

# 12. Democracy and Aristocracy in Nietzsche's Late Writings

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## Abstract

This paper argues that Nietzsche's thought got its unity by his understanding of the aim of the Greek tragedy to lead the spectator to a cheerful assent to the end of its hero by identifying himself with Dionysos as the symbol of the eternal process of coming to be and passing away. On behalf of his decisive premisses, that after the death of God there is no difference between Good and Bad and that man is nothing than a biological creature, he integrated in this frame in his most mature work *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* the concepts of the super- or best man and the eternal recurrence. Every body understanding himself as a bridge for the future origin has not only to break down confronted with his own disproportion to this practical ideal in the horizon of his personal recurrence as the same, but has also to assent cheerfully to his end and his recurrence out of love in the eternal process of coming to be and passing away. On this particular background one understands adequately Nietzsche's scattered notes on democracy as a Post-Christian and despicable, but necessary prerequisite for the origin of a new international aristocracy and subsequently that of a great man and tragic hero.

**Keywords:** Aristocracy, democracy

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My philosophy is directed to rank, not to individualistic morals. The sense of the herd may rule the herd, – but not transcend it; the leaders of the herd are principally needing other values for their actions, in the same manner independent men, or the beasts of prey and so on.

Friedrich Nietzsche, Released remarks:  
End of autumn 1886 – spring 1887 7[6].<sup>1</sup>

## 1. NIETZSCHE'S BELIEF IN HIS DIVINITY

In the preface to his latest book, the *Ecce Homo*, written on his birthday, the 15th of October 1888, Nietzsche summarizes the result of his literary produc-

tivity from spring to autumn, the last period before he fell increasingly into the state of incurable mental derangement:<sup>2</sup>

At this perfect day, where all is ripening and not only the grapes are becoming brown, a glimpse of the sun fell upon my life: I saw back, I looked forward, I never saw as much and so many good things at the same time. It has not been for nothing that I buried just to-day my fortyfourth year, I might bury it, – what happened during my life, became saved, became immortal. The *Revaluation of all Values* [afterwards called the *Antichrist*], the *Dionysos-Dithyrambs* and, written for relaxation, the *Twilight of Idols* – all these are presents of this year, even of its last quarter! How should I not be grateful for all my life?

And then he wrote down his philosophical biography proclaiming to the reader why he is a wise-man, why he is a clever man, why he has written such good books and last not least why he is a fate:

I am knowing my lot. With my name will be connected some days the memory of a tremendous event – of a crisis the like has formerly not been, of the deepest collision of conscience, of a decision brought about against all what had been before be-lieved, demanded and hold for sacred. I don't be human, I am dynamite.<sup>3</sup>

And after a lot of aggressions and denunciations of Christianity as the main source of the moral errors of the past, Nietzsche concludes his book with the enigmatic sentence:

Has one understood me? – Dionysos against the Crucified.<sup>4</sup>

He is, as he informed us some chapters earlier, not only the first *Immoralist*,<sup>5</sup> but also the *Antichrist*,<sup>6</sup> and any reader, who should have any doubts over Nietzsche's real nature should have given attention to the section where he proclaims his imagined noble descent of Polish peerage and the impossibility to understand himself as the son of his mother and the brother of his sister:

When I am on search for the deepest contrast to myself, I find in every case my mother an my sister, – to believe, that I am related to such a canaille, would be a blasphemy against my god-like state (*German: meine Göttlichkeit*).<sup>7</sup>

Therefore it might be more than a coincidence or metaphor for his sense of mission that Nietzsche wrote only some weeks later (on the 11th of December) to *Carl Fuchs* in Danzig:<sup>8</sup>

During the next years the world will stand on its head: After the old God has resigned, I shall reign the worl from now on.

Or should it only be a sign of madness that he wrote to *Meta von Salis* on January 3rd 1889:<sup>9</sup>

The world became blissfully changed, for God is on earth. Don't you see, how all the skies are glad: I just took possession of my kingdom, throw the pope into prison and let be shoot Wilhelm, Bismarck and Stöcker?