acknowledge the ordinary view of existence as false reality, in order to obtain the enlightenment which is within all of us.

As stated previously the Mahayanists and Hinyayanists differed in their perception of the Dharmas. Although the Hinyayanists believed in the unsubstantiality of the individual (pudgalahairatmya) they also classified reality into certain elements of existence (that is, the Dharmas) much to the Mahayanists' chagrin. This led the Hinyayanists to believe in the <u>substantiality</u> of the Dharmas, a concept with which the Mahayanists strongly disagreed. The Mahayanists through Nagarjuna's interpretation of Prajnaparamita literature adopted the concept of sarvadharmasunyata, or the unsubstantiality of all Dharmas. As a consequence of the adaptation of this concept Madhyamaka philosophy stresses the unsubstantiality of everything that we as common unenlightened human beings see as "real". Nagarjuna and the Madhyamaka following are often seen as a religion of "no-position", "due to the relentless attack on any and all concepts" (K. Inada (Trans.), in Nagarjuna, <u>Mulamadhyamakkarika</u>, p24.).

As we have seen in the preceding chapters Nietzsche, also, has been considered a philosopher without a positive stance. Nagarjuna is also viewed as an irrational nihilist. All they are guilty of is pointing toward an understanding "that the reality of <u>things</u> is not bound to logical or conceptual understanding. Reality or human experience lends itself to symbolism, but to that extent it must be understood that symbolic references are strictly speaking deficient of ultimate reality" (K. Inada, op. cit., p25). As we shall see in this chapter, both Nagarjuna and Nietzsche have much in common in their attempts to "crack open the shell" of symbolism,

language and alleged ontological realities.   Let us continue, however, our investigation of Madhyamaka and Nagarjuna, so as to understand that there is greater depth to their philosophy and that it should not be considered pure scepticism, but rather, "an open invitation to everyone to see reality face to face" (J. Singh, <u>An Introduction to Madhyamaka Philosophy</u>, p59).

It is true, that Nagarjuna's systematic philosophical critique against the Hinyayanist concepts of the truth of the Dharmas attempts to de-ontologise and destroy all familiar concepts of reality. He does <u>not</u>, however, intend to leave his followers with a total negative notion of what the world is around us. "He will not leave his opponent suspended in so-called de-ontologised mid-air" (K. Inada, "Problematics of the Buddhist Nature of Self", in N. Katz (Ed.), <u>Buddhist and Western Philosophy</u>, p276) let alone his Madhyamaka following. As Inada admits "He like all true Buddhists, will try his best to return the de-ontologised nature back to solid grounds, i.e. inconsistent context with true reality (sic.), without the traces or vestiges of the mind's imposition of reality as such" (K. Inada, loc. cit., p276). What Inada is suggesting is that the exercise is a conceptual device, which does not entirely lead the Madhyamaka Buddhist to enlightenment, but starts him on his way, by realising what <u>is not</u>, before knowing and understanding what <u>is</u>. For language it is the same, "losing the self requires the discard of the fish trap" (H. Cheng (Trans.), Nagarjuna, <u>Twelve Gate Treatise</u>, p51).

When we investigate the principal points of Nagarjuna's philosophy later in this chapter, his positiveness may be seen more clearly, yet we are reminded by D. T. Suzuki, that this de-ontologisation of the world is not easily comprehended, "This is a staggering idea, but until we are thus thoroughly cleansed of all the intellectual habits contracted since our birth we cannot expect to see the Dharma itself" (D. T. Suzuki, <u>Mahayama Buddhism</u>, p13).

One must suppose that the Madhyamaka believer does not have a "blind faith" towards Nirvana and enlightenment without first understanding that he must make the effort to obtain "enlightenment", and the "absolute truth". Even though

the "absolute truth" is beyond all thought and speech and that, according to the Madhyamaka religion, the absolute cannot be described, this is not to say that teaching towards the "way" is not feasible. Indeed phenomena does not cut us off completely from reality. For "phenomena are appearances and appearances point out their own reality. The veil gives a hint of that which is veiled" (H. Cheng, op. cit., p52). Only when this occurs can the Buddhist follower of the Madhyamaka comprehend the reality of the world. It is, however, important to point out that for the Madhyamaka, the phenomenal world is not any different to the world of emptiness. Here again is love of non-duality within the Madhyamaka religion and that of Nagarjuna's philosophy. It is all the same world, just as there cannot be cause and effect within this world, because it suggests separation of things in itself (that is, causality is a contingent relation between separately identifiable events. Hence, if there are no such events, there cannot be causal relations). It is only when the Madhyamaka can comprehend that the phenomenal world is empty that he can comprehend the "real" meaning of the world. In short, we are interwoven within the world (the world is both "real" and "unreal", here and now and eternalism is all one continuous thing - ever flowing like a Heraclitian river). Once there is a realisation that we are not a world of separate entities, then there can be an understanding to what Nagarjuna is trying to convey. In order to understand Nagarjuna, we must comprehend that :

"Buddhism does not acknowledge an undivided ultimate reality. Any universal self is understood to be illusory as the individuated self"

(P. Mellor, Self and Suffering : Deconstruction

and Reflexive Definition in Buddhism, p50)

In essence, Madhyamaka belief is the epitome of this statement, which suggests that all Buddhist philosophy is generally Heraclitian in concept. As Cheng suggests : "The Madhyamakas often claim that they do not hold any position or

have any viewpoint of their own. What they are doing is simply using what other people believe to point out that the opponents viewpoint involves certain contradictions or absurdities ... all affirmations and negates should be given up ... " (H. Cheng, op. cit., p102). Hence, the Madhyamaka's repetition of denying categories such as birth/death, oneness/manyness, coming in/going forth, universal and individuated self and so on, and transforms itself into an extreme form of Buddhism and Buddhist philosophy.

In summary, it is safe to assume that unlike previous Hinyanan belief, the Madhyamakas refuse to participate in any form of discourse that could carry ontological implications, which we will see from examples later in this chapter. Yet, this is not to suggest that Nagarjuna and Mahyamakas deny the Buddha way, for it can be argued that they follow the Buddha way in the purest form. What the Madyamakas do suggest is the acceptance of "thought constructions", and calls for a "dialectical deconstruction", which therefore could lead Buddhists away from false attachments. This concept of "dialectical deconstruction" attacks "the idea of the self as having substance". In this sense Nagarjuna is saying that all things are empty. "If there is nothing burnable, there cannot be the fact of burning" (H. Cheng, op. cit., p57).

Nagarjuna can be said to have "deconstructed" traditional Buddhist belief, which has helped to establish a long tradition of the Mahayana, in several Asian countries including Japan, Korea and China. Nagarjuna (in some Buddhist sects a Bodhisattva) indeed has much to say, and gives us the tradition, behind the more primal meaning, to what the Buddha taught.

II

Found within a bundle of manuscripts in the Samskrta language, Madhyamaka philosophy and Nagarjuna's following emerged. The Madhyamaka philosophy contained largely in the Madhyamaka sastra of Nagarjuna (and within the Catuhsataka of Aryadeva, a student of Nagarjuna) was found to be greatly

different from that of the earlier Pali canon.

There is always a question as to how much Nagarjuna contributed independently to the Madhyamaka school, as opposed to what he borrowed from past manuscripts within earlier Buddhist traditions. Certainly the Mahasanghikas, an early Buddhist school, contributed much toward beliefs and traditions of the Madhyamaka/Mahayanist following. The Mahasanghika school believed that the Buddha was not just an historical figure, but was "transcendental, supramundane eternal, and infinite" (J. Singh, op. cit., p7). Indeed, the Mahasanghikas believed the historical Buddha to be "fictitious", "sent down" to earth to live like an ordinary human being, in order for people to understand that empirical knowledge could not give us an insight into reality. As J. Singh states, "Only sunyata which transcends all worldly things can give us a vision of the real. All verbal statements give us a false view of the real; they are mere thought-constructions" (J. Singh, op. cit., p8) (my emphasis). Singh even goes as far as saying that "the germs" of all the important tenets of the Mahyamaka world and of Nagarjuna's philosophy were first found within the Mahasanghikas.

Previously we discussed the influence of Prajnaparamita literature upon Nagarjuna's philosophy, which brings us to question of whether Nagarjuna contributed any original concepts to the Madhyamaka philosophical movements? The answer is unquestionably in the affirmative when we consider the dialectic he evolved, as well as his rediscovery of the Mahasanghika and Prajnaparamita documents; works which were so important to the Mahayana movement.

Nagarjuna's dialectics took the form of a tetralemma, a four alternative argument structure. First within Nagarjuna's writings we find a positive thesis which is opposed by a negative thesis. These two theses are the basic alternatives, conjunctively affirmed to form the third alternative, and disjunctively denied to form the fourth alternative. Before looking at examples of these dialectics it is important to understand the reasons for Nagarjuna using this format. Nagarjuna believed that the Buddha's silence concerning questions of "reality" being

transcendent to thought was in itself an extremely important statement. In addition, Nagarjuna learned the concept of the four alternatives from the Buddha. What Nagarjuna did was to systematise the four alternatives and "mercilessly exposed the disconcerting implications of each alternative, brought the antinomies of reason luminously to the fore by hunting out from every cover, and demonstrated the impossibility of erecting a sound metaphysic on the basis of dogmatism or rationalism. This was his dialectic" (J. Singh, op. cit., p13). Nagarjuna's originality consisted of driving reason away by the use of a rigorous logic, and of equipping the mind towards the acceptance of "prajna". The following example which will illustrate this style of Nagarjuna is taken from Mulamadhyamakkarika, chapter eight, on the "examination of the Doer and the Deed" (Karmakarakapariksa).

Verse One

A doer in a completed state cannot create a deed in a completed state. Again a doer in an uncompleted state cannot create a deed in an uncompleted state.

Verse Two

When a doer is in a completed state, there will be no doing and also a deed will be without a doer. Likewise, when a deed is in a completed state, there will be no doing and also a doer will be without a deed.

Verse Three

If a doer in an uncompleted state creates a deed in an uncompleted state, then (in actuality) the deed will be without a cause and the doer will (in itself) have no cause.

Verse Four

Without a cause, there can be no effect or an efficient cause. Without these (effect and cause), there can be no functions of doing, doer and deed.

Verse Five

Without these functions etc. [doer, deed], there can be no factors (dharma) and non-factors (adharma) of experience. Without factors and non-factors there can be nothing arising out of them.

Verse Six

When there is no effect there will be no way of arriving at liberation or the heavens. For all doings or functions will fall into purposelessness.

Verse Seven

A completed-uncompleted doer cannot create a completed-uncompleted deed. For, how could the mutually conflicting completed and uncompleted states co-exist as one?

Verse Eight

A completed doer cannot create an uncompleted deed nor can an uncompleted doer create a completed deed. For (if the above conditions are not accepted), there upon all fallacies will follow.

Verse Nine

A completed doer cannot create an uncompleted deed not that of a completed-uncompleted deed. This is according to the reason expanded in previous verses (i.e. verses 2 and 3).

Verse Ten

An uncompleted doer also cannot create a completed deed nor that of a completed-uncompleted deed. This is according to the reason expanded in previous verses (i.e. verses 4, 5 and 6).

Verse Eleven

A completed-uncompleted doer cannot create either a completed or uncompleted deed. That is to be known by the reason stated previously (i.e. verse 7).

Verse Twelve

The doer is dynamically related to the deed and the deed to the doer in order to arise. We cannot perceive any other cause for their establishment or completion.

Verse Thirteen

Thus, by way of the refutation of the (static concepts of the) doer and the deed, the concept or seizing or clinging (upadana) can be known. And basing the analysis on both the doer and the deed, various other entities (i.e. phenomena) can be understood.

(Nagarjuna, K. Inada (Trans.), Mulamadhyamakkarika, p71-75)

Obviously, the reading of Nagarjuna's philosophy can be a tedious venture into the often confusing world of Eastern philosophy and thought. It would, however, be a misjudgment to consider this work utter nonsense. Indeed, what we have looked at above, is a most significant piece of philosophical questioning, especially in regard to Nietzsche, as the concept of the Doer and the Deed is the crux of Nagarjuna's philosophy. Certainly, as J. Singh suggests on the reading of Nagarjuna,

"to the unwary reader, Nagarjuna appears to be either a cantankerous philosopher out to controvert all systems, or as a sophist trickster wringing

from an unsuspecting opponent certain concessions in argument by artful equivocation and the chuckling over his disconfiture or as a destructive nihilist negativing every view brusquely, affirming none".

(J. Singh, op. cit., p15-16)

Perhaps Nagarjuna may be considered a deconstructive philosopher, yet this is not to say that he had only nihilistic tendencies. His purpose for the dialectic was to <u>disprove</u> views such as the Hinyanists belief in the realities of the Dharmas, and to attack the notions of the dogmatist or rationalist, not to prove a view of his own. Nagarjuna's principal objective, for the sake of the transcendental Buddha, was to resolve the conflict between phenomenal and ultimate realities. In his use of the dialectical method, Nagarjuna demonstrates that the world is interwoven, and even flowing, as he negates our so-called "realities". Now that we have established the importance of Nagarjuna's contribution to Buddhism, it is important to understand the language (and it's intricacies) of the Madhyamaka religion.

From the early Mahasanghikas the Madhyamaka adopted the idea that empirical knowledge could not give them an insight into reality. Like the Mahasanghikas, the Madhyamakas believed that sunyata (emptiness) was the only understanding of the world which could give them a vision of the "real". Therefore, if the world is sunyata, then all verbal statements give a false view of the reality of the world; they are merely thought constructions. The world, to the Madhyamakas, is full of phenomena that are dependent on conditions. Because phenomena are so dependent upon those conditions, they are devoid of any substantial reality. This is what the Prajnaparamita literature teaches: Sunyata and the conditioned and unconditioned thought constructions.

If then, all is emptiness (sunyata), then what <u>is</u> real to the Madhyamaka? Even the concept of Nirvana, which is unconditioned thought, would be classified as empty. Both Samsara and Nirvana, the conditioned and unconditioned, are mere

thought constructions and are considered devoid of reality. In effect, the ultimate reality may be called sunyata, in the sense that sunyata as the ideal transcends all empirical determinations. Together with prajna (i.e. Prajnaparimita, transcendent insight that allows one out cease to indulge in thought constructions and empirical determinations) the concepts of sunyata and prajna developed, as the backbone of the Madhyamaka system.

Let us look further at the meaning of the word sunya (or sunyata), which translates as empty or emptiness. A non-Buddhist translation of sunya is often viewed as nihilism in the West. This is a gross mistake. Ontologically, sunya "is the void which is also fullness" (J. Singh, op. cit., p37). In the usual cryptic style of Buddhist philosophy, one could say that because sunya is nothing, that it has a possibility to also mean everything. Obviously this use of sunya is pertinent in the Madhyamaka philosophy as a symbol of the inexpressible. Indeed, it is a stepping stone for the Buddhist to grasp the primal meaning of his religion. Singh best describes the concept sunyata as an "awareness of the importance of reason to realise truth and the urge to rise to a level higher than reason in order to realise it when the thinker lets go his foothold on discursive thought, it is only then that he can mount to something higher" (J. Singh, op. cit., p42).

In a sense to call the Madhyamaka system nihilistic would seem a fair view of this seemingly graspless religion, if it indeed rejects all views of reality. Yet, having said that, if we look with an Eastern "eye" we must acknowledge the fact that to the Madhyamaka Buddhist, there is hope and salvation by way of understanding true reality by negating all views of reality that we see at present. In a sense, much like Nietzsche's extreme nihilistic overtones, after the destruction of the empirical world there is hope in finding our true selves, our true way of living, like the phoenix rising from the ashes. To the Madhyamaka Buddhist the way to "rise" out of the fire is to negate these views of reality. In a sense if they accepted their fate of living in a world that is a "big lie", then yes, the nihilistic label would be correct. But like Nietzsche, there is not acceptance, but rather an urge for

change. That the whole of the Madhyamaka system is dependent on the understanding of sunya and sunyata, may be difficult for Westerners to grasp, and it is important to understand the existential, here and now qualities of Buddhism as such, and as a form of practice of the inner self. Inada describes this concept of "emptiness" :

"In the final identity of form and emptiness, a climax in the ideological development is reached where the sutras, in particular the whole prajnaparamita sutras, elaborate on the point that all forms are in the nature of void (sunya). Thus, such forms in the nature of a sentient creature or being (sattva), a soul or vital force (jiva), a self (atman), a personal identity (pudgala) and separate "elements" (dharmas) are all essentially devoid of any characterisation (animatt, alaksana). The quest for voidness or emptiness of the personal experiential components (pudgala-sunyata and of the personal ideational component (dharma-sunyata). This is the final goal of the Nirvanic realm, here and now, without residues (anapudhisesn-Nirvana-dhatu), and achieveable by all".

(K. Inada (Trans.), Nagarjuna, <u>Mulamadhyamakkarika</u>, p12)

However important is the concept of sunyata is to the Madhyamaka religion, Nagarjuna warned his followers against making a fetish out of it. Prajna is what one wants to aspire to in gaining transcendental insight, to believe that the world is empty <u>would</u> be a nihilistic ideal. The concept of sunyata prepared for the spiritual disciplines of Prajnaparamita and its six spiritual qualities : 1) Dana, charity; 2) Sila, withdrawing from civil deeds; 3) Ksanti, forbearance; 4) Virya, enthusiasm and exertion; 5) Dhyana, concentration; 6) Prajna, transcendental insight (i.e. : Prajnaparamita is the highest kind of knowledge). Nagarjuna believed that without acknowledgement of sunyata, everything would be out of joint (see Karika XXIV, 14). Hence, we must see sunyata, as more of a therapeutic device, instead of a

nihilistic concept within the world of the Madhyamakas.

So, if we agree that reality is transcendent to thought and cannot be upheld within the dichotomies of the mind, and that according to the Buddha and his doctrine of the "middle way", which tells us that things are neither absolute being nor absolute non-being, then what is Nirvana to the Madhyamaka? According to the Madhyamaka such an understanding cannot be revealed upon this earth, because of the concept of the two truths (conventional, or what we know as living human beings, and ultimate truth). There is no real way to discover what such concepts as Nirvana, absolute truth, etc. are in actuality. If we know what they are then we would be enlightened, but enlightenment will not be achieved as long as we sit here, trying to philosophize upon such questions! All we can say of Nirvana, within Madhyamaka thought, is that it is not something which is produced or achieved. In a sense Nirvana is the same as the world as we know it, but for the disappearance of the fabrications of thought constructs.

Again, as mentioned previously, phenomena do not cut us off from "real" reality. Phenomena points the way to "reality", or "the veil gives a hint to that which is veiled". Once this veil is lifted, one can understand the concept of truth (tathata) and the medium in which it reveals itself (tathagata); the epiphany of reality. It is the "reality" within us which has been brought to the forefront, that makes us yearn for Nirvana and the freedom that it induces.

The concept of Nirvana, no matter which area of Buddhism one looks at, is a difficult concept to grasp. For the Madhyamaka Buddhist, the concept of Nirvana is the same as his conception of Buddha, and of reality. For, "Nagarjuna treats the same thing, under four or five different headings, his object being to show that whatever be the verbal designation, from whatever side the problem of the absolute be tackled, the result is the same" (T. Stcherbatsky, The Concept of Buddhist Nirvana, p56). Because nothing has a being or essence of its own, we are all the same, ever flowing concept (no being = svabhava) and therefore to make the concept of Nirvana something other than what we already are is a

misrepresentation, opposed to everything that Nagarjuna and the Madhyamaka religion professes. As a summary of the Madhyamaka concept, it would be useful to paraphrase K. S. Murty's outline of Nagarjuna's philosophy. It :

1. Avoids the extremes of affirmation and negation (the is and is not).

2. Does not affirm that there is substance or self.

3. Attempts to critically review what is, and to be more aware of things as they are.

4. Is a middle approach (middle way).

5. Is neither realism or idealism and definitely not nihilism.

6. Nothing has its own being - everything is in relation to other things.

7. Hence, nothing has an independent existence.

8. Nothing is an integral entity : (things we see and deal with are made up of constituents - dharmas).

9. The dharmas as well, have no substantiality or self.

10. All things are mutually dependent and related (for this makes them what they are).

11. All things are void (sunyata).

12. Things are related to each other and determined.

13. Hence, nothing has a character of its own.

14. Nothing has a being of essence of its own (no own being (svabhava)).

15. The world is in flux, constantly changing.

16. Things which are conditioned (and naturally derive their being) are not real.

17. Categories are not real - unexplainable and self contradictory (i.e. there is no birth/death, oneness, moneyness, coming in or going forth, etc.).

18. Hence, this is the philosophy of Advaya (or the non-two).

19. Hence, it is a non-dualistic philosophy.

(K. S. Murty, Nagarjuna)

One must stress to the Western mind, that to the Madhyamaka Buddhist his religion is not looked at as nihilistic. As mentioned previously, the "reality" of the absolute cannot be apprehended by thought, and is incapable of verbal elaboration (aprapancita) that is the two-truths, absolute and empirical. Yet to the Madhyamaka, there is no doubt that the concept exists and that the importance (similar to Nietzsche's?) lies within the person himself. After all, enlightenment, in any Buddhist school, arises from an understanding, from practice, and meditation, from no-one other than yourself. To conclude, K. K. Inada best describes Nagarjuna as a philosopher who is rather difficult to classify :

"If Nagarjuna is not to be labelled an absolute monist, radical pluralist, nihilist, negativist, relativist, logician, and finally dialectician, what then can be said of him and his philosophy? It would seem that there is but one definite and practical approach to guide us. It is that Nagarjuna's thoughts, however elusive they seem to be, must be made coincident with the most original and fundamental teaching of the historical Buddha, i.e. the doctrine of the middle path".

(K. Inada, op. cit., p21)

So, too, we must conclude that Nagarjuna was also largely responsible for transforming and "routinizing" the historical Buddha to that of the spiritual and transcendental one. This may have been his greatest contribution to the Buddhist world.

III

"Motion is a word, motion is not a cause"

<div align="right">(F. Nietzsche, op. cit., 21)</div>

Nietzsche's assault on language was an attempt to "break through" the traditional philosophical ideals and concepts of existence, and to try to create a new philosophy. As we have seen, the Madhyamaka philosophy agreed with such an inspirational "break through". Cheng states : "One of the chief sources of confusion in philosophical reasoning, San-lun (the Chinese equivalent to the Madhyamaka school) Buddhist contended, is that philosophies often fail to see the emptiness of words and names. People tend to think that words, names, and concepts are attached to objects and belong to them inherently" (H. Cheng, op. cit., pp18-20). As we shall see Nietzsche is not in this category of philosophers.

It is now probably safe to assume that Nagarjuna denies that words actually denote the objects. Our intention at this point is to show how and why Nietzsche agrees with Nagarjuna's conception. Again, this is not to say that both philosophers view language as a useless concept. For example, in Nagarjuna's case, Cheng eloquently states that, "the function of language can be likened to a raft. A man intending to cross a river to get to the other bank, where it is safe and secure, makes a raft. With its help he safely reaches the other shore. But however useful the raft may have been, he will now leave it aside and go his way without it. So also language, including the term Dharma, is like the raft, to be discarded after Nirvana" (H. Cheng, op. cit., p24).

Nietzsche's philosophy, like Nagarjuna's, has been linked to negativism and nihilism. What this chapter intends to stress is their purpose, which often seems overlooked, the attempt by both philosophers to achieve a "spiritual break through". As we have seen previously, Nagarjuna's journey into emptiness is a way of seeking the original inspiration of the Buddha. For Nietzsche, especially in his later works, there is an attempt to find a way beyond the nihilistic devaluation of existence. He

also questions the ontological Western traditions that his culture, and still to a great extent our present culture, rely upon so greatly to give us meaning, form, and structure. Nietzsche's endeavour is pitted against the traditional ideals that respond only to hidden fears and suffering. Because of this phenomenon, Nietzsche believed that our "entire edifice of culture" is not based on a true representation of existence. This creates havoc within the human state of being, and in light of this problem man should be searching for that "primal meaning", which remains in constant flux and is ever changing. In comprehending our situation we must seek reassurance, and then assess our situation. In short, we crave for a "sub text" that can be interpreted as the "surface" text. To quote from Will to Power :

> "The hermit does not believe that a philosopher - supposing that a philosopher has always been first of all a hermit - has even expressed his real and final opinions in books; does one not write books precisely to conceal what lies within us? - Indeed, he will doubt whether a philosopher could have "final and real" opinions at all, whether behind each of his caves there does not and must not lie another, deeper cave -a stronger, more comprehensive world beyond the surface, an abyss behind every ground, beneath every "foundation".
>
> (F. Nietzsche, op. cit., 289)

Clearly, for Nietzsche, his philosopher mentioned above, who searches for what is real and valid, takes on a sort of Socratic form of redemption that depends on false belief, "the belief that we can discover the ultimate truth about things through rational inquiry" (M. Clark, "Nietzsche a Postmodernist? ... Nietzsche, De Man, and Postmodernism", in C. Koelb (Ed.), Nietzsche as Postmodernist, p77). Nietzsche's own philosophy, in this sense, stems largely from the acceptance of Schopenhauer's claim, "that the world accessible to us through sense experience and theory is mere appearance" (M. Clark, Loc. cit., p77). But, Nietzsche goes one step further when he suggests in "Will to Power" that :

"When one has grasped that the "subject" is not something that creates effects, but only a fiction, much follows. It is only after the model of the subject that we have invented the reality of things and projected them into the medley of sensations. If we no longer believe in the effective subject, then belief also disappears in effective things, in reciprocation, cause and effect between those phenomena that we call things. There also disappears, of course, the world of effective atoms: the assumption of which always depended on the supposition that one needed subjects. At last, the "thing-in-itself" also disappears, because this is fundamentally the conception of a "subject-in-itself". But we have grasped that the subject is a fiction. The antithesis "thing-in-itself" and "appearance" is untenable; with that, however, the concept "appearance" also disappears"

(F. Nietzsche, op. cit., 552).

In short, Nietzsche is denying the antithesis between appearance and reality.

Nietzsche does not "abandon ship" at this point, only to accept this nihilistic dead end. He still owes much to Schopenhauer, as one who had helped bridge the gap between those who believe in what is "real" and those who believe that what is "real" is not what we see. Again Nietzsche states in Will to Power, "There are neither causes nor effects. Linguistically, we don't know how to rid ourselves of them" (F. Nietzsche, op. cit., 551). So, we may say, through Nietzsche's understanding of the world, that Socratic knowledge is illusory. This is so, according to Nietzsche, because it appears through the veil of time, space and causality. A common Derridian belief is that Nietzsche has demonstrated appropriately that all language is metaphorical. Nietzsche claimed latterly in his posthumous notes that "knowing" was nothing but the corroboration of favourite metaphors. Indeed, knowing was an imitative concept, disguised as reality so well, that we no longer think it to be imitative. He calls for something different, "to

penetrate the realm of truth", and to lead us to a more natural sense of what we are within this world. Like Nagarjuna and his deconstruction of language, Nietzsche does not intend to lead us away from the metaphysical traps either, for as A. Schrift suggests :

"The success of the Nietzschean deconstruction will not allow the philosopher to escape from within the nets of language, however; but facilitating such an escape was never his intention. Rather, by revealing the hope of a literal designation and an adequate, natural relation between words and things to be unrealizable, Nietzsche directs himself toward the critical task of demonstrating that philosophers do not know what they think they know".

(A. Schrift, Nietzsche and the Question of Interpretation, p132)

The intention of this quotation is to show that it was the effort of searching by Nietzsche (and as we shall see, by Nagarjuna as well) which is of great importance. This searching from amongst the nihilistic "rubble" gives new meaning to Nietzsche the philosopher; seeking a "break through" from nihilistic devaluations of existence. This philosophical method can be described as an attempt at a radical spiritual breakthrough which, if accomplished, would drastically change the way we live within our tradition in the West. Yet, more important than making this breakthrough is the attempt in seeking change. This is what Nietzsche is asking us to achieve: an exercise of mind and living, and acceptance to ponder over the "abyss" that it leaves us to contemplate. As G. T. Martin states, Nietzsche's "deconstructive hermeneutic" creates an abyss at the very threshold of our existence in this world. It is indeed, no time to fear the unknown, it is a time to seek it, and to make the leap into the "abyss". Nietzsche is asking his "overman" to seize hold of language, employing it to further his power, recognizing that language is only a tool and not a reflection of reality, whereas Nagarjuna abandoned his "raft" in order

to reach Nirvana. As we have seen from previous chapters, in order for man to evolve into the "Übermensch" Nietzsche methodically disintegrates traditional values, including Christianity, morality and language. He then calls for us to overcome values of the past, in order to reach a new path (an "unheard of" spiritualization).

We catch glimpses of his "new path" within <u>Thus Spoke Zarathustra</u>, and the symbolism of the "Dionysian", as man attempts to affirm a new life. Concepts such as the "Übermensch" are created as well as "Will to Power" and "Eternal Recurrence". Yet these should not be interpreted as ontological truths, but rather as symbolic and metaphoric ideals.

Like Nagarjuna, Nietzsche admits that "communication is necessary ... it must be experienced as adopted as recognizable, but the world of phenomena is the adopted world, which we feel to be real. The "reality" lies in the belief that here we are able to reckon and calculate ... the antithesis of this phenomenal world is not "the true world", but the formless informable world of the chaos of sensations - another kind of phenomenal world, a kind "unknowable" for us" (F. Nietzsche, op. cit., 569). Both Nietzsche <u>and</u> Nagarjuna are keen to deny a contrast between a phenomenal world (of mere appearance) and a "real" world, and are quite adamant in believing and pursuing the notion that through language we will never reach the ultimate truth to the meaning of the world.

There is a strong comparison to be made when looking at the concept of "being" within Nietzsche's and Nagarjuna's philosophies. For Nietzsche, as with Heraclitus, our existence is a process that is continuously in flux. According to Schutte, Nietzsche's denial of being can be described in this manner. First, there is no reality, outside of the reality of the physical world. In short, the metaphysical world which we, as humans, create, has no claim to reality, and is a fiction. Second, it is a fiction to understand the term "being" for a metaphysical reality that is superimposed upon <u>time</u> and <u>becoming</u>. Lastly, it is a mistake to construe nouns (names) to refer to what we actually live in, the world as flux. This leads to the

creation of a false stability, which is implied from the formal structure of language. As Schutte suggests, "the metaphysical world of reality ... dims the reality of the only world there actually is, the world of life that is always coming into being and passing away" (O. Schutte, op. cit., p40).

It is significant to note that with Nietzsche, as with Nagarjuna, "being" seems to signify the arrest of the world that is overflowing, that is non-dualistic. For Nagarjuna "being" arrests the notion of enlightenment, for Nietzsche "being" arrests the notion of life as "Will to Power". Those who posit the notion of "being" are responsible for our division between reality and the world we live in. Nietzsche wants us to understand that "things" do not exist in this world, for everything is flux. This being so, "one gives names to things, one equates them with each other, or calls them "identical" to what they were in the past, but only because otherwise the survival mechanism would probably be impaired" (O. Schutte, op. cit., p44). So, we separate and give names to things, so that we can feel greater security within our frightening world. We disguise the abyss, so we <u>shy away</u> from it and create a stage on which we can falsely "play act" our existence. This constitutes a rupture of existential continuity, in terms of the dynamic unity of life.

Nietzsche's "will to power" is, according to Schutte, a metaphor designed to stop the erosion that metaphysics gives to this continuity. This brings us to a most important stage in the study. If we are to agree with Schutte that the "will to power" notion cannot be treated as a scientific theory then we <u>must</u> look at Nietzsche's views on causality.

Nietzsche denies the existence of causes (transcendentally) and therefore rejects models of reality such as the Kantian model, because of notions of duality within the world. Obviously a strong comparison can be made here, with the concept of Advaya, the non-duality within the Madhyamaka religion. Similar to David Hume, Nietzsche understood the notions of cause and effect to be a probable mental projection conditioned by use (or habit). But, according to Schutte, Nietzsche goes one step further in suggesting that the "reason regularity is

interpreted as necessary is that human beings are very much afraid of the unknown" (O. Schutte, op. cit. p52). One starts to search for a cause, because of this fear of the unknown. As Schutte states :

"When confronted with something new in our experience, the dread of the new makes us want to associate the new event with some past experience rather than attempt to understand the new event on its own terms".

(O. Schutte, Loc. cit., p52)

We establish, according to Nietzsche, a safe, straightforward framework of explanation in our lives. Of course, this is what he wants us to break out of, and to go back to our more primal ways, to the life that we should be instinctively living.

Within Nietzsche's philosophy, language and causality begin to crumble under the statement that there are no realities. G. T. Martin speaks of this as a new deconstructive hermeneutic, which opens up the "abyss" again, the actual core of existence. Martin further adds that :

"his [Nietzsche's] writings, involves the struggle with this truth, and his attempt to overcome its nihilism in favour of a new unheard of vision not a denial of "becoming" by its logical antithesis; being"

(G. T. Martin, op. cit., p94)

Examples from Nietzsche's work concerning this matter are the symbolic paradigms, such as Zarathustra, the Dionysian and the Artist, which we will consider more thoroughly in Chapter Five's comparative discussion of Nietzsche and Zen Art. For now let us say that the artist, "reflect[s] complete and unreserved life-affirmation, affirmation not only of suffering, death, and becoming, but of the necessarily perspectival character of existence itself which constitutes the most dreadful insight" (F. Nietzsche, Ecco Homo II, 2). As mentioned above, there is

also Nietzsche's "new relation to the world" which is highlighted by such ideas as "the overman", "will to power" and "eternal recurrence". And lastly there is metaphor, such as Nietzsche's metaphor of the Alchemist. This "spiritual alchemy" which, Martin suggests, besets and gives flavour to Nietzsche's new relation to the world, which with the help of nihilism, as a "bridge", has come upon us to pioneer and make way for it. As Martin states, on the metaphor of the Alchemist :

"[he] does not exchange but transfigures, creating new values out of next to nothing. The holiness of being that once permeated and grounded phenomenal existence is lost in nihilistic devaluation, never to be restored. Our only hope lies in finding a new sanctity through a transvaluation of our relation to this groundless existence".

(G. T. Martin, op. cit., p96)

Noting the similarities of thought found in Nagarjuna and Nietzsche we are lead to compare Nagarjuna with another relevant Western philosopher, Wittgenstein. Probably the most important points that Ludwig Wittgenstein makes throughout his philosophical investigations is that a word is not necessarily the name of a thing, "and that philosophic problems arise when one abstracts a word from its context - that is, from the everyday workings of language - and tries to understand that word apart from its functional matrix" (N. Katz, "Nagarjuna and Wittgenstein on Error", in N. Katz (Ed.), Buddhist and Western Philosophy, p306).

Wittgenstein uses the word "time" to highlight his arguments. One may ask, "Quid est ergo tempus?", and find that it is eventually a hard question to answer. The concept of time, according to Wittgenstein, is a technique we learn for a variety of purposes, that we all know and use everyday. Yet, we assume that the actual word "time" has a deeper significant meaning than what we know. Like the "King Milanda" story (see Chapter Two) where we learn that we have a naive understanding of the

workings of language, Wittgenstein also sees language as a fundamental problem within human existence. Katz suggests :

"The parallel between the Buddhist notion of "convenient designation" and Wittgenstein's "everyday language" is clear. Both are saying that because a word may be used, we should not get carried away with philosophies about essences and the like"

(N. Katz, op. cit. p311)

The Buddha himself declared that "all grief, woe, lamentation and despair" could be traced to a naively understood grammar of "I".

The Mahayanists, as we have seen, try to escape from what Wittgenstein would call "naming inner-objects". This is the reason the Mahayana following moved away from prajna (wisdom) to prajnaparamita (wisdom which has gone beyond). To recap the views of the Mahayana for this comparison with Wittgenstein, it is important to remember that in order to gain this perfect wisdom (prajnaparamita) it involves the realization that the Dharmas (truths) themselves are objects implying an inner, unreachable self, "Just as much as the objects in the external world they were meant to do away with, but also that, as with Wittgenstein, there is no way of 'correctly' identifying and naming necessarily private Dharmas". (C.Gudmansen, Wittgenstein and Buddhism, p.34). Remember, the Theravadans believed that the Dharmas were true and that commonsense objects were logical fictions. "But the Mahayana now adds that those (Dharmas) are empty of self in the sense that each one is nothing in and by itself, and is therefore indistinguishable from any other Dharma and so ultimately non-existent" (C. Gudmunsen, Loc. cit., p34). This is the Mahayana way of telling the world that it is a grave mistake to put the world into simple, "existent particulars".

Indeed, Wittgenstein fits in well with the Madhyamaka notions on language. Of course, it is significant to realize that however exhilarating and new

Wittgenstein's and Nietzsche's revelations on language are to Western thinkers we must keep them in perspective compared to the "time frame" of the East. Much of what Wittgenstein had to say about the theory of language was anticipated some 1800 years before in India.

In conclusion, when looking at Nietzsche's relationship with Asian thought, and specifically within the comparisons made in this chapter, we must understand that Nietzsche's deconstructive hermeneutic sets out to destroy the metaphysical foundations of the modern Western world. This is why he compares so neatly to the Madhyamaka movement, and their dismantling of the metaphysical in their time. To observe this relationship more closely, G. T. Martin describes rather compendiously three forms of spiritual quest :

(1)   That there is a "religious intuition of a 'sacred dimension' transcending the everyday world";

(2)   There is a critical and intellectual deepening of the understanding to the point where a "transforming wisdom is awakened";

(3)   And that there is participation in a set of symbols, myths, and metaphors, which point to the possibility of "redemption".

(G. T. Martin, op. cit., p99)

Martin suggests that Nietzsche fits the last two forms, and that Nagarjuna only the second one. This leads us to the conclusion of our comparisons between Nagarjuna and Nietzsche's notions of language.

Nagarjuna is best known for his total lack of participation within any form of discourse that might carry ontological implications, while Nietzsche uses metaphor and symbolism to what, in Nagarjuna's perspective, would in all probability be considered a dangerous degree. Yet, Nietzsche's use of metaphor helps us conceive this "new relation" to the world. For example, his use of the artist metaphor as being "what is essential" is "perfection of existence ... production

of perfection and plentidue", and that "essentially art is affirmation blessing, deification of existence" (F. Nietzsche, Will to Power, 821). This shows us that there is human potential for some "spirit" to rise out of the rubble. Call this a philosophically, revolutionary spirit if you will, but certainly it is an attempt, as such were Nagarjuna's writings, to transform "our mode of being-in-the-world".

Finally, we find that Nietzsche is near to Nagarjuna's thinking that "there is a "non-duality" between human action, language, and grammar, on the one hand, and the world on the other" (G. T. Martin, op. cit., p108). Similarly, both philosophers do not offer a "quick" solution to the worlds of "being" and "nothingness", but such is the price for living within an ontological framework. It would be unjust to say that both of these philosophers leave us stranded in eternal despair, certainly they do not, practicality in philosophy should not be perceived as nihilism. What nihilism has done for both Nagarjuna and Nietzsche is to "dam" the river of traditional methods of thinking within their respective environments. Retrospectively, it allows new "streams" to appear as possibilities for existence - and this is a call for change, and not a call for negativism.

CHAPTER FIVE

"Poets of Our Lives"

This final chapter of the dissertation will establish an important link between Nietzsche and Asian philosophy, as found in examples from Taoist and Zen Buddhist views of art and nature, and will discuss how close Nietzsche was to Eastern thought in this respect. The chapter will examine the significance of comparing Nietzsche's view of art and the artist to that of the transition of Chinese Tao to Ch'an to Zen, in light of human progress toward being at one with nature. As fellow scholars of the philosopher realize, Nietzsche found art a most fascinating subject and a significant one in reaching his philosophical conclusions. Of course, one can always find passages within Nietzsche's works which question the relevance of art. "The contradictions and ambiguities of Nietzsche's judgement in matters of philosophy, art, and science are a source of constant irritation to his interpreters" (M. Pasley (Ed.), Nietzsche: Imagery and Thought, p4). This point is well taken but should not hinder our study of the relationship and importance of art for Nietzsche.

Zen Buddhism, on the whole, would not be the well known practice that it is in the East, or a popular subject for those who seek "alternative" belief in the West, if it were not for it's practices in the arts, such as: painting, calligraphy, flower arranging, gardening, archery, architecture, tool making, or "motorcycle maintenance". The notion of Zen Buddhism in Japan for example, "is most often cited as the source of ideas and expression in aesthetic practice and discourse" (D.E. Cooper (Ed.), A Companion to Aesthetics, p69). The notion of art is an idea that is interwoven within the culture of Zen Buddhism and Japan. For Nietzsche, art, and the artist as a metaphor, helps his search toward the Übermensch ideal by using art as a tool to guide us to a more natural state of being. Zen too suggests that art, in a broader use of the word, is good practice in attaining enlightenment. This chapter intends to show how these two philosophies come to their conclusions,

hoping to extract more of the "Eastern eye" from Nietzsche's uncanny resemblance to Asian thought.

For the first part of the chapter, it is important to outline the development of Zen Buddhism by discussing its evolution, excluding Nagarjuna's philosophy (see Chapter Four) which has already been covered. What we <u>do</u> want to discuss is Zen's history and development from the basic Mahayana principles and from Chinese Taoism, which eventually led to the Ch'an religion in China, only to become what we know as Zen in Japan. The significance of Taoism for Nietzsche will become quite clear as the chapter develops. The chapter will also concentrate on Zen art and practice in regard to its use in Zen philosophy, and will demonstrate why Zen is so keen on its use of art as a device leading to enlightenment. In conclusion, the chapter will link Nietzsche to the questions of nature, art and living.

We will discuss the attempts by both Nietzsche and Zen to employ art to challenge the sense of "reality" of existence, as most people conceive it, and to come to an understanding of their "alternative" roads. We will come to understand why both traditions have repeatedly shown that some of their most important concepts are at times best understood and viewed under the guise of art and the artist, realistically, practically and metaphorically. This paper will portray the idea of art in this significance, for it must be noted that both the Zen ideal (enlightenment) and Nietzschean "positiveness" rely on art to show their respective routes to progress, although the use of art has different connotations for such philosophy.

I

What is Zen and why is Zen art so significant to its philosophy? It is difficult to explain the function of Zen for the spoken word is regarded to have a negative connotation. Indeed, this belief holds the key as to why Zen art is important to its followers: it <u>is</u> speechless, and at times frustrating to those who would seek a fast and easy way to "the path".

Zen is foremost a discipline, a discipline that leads to non-thinking ("one knows it by not knowing it" (E. Herrigel, Zen in the Art of Archery, p17). Zen involves the strict meditation methods, which are so common within the Eastern religions. Yet, "the Zen practice of meditation is not a mode of deliberate reflection, not thinking in the usual sense, but consists rather in an evacuation of the mind, a process through which alone we can fully exercise our intuitive insight" (M. Anasaki, Buddhist Art, p50). Zen, through its evolution from Mahayanist and Taoist disciplines, takes on a new aspect to the idea that "our mind is Buddha" ("in the scriptures first produced in India the idea of "our mind is Buddha" was not promulgated. It was not until the Chinese Zen (Ch'an) masters that this idea was fully developed" (Dogen, op. cit., p17)).

Zen's strict disciplinarian background derives from the notion that life must be treated as a disease, and that we must return to a way of "not-thinking", that there is object and subject division (see Chapters Three and Four). Simply put, if one asked what the tree outside my window is a Zen master may well reply (if at all) with something such as, "It is there". Why this reply? The teacher wants to illuminate the student into thinking that everything can be confronted with one's own mind. To quote Suzuki, "If I am asked, then what Zen teaches, I would answer, Zen teaches nothing. Whatever teachings there are in Zen, they came out of one's own mind. We teach ourselves; Zen merely points the way" (D. T. Suzuki, Introduction to Zen Buddhism, p38). In other words, we must not seek enlightenment by way of questioning what things are, or indeed, why they are. Again Suzuki suggests that, "this state of inner consciousness, about which we cannot make any logical statement, must be realised before we can have any intelligent talk on Zen. Words are only an index to this state; through them we are enabled to get into its signification, but do not look to words for absolute guidance" (D. T. Suzuki, op. cit., p58). In short, we must stop thinking in lateral terms of this world, for non-thinking increases our chances towards enlightenment. This concept lies within the understanding that we, as people, are nature itself, and that

there is no point in dividing things into object and subject.

Within the subject of Zen art this aspect of "non-thinking" takes on a whole new meaning of aesthetic experience in Japan, we will explore this aspect in the second part of this chapter. Before we give a brief history of Zen from its roots in India and China let us understand that Zen's main point to its students is the ability, "to see things properly and accept them the way they are - we must combine the 'seer' and the 'seen' in one action. Our mind should be enlivened by the action of undivided mind" (Dogen, op. cit, p11). Certainly this is not new to the Western tradition either, where there have been many thinkers (for example, Neo-Platonists, writers, poets, artists, etc.) who have experienced this "seeking" for the undivided, inter-connected and interwoven world (for example, "how can we tell the dancer from the dance" (W. B. Yeats, Among School Children)). Indeed this concept of the world should not only be seen as Eastern mysticism, but it can be seen as an extension to Nagarjuna's philosophical discourse and as a brave attempt to understand the world, as a world which is in all of us.

Buddhism, which was founded in India during the 6th Century B.C., reached Japan from China and Korea some twelve hundred years later. Certainly it is by no means an indigenous philosophy to any of these Far Eastern countries, yet when one thinks of Buddhism in modern terms it is usually associated with the Far East. Indeed, Zen "was a sinicized form of Buddhism which came to Japan, for the Indian religion had been forced to adapt itself to Chinese conditions in order to find acceptance in that ancient civilization. Its ecclesiastical language had become Chinese, its temple architecture was in Chinese construction, and the religions art embraced Chinese styles" (J. Vollmer, G. Webb, Japanese Art, p11).

Zen, translated as contemplation, was first introduced into China by the Bodhi Dharma from India is 620 B.C. With its integration into a foreign land, it was inevitable that the concept would take on the indigenous religions, and certainly the "marriage" between Buddhist and Taoist religions was effectively born out of this amalgamation ("with the tranquil temper of Taoist quietism"), (N. Tsuda,

Handbook of Japanese Art, p44). As Munsterberg advocates on the making of the Zen world: "Although Zen was not a Mahayana doctrine, Mahayana was a prelude to Zen's birth [see Chapters Three and Four], for it was the Chinese genius working on the raw material of Indian thought which, with contributions from Confucian and Taoist sources produced, with Bodhidharma as midwife, the essentially Chinese school of Ch'an or as the Japanese later called it, Zen Buddhism" (H. Musterberg, Zen and Oriental Art, p17). This chapter highlights the Taoist background, not only for the reasons mentioned above, but also because the religion extended the appreciation that Buddhist sects have of nature, particularly when it comes to Zen. With nature we also find art, and vice-versa within Zen, and this interwoven thinking is indeed relevant to that of Nietzsche's views on the subject of art and nature.

I am not trying to argue for the idea that Taoism and its principles brought nature to the forefront of Zen philosophy, but we must believe that it, indeed, assisted in developing Zen's obsession with nature. As M. Anesaki suggests : "Zen was a branch of Buddhism which laid special emphasis upon meditation. Its adherents believed that to them had been directly transmitted the spiritual illumination of Buddha, and they cultivated his method of meditation simply and purely, without a mixture of mysterious rituals and doctrinal analysis. They had, moreover, inherited the nature-mysticism of the Indian Buddhists which, together with the poetry of the Southern Chinese, became a source of inspiration for the artistic sense of the Japanese" (M. Anasaki, op. cit., pp48-49). So, before we look at Zen and art, let us first find it's inspiration with the marriage of Taoist thought.

Taoist culture, like Zen, "was to overcome worldly troubles and find an everlasting repose in the calm enjoyment of nature" (M. Anasaki, op. cit., p55). So often in this thesis we come to understand that nature and being "one" with the world is an extremely important aspect both for Nietzsche and for Asian thinkers. With Taoism this is certainly so, and because of this, Zen takes on even more of a need for nature than previous Buddhist sects. Let us look at Tao and Taoism.

Tao, the path or the way, is the leading idea in the Tao Te-Ching (the bible of Taoism) and can be conceived in three senses in which this "way" can be understood. Tao can be described as the way of ultimate reality, a concept which mere words cannot describe. Secondly, Tao is the way of the universe, the driving power in all nature and Tao is the way man should order his life, to gear himself in with the way the universe operates. Unlike the philosophy of Confucius, Lao Tzu, the founder of Taoism, focused beyond man and into the wholeness of nature itself. These two religions were poles apart from each other, yet lived side by side within ancient Chinese culture.

Taoism emerged in China as three different types of power or "Te". First, Te (power of the universe) can be reached by magic, which is popular Taoism for the masses. Second, Te takes on a more esoteric form, in the sense that it is concerned with holding the society together by a mystical form of morality, which highlights the difference to Confucius' morality of rules and rituals. Through psychic practice, such as meditation and yoga, the idea was that by example, people who participated in these practices would become a benefit to society. The goal of Te was to develop the inner-man (as opposed to outer-man and "to arrive at this inwardness it was necessary to reverse all self-seeking and to cultivate perfect cleanliness of thought and body" (H. Smith, op. cit., p187)). Last of all Te is a philosophy in which : "the power of Tao is the power that enters a life that has reflectively and intuitively geared itself in which the way of the universe" (H. Smith, op. cit., p189). This last form of Te is what we want to develop in relation to Zen Buddhism and Nietzsche's artistic/nature model.

Taoism's philosophical side is best described by its term Wu Wei, or "creative quietude" (H. Smith, Loc. cit., p189). Man is seen as a combination between "supreme activity and supreme relaxation". Wu Wei is "virtue approached from a direction diametrically opposite to that of Confucius. With Confucius' every effort was turned to building up a complete pattern of ideal responses which might thereafter be consciously irritated" (H. Smith, Loc. cit., p189). With Taoism it is

the opposite, due to Wu Wei, for one wants to "flow spontaneously" with their behaviour and to live in a more <u>natural</u> manner with the world. As H. Smith suggests :

"On the whole the modern Western attitude has been to regard nature as an antagonist, something to be squared off against, dominated, controlled, conquered. Taoism attitude towards nature tends to be the precise opposite to this" (H. Smith, op. cit., p193).

Yet, this cannot be said of Nietzsche, as we shall see later in part three of this chapter. But to return to nature and Taoism we must also bridge the connection pertaining to art. The Taoist approach to nature has a deep significance for Chinese art, and therefore had great influence on Japanese art for Japan owes much to the Chinese Ch'an religion, which transformed into Zen. Taoist art, like Zen, is not some sort of meretricious artistic statement boldly clashing with its environment, which may be seen at the Tate on any given day. Taoist art blends in with nature, just as man should blend into nature. To understand this concept let us take Taoist landscape painting as an example. As Smith proposes about landscape painting :

"Man's part in that vastness is small, so we have to look closely for him in the painting if we find him at all. Usually he is climbing with his bundle, riding a buffalo, or poling a boat - Man with his journey to make, his burden to carry, his hill to climb, his glimpse of beauty through the parting mists. He is not as formidable as a mountain, he does not live as long as a pine; yet he too belongs in the scheme of things is surely as the birds and the clouds. And through him as through the rest of the world flows the rhythm movement of Tao" (H. Smith, op. cit., p194).

Everything blends into one, and if one were to propose that something has a

character of its own, whether it be in Tao or Zen, then we would be losing the meaning of Tao and Taoism. For even in the concepts such as good and evil, these two familiar "opposites" that we had seen throughout the thesis, they too lost their absolute character and become one and the same thing, just as man is portrayed with nature in a Taoist landscape.

As we turn to Zen again, with a greater understanding of Zen's metamorphosis from Chinese philosophy, one must be extremely careful not to label Zen as purely an extension from Indian Buddhism to Chinese philosophy to Zen. Zen stands alone and in some ways becomes contradictory to its being attune with nature, and being interwoven with nature, due to it's strong individualistic overtones. There is a regal spirit in Zen, much like Nietzsche, that accepts and heralds the way back to nature, and yet at times this is done individually. One has to understand this pilgrimage back to nature on his own. Self enlightenment is of the upmost importance in Zen practice. As Suzuki states : "spiritually, directness of expression, disregard of form or conventionalism, and frequently an almost wanton delight in going astray from respectability" (D. T. Suzuki, <u>Awakening of Zen</u>, p57). Here we have a dilemma when speaking of Zen as an individualistic religion. The paradoxical intonations derives from the notion that through personal experience in contemplation one can attain enlightenment, <u>although</u> we are all under the guise of nature. Zen and Zen art undoubtedly wants to, "pervade human life with a spirit of naturalism" (M. Anasaki, op. cit., p48), and in doing so, according to Anesaki, this meditation/contemplation results in this strong individualistic character of its followers; yet at the same time there is an undying love for the tranquil beauty of nature. As Anesaki advocates : "This somewhat paradoxical combination of individualism and transcendentalism resulted in an identification of self with the world, a state to be realized only through insight into heart and spirit of nature" (M. Anasaki, op. cit., p49).

We should not take individualism as meaning some sort of motivated passion or enthusiasm, which must take place for enlightenment, nor should we think that

reason would be beneficial to Zen enlightenment. So, what is the essential element required for enlightenment? "The essential is intuition, which illuminates the mind like a flash in darkness, and pervades the whole air like moonlight" (M. Anasaki, Loc. cit., p49). As Suzuki states, "Zen wants to live from within. Not to be bound by rules, but to be creating one's own rules ..." (D. T. Suzuki, Introduction to Zen Buddhism, p64). But the Zen Buddhist sees his own rules reflecting within nature, living with nature, and blissfully in love with nature :

> "In his sight, the beauty and grandeur of a waterfall consist in its motion as a whole, - not in the movement of particular drops and bubbles; and it was this motion that the Zenist enjoyed as a symbol of the general, everlasting flow of nature" (M. Anasaki, op. cit., p52).

Zen encourages a return to "naivety" for, at first, we are born with a naive instinctual behaviour but we then stray from this behaviour in order to "seek" the "true" reality of this world. After Zen training and discipline in "non-thinking" we again return to the naivety, which is now seen as enlightenment, only when one realizes that seeking is not the way. In order to return to this naivety, we must strive for direct experience, and according to Zen this experience is not attainable by the human tongue (see Nagarjuna, Chapter Four). Surely this echoes concepts similar to Nietzsche's three phases of life from "Zarathustra" : the camel (beast of burden), the lion (destroyer), and the return to the child (a new kind of simplicity - free to create things of the future). The difference of these two concepts, which we will see in greater detail in part three, lies within the problem of Nietzsche's attachment to something that is "of this world" (that is, our ontological world) and retrospectively important towards attaining a higher world in Nietzsche's terms.

Yet, Zen also seeks a new way, a new viewpoint (Satori), which enables a person to obtain a "pure experience". But unlike our "rational" and conceptual Western world the idea of Zen is, "that the ultimate truth of life is to be intuitively

and not conceptually grasped, and that this intuitive apprehension is the foundation not only of philosophy but of all other cultural activities ..." (D. T. Suzuki, Zen and Japanese Culture, p219). In part two we will examine how this is so.

II

The important point to underline, when speaking of Zen and art, is that a "spiritual relationship" exists between Zen and Japanese art, a relationship which should be recognized as not only an aesthetic state, but also as having an important religious association between the two. To use Christian dialogue, art is "holy" to Zen (as Zen is "holy" to art) and the artist strives to create his art properly, in order to reach his goal for ultimate truth, by a sort of unification of artist to his art (samadhi). Art is used in a way so that we, as human beings, can obtain and acquire a phenomenological view with which to explain the mysteries of life, the secrets of nature and the realisation of Nirvana upon this earth. In order for us to do this we must, as Zen Buddhists, look upon, and react accordingly to our natural self.

Nature itself is within all of us, according to the Zen Buddhists, we are nature and nature us, or to "employ Christian terminology, the good is to attain that peace which passes understanding, to lose oneself so as to find oneself, for as long as one thinks as the world thinks, one will never discover the wisdom of the self" (H. Munsterberg, op. cit., p108). In a sense, as with Nietzsche's use of art, it is a beginning to the "bridge" spanning toward enlightenment. In Zen painting we see Rinzai (the southern school of Zen which encourages sudden enlightenment by use of "Koans") influenced "sudden enlightenment"; in it's archery we see the strict spiritual discipline of Soto (the northern school of Zen that emphasises meditation, spiritual discipline and moral conduct). And yet, however different painting is from archery in the Western view, in Zen they both point to the same artistic ideal in the broader usage of the word. One could say that art allows the "sensual" to flower and bloom in both of these traditions : East/West, Zen/ Nietzsche.

Art, however, is very much embedded within the nucleus of the ultimate goal in Zen. Indeed, art takes on the philosophy of Zen, and never strays from it, as if there is only one proper way to shoot an arrow, or stroke a canvas with an "untrammelled" brush of a shredded bamboo. As art is "marinated" within the Zen tradition, unable to be ingested on its own, it must have the flavour of Zen philosophy. So, we see, in Japanese, "gazen ichimi" translates to roughly meaning, "painting and Zen are one". In the world of Zen a separation would be looked upon as a misguidance. Let us take for example the Zen painters who, as Tsuda suggests, "were extremely fond of landscape paintings and of birds and flowers, separated from human figures. According to the ideal of Zen artists, beauty or the true life of things is always hidden rather than expressed outwardly. Realizing the limited power of any elaborate depiction in revealing the infinite life and power of nature, they tried not to display everything that may be seen, but rather to suggest the secret of infinity" (N. Tsuda, Handbook of Japanese Art, p145-146). Hence, the work of the Zen artist was not a depiction of nature, but the expression of his emotion. Like a flash of lightning from out of a sky Zen Buddhist strove to capture a sudden moment of nature, in a most simple and pure way.

The Zen artist must be prepared before he sets out to paint. Even today, "In Japan, the artist and the work have an antonymous value that takes precedence over reality. Those who hope to become painters, rather than select the vocation of painter as one of many outlets for expressing reality, first experience an awareness of some aptitude for art and then become artists, at least in embryo" (T. Terada, Japanese Art in World Perspective, p14). For the painter of Zen art this awareness comes from experiencing the connotations of the absolute void of reality. The paintings, once the artist understands, reflect this true meaning of reality, and are called "Zenga" (pictorial expressions of the Zen experience). In this sense, it is the spirituality which is the true meaning that is behind the Zen experience. A Zen picture is a direct reflection on the profoundity of the artist. If he is able to express the feeling of this voidness in reality, within his "Zenga" painting, then, and only

then, can the subject come to life for the observer.

This sort of painting, completed within minutes, and keeping with the spontaneity and suddenness which Zen preaches seems a complete contrast, to say, the art of the Italian Renaissance whose artists strove to paint something worthy of God's love, full of detail depicting notions as to what was considered divine. The Holistic view of Zen art contrasts, "to major traditions in the West, society itself is a part of nature, a piece of a large and organic whole ... and a commitment and a process that brings forth the creator and audience close to the way" (D. E. Cooper, op. cit., p73).

Surely, Buddhism too has its temples and shrines, and if we were to examine Buddhism we would see an infatuation for symbolism as well. But this is Zen, and Zen's preoccupation is evident : one needs to move away from such ideas of symbolism, thinking in logical terms, etc. As mentioned previously, in Zen there is a moving away from separateness of self : Zen art takes on a sudden and immediate genre, and should not be understood in terms of Western ideas of aesthetics.

Zen art must be used as an instrument in teaching. It teaches in a way that for the artist he becomes the object himself. To quote Herrigel :

"The spider dances her web without knowing that there are flies who will get caught in it. The fly, dancing nonchalantly on a sunbeam, gets caught in the net without knowing what lies in store. But through both of them "It" dances, and inside and outside are united in this dance. So too, the archer hits the target without having aimed - more I cannot say" (E. Herrigel, op. cit. p80).

As Herrigel eloquently suggests in this passage art engulfs both subject and object in the truest sense of Buddhist non-dualistic philosophy, artist and his art become all one of the same.

Suzuki in discussing a painting of a hibiscus plant states that, "the secret is

to become the plant itself, but how can a human being turn himself into a plant? ... there must be in him something which corresponds to it in one way or another. If so, he ought to be able to become the object he desires to paint. The discipline consists in studying the plant inwardly with his mind and thoroughly purified of its subjective, self-centred contents. This means to keep the mind in unison with the "emptiness" of sickness, whereby one stands against the object itself ... when the painter begins his work it is not he but the object itself that is working and it is then that the brush, as well as his arm and his fingers, become obedient servants to the spirit of the object" (D. T. Suzuki, Mysticism, Christian and Buddhist, p32).

This state, that Suzuki describes, is a concerted effort of man beginning his "cross over the bridge". No matter how different the approach is to Nietzsche's efforts the association lies within the discontent of the present state of things in the illogical society that we live in. The way the Zen artists acquire their "truth" is by eluding to all the systematized and technical skills and in doing so come close to the life which is "all invigorating". For Nietzsche, as we will explore later, life as we know it still holds possibilities, still holds potential for something that is evolutionarily better. Mystically Zen is different from Nietzsche, for rationality does not exist in the slightest. How can the arrow hit a target without being aimed with calculations for distance, velocity and so on?, "the shot must fall, it must fall from the archer like snow from a bamboo leaf, before he even thinks it" (E. Herrigel, op. cit., p68). As we leave part two to consider Nietzsche's stance it is important for us to realize that Nietzsche's relationship to Zen lies with the insight and drive that the artist can achieve, in order to make his world more positive and less nihilistic.

III

Nietzsche's "fundamental falsity" indicates that he was occupied in the attempt to recover life, to recover "nature" from its deepest source. This attempt, like Zen, attacked institutions which were at large in their respective periods of

time. For Zen, the mind must be awakened to the "true mind", which was Buddha's original message according to Zen Buddhists, and not a seeking for Buddha, or a "setting up" of a Buddhahood. In many ways, Nietzsche's rejection of God as a "suprasenory value inimical to natural life" (M. Abe, op. cit., p149), is the same sort of denial. As we know, Nietzsche's attack on Christianity was primarily an attack on Paul who had deprived man of his naturalness in his "setting up" of what we know as the Church because of his faith in Jesus. Our lives have been robbed, according to Nietzsche, of our instinctual naturalness by Christian morality. The attack was not aimed at Jesus whom Nietzsche admired, at least, for his attempt in trying to obtain a "true" way of life. As M. Abe suggests, "According to Nietzsche, the essence of life is the instinct for the development and preservation of life, the instinct toward the accumulation of energy, the instinct to power" (M. Abe, Zen and Oriental Thought, p136).

Although this may at first seem to stray from the path of Zen art and the Nietzschean concept of art it should be noted that a comparison exists between them, there is a certain lack of tension between the pursuit of enlightenment and the pursuit of the "Übermensch" neither have commitment to any social moralities. In other words, morality in Zen is yet another label, another meaningless turn; just as depicted in the picture of a monk burning the Diamond Sutra, Nietzsche too wishes to destroy the New Testament, for the essence of life is his will to power.

Art is a useful way of demonstrating this energy for Nietzsche, as is the artist and his aestheticism. According to Nehamas, "this aestheticism results from his effort to bring style into the centre of his own thought and to repeat once more what he took to be the great achievement of the Greeks and Romans. To make of the grand style no longer mere art but ... reality, truth, life" (A. Nehamas, Nietzsche : Life as Literature, p39). Nietzsche saw the artist (as a metaphor) as the closest example of human being to actually be able to try to establish new adventurous ground. His use of words such as "freedom", "truth", "creative placing", "forming" lead to this conclusion, I have no doubt one has to create truth,

and not just discover it (see Nietzsche's <u>Beyond Good and Evil</u> (211) and <u>Will to Power</u> (552)). What Paul had done, according to Nietzsche, was not in any way adventurous,indeed it was detrimental to man's well being within nature. So, Nietzsche turns to concepts such as art and the artists, forging newer ground. Nehamas points out a most intriguing example:

"Consider, for example, a radical innovation in painting or in literature: single point perspective or cubism, naturalism, or stream of consciousness. We often speak of these as "styles", and accordingly think of them as menus for depicting in novel ways what was there all along to be depicted. Yet such innovations do not allow us simply to represent a pre-existing world in new ways. At least as much, they produce new things to paint or write about; they create new aspects of reality to which we can now for the first time, be true" (A. Nehamas, op. cit., p59).

This is precisely the point Nietzsche is trying to make: that man establishes himself as an innovator within the here and now. This notion conflicts with the fundamental concepts of Zen and Art. Zen philosophy feels that the artist is still <u>trapped</u> within the restrictions of technical and traditionalist views of what art should be. The problem with Zen's concept of art is that the artists works are not "precipitating" with life; he is not creating but rather imitating. One <u>must</u> understand this difference between Zen and Nietzsche, for the latter's "art" is the supreme manifestation of what we are : in short, "will to power". In this sense, art brings us close to nature, for nature is also "will to power". Hence, there is at once an analogy with, and a difference from, the Zen view of art. For even Nietzsche's exuberance for man to grasp hold of nature seems to stall. For Nietzsche, it seems that one cannot finally be 'one' with nature, since even the overman-artist must 'falsify' how things are. The overman must impose "being" when (as we know of Nietzsche's philosophy and its "everflowing" nature) there is only becoming. In

short, man cannot achieve "being", but is certainly encouraged by Nietzsche to try. This is the importance of Nietzsche's view on Art and Nature. Zen, in the final analysis, does not attempt to try to achieve 'being' in this way. What way one may ask? The way that Nietzsche falsifies nature, and imposes a form to nature that it does not have. Nietzsche tries to grasp hold of nature, shaking it, throttling its neck, in order for it to conform to his "man", his "overman". Although Nietzsche realizes that this goes against his belief in an "everflowing world of existence"; Nietzsche understands the need for giving hope, form, and meaning, to our existential world. For the Zen artist; nature overflows, overgrows, and "is" to every extent "everything". Certainly, Zen is at "one with nature".

To recapitulate, art is a tool for Zen, for Nietzsche it is a finding that there are great possibilities in the here and now. Nietzsche valued interpretations of the world, which are considered empty and deceptive constructs of the mind according to Buddhists. They hold value for Nietzsche for they preserve life through a disguised "will to power". Although we value the world falsely, it is still something to be affirmed. In Zen practice, and other Buddhist sects, one wants to rid everything to do with the "mind", which for Buddhists is all illusion and ignorance. Although his artist model is often written in a positive stance we must now ask ourselves whether art is Nietzsche's ultimate goal and achievement for obtaining passage to the other side of the "abyss".

In the early "Birth of Tragedy" and certainly from "Zarathustra" and beyond art is mostly a positive function, for it opposes any "devitalising knowledge". "Art and nothing but art! Art is the great enabler of life, the great temptress to life, the great stimulant of life" (F. Nietzsche, Thus Spoke Zarathustra, 682). And yet, for Nietzsche the downfall of art, is acting as a "hand maid" to religions, or philosophers. More to the point of this subject, Nietzsche's derogatory remarks about art at times stem partly from his attack on the Schopenhauerian stance that art can be used as vehicle, if you will, on the road to "Nirvana". As usual, this attack is spurred on by Nietzsche's disgust with any organized religion. We must

remember that Nietzsche is stringently trying to aim for a kind of detachment from all ideals and concepts. And yet, if Nietzsche had been familiar with Zen tradition he certainly would see the likeness to his own works on this subject, even though the philosophies seem to separate in their final conclusions. Nietzsche disassociated himself from Schopenhauer on the subject of art and aesthetics because, "by bestowing the highest possible value on art, namely independence, [Nietzsche] finds himself in the peculiar position of exposing it to every conceivable attack, since neither priest, philosopher, nor politician can see it serving his purposes" (M. Pasley, op. cit., p18).

Again, one cannot help but wonder that if Nietzsche had been exposed to the Zen concept of art would he have seen it in a positive light, or would he have seen Zen art as a corrupted assistant to religious activity? Yet, as we have seen, Zen is so unreligious at times in comparison to Western religious beliefs. Zen's denial of seeking Buddha, it's denial of seeking ideals and concepts of "samsara" seem so close to Nietzsche's spirit and energy. Nevertheless, Zen, and all the other Buddhist sects, would have seemed quite grim and nihilistic to Nietzsche. Certainly, because of this, Nietzsche distanced himself from Schopenhauer.

Nietzsche wanted to find the solution to Schopenhauer's "nauseating" view of life, at first through a rebirth of Greek tragedy; a retreat back to the "intelligent, sensitive and cognizant" world of the ancient Greeks. Without Schopenhauer's previous influence (the belief of art having the remarkable power to transport man from out of our ordinary and everyday selves) Nietzsche's direction would have been different. As early as the Birth of Tragedy Nietzsche acknowledges that the significance of art is wasted if one does not realize that there is a conscious changing experience, a transformation analogous to that occurring in the artist's creation. In a sense, the artist's psychological identity is transfigured. As the title of the book states, Nietzsche was crying out for a "rebirth" of tragedy so that science would inevitably "shipwreck" itself. The hope (or hero) of the period of the book was Wagner, who later was to be chastised by Nietzsche. Before we look at

Nietzsche's latter and broader view of art, let us examine his Apollonian and Dionysian dualities.

Nietzsche's use of the conceptual opposites, the "Apollonian" and "Dionysian", highlights the two conditions in which "art appears in man as a force of nature" (F. Nietzsche, Will to Power, 799). The Dionysian being "an urge to unity, a reaching out beyond personality, the everyday, society, reality, across the abyss of transitoriness ... and the Apollonian meaning the urge to perfect self-sufficiency, to the typical individual" (F. Nietzsche, op. cit., 1050). The notion of "will to power" is an outgrowth of the duality between the Apollonian and Dionysian "art impulses of nature".

The "Übermensch" is life raised to the level of art, and the Dionysian artist exemplifies the work of art as being part of himself, much as the Zen artist does in order to paint in the Zen way. Indeed, Schacht states in considering the artist in the Birth of Tragedy that, "the Dionysian artist has identified himself with primal unity, in all its 'pain and contradiction' and also its exhaustible and indestructible vitality - and, thus released. From his individual will; he gives symbolic expression to the nature of the fundamental reality with which he identifies" (R. Schacht, op. cit., p491). Nietzsche is calling to attention not so much a "transformation of our consciousness along line rendering us oblivious to our individual existence" (R. Schacht, op. cit., p502) much like a Buddhist ideal would render, but more so a "Verklärung", a transfiguration of the character of our consciousness whilst still giving value to such existence. This creates a remarkably different conclusion to Zen's usage of art, as mentioned before, the escaping from the "conscious" world. Nietzsche claims that art enables man to view life as worth living, through his "Verklärung", this transfiguration.

Following his Dionysian/Apollonian dualities, as described in the Birth of Tragedy, Nietzsche "blossomed out" to see art as "the great stimulus to life" (F. Nietzsche, Twilight of the Idols, IV, 24) the enhancer of life. As we can see from the above, Nietzsche's point about art is not only significant for aesthetic discourse,

but that it is also a vehicle enabling us to understand life more clearly, as if the two are intertwined, as they are in Zen practice. For Nietzsche, art is a way <u>beyond</u> nihilism; "a new respect for ourselves and estimation of life, 'redeeming existence' in the aftermath of the collapse of old illusions" (R. Schacht, op. cit., p528). As Schacht emphasises in <u>Nietzsche</u> his artistic model serves the purpose in expressing the fundamental nature of life. " "<u>Will to Power</u>" (which <u>is</u> life to Nietzsche) is properly understood only if it is conceived as a disposition to effect such creativity transformative overcoming, in nature, in human life generally, and art alike" (R. Schacht, op. cit., p482). This view is what Nietzschean scholars call Nietzsche's "Grand Style" in art (see <u>Twilight of the Idols</u>, IX : 11). "The power which no longer needs any proof - which spurns pleasing, which does not answer lightly, which feels no witness near, which lives oblivious of all opposition to it ... " (F. Nietzsche, op. cit., 11).

"Art as the will to overcome becoming" finds its highest format within this grand style. Who would meet this standard? We can only wonder, for even Nietzsche realized that the artist, and his art, fall short most of the time. So, who is Nietzsche's prototypical user of art? Certainly, it must be someone who is adept at using the greatest possible range of perspectives, someone who is free to roam from "dogma and doctrine", and someone who is grappling with their inner contradictions, and is obedient to his task. Like the Zen masters, Nietzsche too is looking for men of substance, those who pursue the truth, not for themselves, but for the world. Nietzsche depended upon his artistic models for understanding the world, and made them swear, "that there should be obedience ... given that, something always develops, and has developed, for whose sake it is worthwhile to live on earth, for example, virtue, art, music, dance ... " (F. Nietzsche, <u>Beyond Good and Evil</u>, 188).

This, again, is all well and good but still the answer is left open as to who is the ideal, living model who has these attributes. Perhaps it is Goethe; as Nietzsche describes as someone who :

"return[s] to nature ... he did not sever himself from life, he placed himself within it; nothing could discourage him and he took as much as possible upon himself, above himself, within himself. What he aspired to was totality; he strove against the separation of reason, sensuality, feeling, will ... he disciplined himself to a whole, he created himself ..."

(F. Nietzsche, Twillight of the Idols,

"Expeditions of an untimely man", 49).

Nehamas comes up with another possible answer, but only after first admitting that although "Nietzsche does not describe his ideal character" (A. Nehamas, op. cit., p230) he still manages to offer a conception of what he would be like. He further adds that, "Nietzsche's texts therefore do not describe, but in exquisitely elaborate detail, exemplify the perfect instance of his ideal character. And this character is none other than the character these very texts constitute : Nietzsche himself" (A. Nehamas, op. cit., p233). True this may be, but Nietzsche's intentions surely were not for the purpose of creating an ideal image of himself. Nehamas further explains that because the will to power is considered the "Life Force" and the drive in man's life, Nietzsche shows his "most insistent ambition" to the world, and therefore may be seen as the "Artistè Èxtrodinaire".

To conclude, for Zen art is a tool toward Nirvana, a training method that is indeed life denying, in the Western sense, but it is not itself the goal. As suggested by Herrigel, the master denies that the bow and arrow is the goal itself, it is "only the way to a goal ... [it] only helps for the last decisive leap" (E. Herrigel, op. cit., p18). So too, Nietzsche grapples with art as being the end to all notions of attaining the "Übermensch" ideal. As we have discussed, in this chapter and previous ones, with most Nietzschean concepts contradictions appear. Nietzsche's style is to contradict and to examine all sides of an argument, whilst destroying most "facts" which get in his way. For the artist model, his contradictions lie in the notion that

art and artists may be merely an "intermediary species" to the Übermensch model, insisting in the <u>Will to Power</u> that they "fix an image of that which ought to be and so are still relatively lacking in will and strength of the sort necessary to be able to 'endure' to live in a meaningless world because one organises a small portion of it ourself" (F. Nietzsche, <u>Will to Power</u>, 585).

Nietzsche also sees that the artist possibly may be "easing" his burden and "dissatisfaction with reality". Nevertheless, Nietzsche sees the artist as, at the very least, a better example than "men of knowledge" for productivity and the potential to actually alter the "construction of the bridge" between man (beast) and overman, and that "it can be taken as paradigmatic in exhibiting the nature of the crossing, and in indicating what lies on the other side" (R. Schacht, op. cit., p524). One could say that this statement could be true of Zen and art as well. Yet, it would be false to assume that in Zen and in Buddhism there <u>is</u> another side, to them <u>all</u> existence is meaningless.

For Nietzsche, art also is a symbol for a way beyond nihilism, "a new respect for ourselves and estimation of life, redeeming existence in the aftermath of the collapse of old illusions" (R. Schacht, op. cit., p529). For Zen and Nietzsche alike, art is a part of nature, "a piece of a large and organic whole" (D. E. Cooper (Ed.), Loc. cit., p73). Nietzsche shares this traditionally Eastern view of life. He asks for a well rounded individual, one who is to grasp hold of the previous child-like qualities, stripping away the beast of burden mentality. Zen, also, trains its disciples to "grasp", to obtain the "way", in such a way that is unrecognizable to man without proper training, and is unspeakable in our terms, and in our language. Nietzsche asks us to become "poets of our lives", to take note of what the artist spirit is, and somehow to conceptualize the spirit within ourselves, in our everyday lives. To quote Nietzsche :

"We should learn from artists while being wiser than they are in other matters. For with them this subtle power [of arranging, of making things

beautiful] usually comes to an end where art ends and life begins; but we want to be poets of our life - first of all in the smallest, most everyday matters" (Gay Science, 299).

CONCLUSIONS

The principle ideas discussed in this thesis are important in revealing the parallels and patterns, contrasts and contradictions of Nietzschean and Asian philosophy. From this study we have both enhanced our understanding of Nietzsche, and have gained insight into the vast differences between the philosophical thought and cultural expectations of East and West. In gaining an understanding of our place in the world we must attempt to comprehend even seemingly opposing opinions. For Nietzsche, in his effort to break out of the traditional Western mould, such an effort was a necessity.

This is not to say that Nietzsche (like Schopenhauer) pursued Asian thought in the belief that it would be the salvation of man's existence. Nietzsche's goal was to free man from the bondage of Western social and philosophical traditions. To allow him to grasp his "will to power", be it physical, social or political; for Nietzsche all life derives from "will to power". Nietzsche demanded that we should denounce our mediocre existence among "the herd", and strive for a "spiritual growth", which offers a freedom reaching beyond "good and evil". In reaching his conclusions, Nietzsche explores and "borrows" concepts from many beliefs and philosophical disciplines; Asian thought is but one of the many concepts that Nietzsche uses to highlight his personal style of deconstructive philosophy. Yet, this is not to say that Asian philosophy and thought was merely a concept which could have been metaphorically interchangeable with anything.

Asian philosophy, as we have seen, has many parallels with Nietzschean concepts, and is extremely important to the study of his philosophy. Nietzsche's aristocratic concept of power, domination, and mastery over the herd, compares closely to the Hindu caste system, which he used extensively as an analogous system with which to strengthen his viewpoint. Throughout this thesis we see Nietzsche's main concepts highlighted by some form of Asian religion, thought or

philosophy. The nihilism and asceticism found within Eastern religions was used by Nietzsche (through the influence of Schopenhauer) as tools for purging concepts such as morality, represented by "good and evil", in order to again say "yes" to the world with which one can live instinctively. As Heine suggests (see Chapter Two) "Although Buddhism and Nietzsche travel comparable paths of negativism and affirmation, traditional Buddhism assumedly does not conclude with a yes" (S. Heine, op. cit., p259). Nietzsche is often seen within this thesis as having a more "positive" stance than the Asian religions and philosophies to which his concepts have been compared. This is due to the idea that Nietzsche believed in the positiveness of the Übermensch, as an ideal that can satisfy us, who live in the existential here and now.

When one compares Nietzsche's idea of the self to that of the Buddhist notion of the non-self many avenues for comparison are opened up. It is evident that both philosophies have certain similarities on how they view the nature of the thinking mind. In our study of the nature of the self within the two philosophies (Chapter Three) we compared the views of East and West regarding mind and body. We found that Nietzsche's views do not entirely fit in with the notion of the non-self (or I-less-ness) of the Buddhists, for he retains a certain individuality of the self, and is not as eager to identify the concept of the non-self to his more positive view that man can create something of himself individually, through a "will to power". Although this comparison of the "selfs" open up substantial ideas of non-duality in the world, cause and effect, etc., and we find that Nietzsche has much to applaud in the nature of "selflessness", he inevitably still clings to his notion of "will to power", and this separates his thoughts from the Buddhist "I-less-ness".

We speak of non-duality, and we think of Nagarjuna and the Madhyamaka movement. So too when we think of language, we think of the Madhyamakas, and their denouncing of language, as an important step toward understanding the "Buddha-way". Both Nietzsche and Wittgenstein to a great extent compare significantly with the Madhyamakas in the concept of non-duality. The reason why

there is a significant comparison between Nietzsche and Nagarjuna (Chapter Four) was that his "deconstructive hermeneutic" sets out to destroy the metaphysical foundations of the modern world, much as Nagarjuna did in his attack on the Theravadan world of Buddhism. Finally, Nietzsche is linked with Zen, nature and Taoism in his use of art, as a tool with which to reach the Übermensch goal, much as the Zen Buddhists employed art as a means for reaching Nirvana.

For Nietzsche art is the symbol for a way beyond nihilism, as it is worthwhile and positive in the sense that it creates new things from and of this world, as we know it. With Zen, art is used purely as a tool and nothing else, for the world and its objects are impermanent ("no-thing") according to Zen Buddhists. Yet Nietzsche shares a traditionally Eastern outlook of life when he asks for the "nature like" individual, or one who is attuned to "true nature", to grasp his instinctual qualities, and to strip away the "beast of burden" mentality of the Christians. Nietzsche asks us to become "poets of our lives", for our sake and for mankind's sake.

This remains the principle difference between Nietzsche and the East, this dedication that Nietzsche has to this world. Nietzsche wants to exist in the world, and Eastern thought, although responsible to the world and one with nature, does not see this world as the being an end to all. It is merely something that one must break out of in order to be enlightened. Nietzsche's "enlightenment" is the "will to power", to be found within all of us, a power we must seek and use, if we are to become the species we were meant to be.

Finally, we must conclude that Nietzsche was no expert in the subject of Eastern thought, but rather one who borrows concepts of the East. This thesis never intended to show Nietzsche as someone who knew a great deal of Eastern and Asian philosophy, although many readers are led to believe that he did due to his many references to the subject within his works. Rather our intention was to show the importance of comparison, between the philosophies, as a means to understanding the similarities and differences between Eastern and Western thought,

the outlook on life within their respective cultures, and the often surprising parallels between Nietzsche's concepts, and those of the East.   Again, it is not what Nietzsche knew about Asian philosophy that is important, it is what we learn from the comparisons, which is of the upmost significance within this study.

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