

# Nietzsche's Critique of Democracy (1870–1886)

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ABSTRACT: This article reconstructs Nietzsche's shifting views on democracy in the period 1870–86 with reference to his enduring preoccupation with tyrannical concentrations of power and the conviction that radical pluralism offers the only effective form of resistance. As long as he identifies democracy with pluralism (*Human, All Too Human*), he sympathizes with it as a site of resistance and emancipation. From around 1880 on, however, Nietzsche increasingly links it with tyranny, in the form of popular sovereignty, and with the promotion of uniformity, to the exclusion of genuine pluralism. Democracy's emancipatory claims are reinterpreted as "misarchism," or hatred of authority, and Nietzsche looks to the "exceptional beings" excluded by democracy for sources of resistance to the "autonomous herd" and "mob rule." Against elitist readings of this move, it is argued that Nietzsche opposes the domination of the herd type under democracy from a standpoint in human diversity and a generic concern with the future of humankind. Exceptional individuals are conceived in pluralistic, *agonal* terms, as a community of legislators engaged in a process of transvaluation that serves the interests not of one or a few but of all of us: "the self-overcoming of the human."

Recent years have seen a strong interest in the constructive potential of Nietzsche's thought for a radicalized concept of agonistic democratic politics.<sup>1</sup> But Nietzsche is known to be a fierce critic of democracy, and this is either ignored, played down, or softened by most theorists of radical democracy.<sup>2</sup> The value of Nietzsche's thought for democratic politics therefore needs to be reassessed, by asking: Is there a way to interpret or appropriate Nietzsche for democracy that *confronts* the problems he locates in democracy? The purpose of this article is to lay the ground for addressing this question by examining Nietzsche's critique of democracy.

Nietzsche's attitude to democracy is more complex and multifaceted than is usually thought.<sup>3</sup> In its chronological development it exhibits distinct turns and phases, reflecting shifts in Nietzsche's philosophical center of gravity, but also reappraisals and reversals of earlier positions. It is this trajectory and the sources of some of its twists and turns that I will address in this article. It would, however, be misleading to suggest that there are no constants whatsoever in Nietzsche's thought on democracy. A survey of all of Nietzsche's texts on

democracy reveals one quite striking pattern: in Nietzsche's usage the terms 'democracy' and 'democratic' do *not* usually refer to a form of government or a set of institutions. In other words, Nietzsche's thought on democracy is not political in an obvious sense; rather, the political is usually taken as symptomatic of something else, something much larger, much broader, that Nietzsche comes to call the "whole democratic movement [*demokratische Gesamtbewegung*]" (*KSA* 11:26[352], p. 242).<sup>4</sup> Perhaps we can speak of a pervasive cultural tendency or a general disposition. This is also suggested by the frequent occurrence of the term 'taste' (*Geschmack*) in connection with democracy in expressions such as 'der demokratische Geschmack' or 'der demokratische Grundgeschmack aller Wertschätzung' (*KSA* 11:35[22], p. 518).<sup>5</sup> 'Democracy,' then, refers primarily to a set of values or ideals—increasingly identified as one of a network of mere "modern ideas" in Nietzsche's later writings—but also to a disposition, attitude, or type that flourishes and dominates under those values.<sup>6</sup>

All of this raises the question: In what sense, if at all, does Nietzsche engage democracy as a political thinker? Where Nietzsche *does* discuss the state, he usually does so in order to raise the question of political ends: What is the state for? And this question is answered in a way that always subordinates the state in instrumental fashion to culture. It is tempting to see this as an aestheticist refusal of politics, a retreat from politics into the privatism of *Kulturphilosophie* typical of the nineteenth century.<sup>7</sup> But I think that this is wrong. Culture is not just about great art, even for the young, Wagnerian Nietzsche. Rather, it is the medium for enhancing and extending human possibilities, the laboratory for all those experiments in human excellence that are his real concern—a concern that only becomes more urgent and pronounced with Nietzsche's increasing preoccupation with Nihilism in later years. In this regard, I would suggest that Nietzsche is not an apolitical thinker but a thinker who, in the throes and agonies of modernity, resuscitates *ancient* political philosophy, and specifically its *ethical* orientation to human excellence or perfection, by retrieving what Dan Conway has called the "founding question of politics": What ought humankind to become?<sup>8</sup>

### The Early and Middle Work (1870–1881)

Nietzsche's early writings have little to say about democracy. What he does say is overwhelmingly critical and usually arises in connection with his critique of Socrates/Socratism or his rejection of certain theories on the popular origins of the chorus in Greek tragedy.<sup>9</sup> Without question, Nietzsche's early thought is dominated by the thought of culture and the figure of genius, embodied by the pre-Socratic philosophers, the great tragedians, and their contemporary avatars: Schopenhauer and Wagner. Where Nietzsche does think politically, it is in terms of Schopenhauer's thought or, rather, Wagner's appropriation

of Schopenhauer in his essay “Über Staat und Religion” (“On State and Religion”).<sup>10</sup> Here Wagner plays on his favorite Schopenhauerian themes of the diremption of the will and its manifestation in the progressive, conflictual order of phenomena in order to thematize the centrality of genius to cultural and political life. The genius, he argues, stands at the summit of life’s pyramid and represents the end result and pinnacle of the all-pervasive conflict of life—the highest manifestation of the will.<sup>11</sup> As such, however, Wagner’s genius also holds the key to our redemption from conflict and suffering. The artistic genius is cast as the creator of powerful illusions (*Wahngebilde*, *edle Täuschungen*) that translate the Schopenhauerian “gravity of life” (*Ernst des Lebens*) into a “play” (*Spiel*), through which the “nullity of world” (*Nichtigkeit der Welt*) is brought into the open but made harmless, conceded with a smile, as it were (*wie unter Lächeln zugestanden*). In this account, artistic genius offers the community of sufferers a form of life-immanent redemption (*innerhalb des Lebens über diese erhebt*) that enables them to live and to affirm life, or as Nietzsche puts it: “The influence of the genius is normally that a new network of illusions [*Illusionsnetz*] is cast over a mass, under which it can live. This is the magical influence of the genius on the subordinate levels. But there is at the same time an ascending line [*aufsteigende Linie*] to the genius: this tears the existing networks apart until finally in the attained genius a higher artistic goal is attained” (*KSA* 7:6[3]).<sup>12</sup> Clearly, we are a long way from Schopenhauer’s utterly impractical, solitary genius subsisting at the margins of society. Through a peculiar synthesis of individual genius with Schopenhauer’s “genius of the species” (*Genius der Gattung*), Wagner moves the figure of genius to the very center of cultural and political life and gives that figure the eminently practical task of making it possible for the human community to live and to affirm life.<sup>13</sup> Everything—the state, the people, and ordinary existence—is subordinated to this figure.

For Nietzsche, however, the status of the genius at the apex of culture and society depends on the capacity of genius to limit or measure itself and not to abuse its position of authority for its own ends, what Nietzsche calls “creative self-restraint” (*schöpferische Selbstumschränkung*) with reference to Schopenhauer (*SE* 3, *KSA* 1, p. 350–51). And in the aftermath of *The Birth of Tragedy*, Nietzsche’s perception of genius changes. With the breakdown of his relation to Wagner in the mid-1870s, Nietzsche loses confidence in the capacity of genius to limit itself; Wagner is increasingly cast as a tyrannical force,<sup>14</sup> and the *question of limits* becomes central for Nietzsche. How to impose limits on genius? Where are the limits on a single overwhelming force like genius to come from? Nietzsche now embarks on a systematic deflationary critique of genius that comes to fruition in *Human, All Too Human* and culminates in the dissolution of genius in its active reception: “What is genius worth if it does not communicate such freedom and heights of feeling to its

contemplator [*Betrachter*] and venerator that he no longer has need of the genius!—*To make oneself superfluous*—that is the distinction of those who are great” (*AOM* 407; cf. *KSA* 8:29[19]). This aphorism illustrates well the shift in Nietzsche’s standpoint away from the genius and the ideal of self-limitation to those who suffer *under* genius. And with this shift comes the *question of emancipation* that will dominate the middle works: How to free ourselves from the tyrannical force of genius?<sup>15</sup> Nowhere is this shift inscribed more clearly than in §7 of *Richard Wagner in Bayreuth* (*KSA* 1, p. 466), where, beginning with a sense of “smallness and frailty,” of self-alienation or nonidentity, in the face of Wagner’s overwhelming force, Nietzsche describes a form of antagonistic reception or *Betrachten* through which he is empowered *through and against* Wagner: “In succumbing apparently to Wagner’s out- and over-flowing nature, the *Betrachtende* has himself partaken of its energy [*Kraft*] and has become powerful *through and against him*, so to speak; and everyone who examines himself closely knows that a mysterious antagonism [*Gegnerschaft*] belongs even to *Betrachten*, that of confrontation [*Entgegenschauen*]” (*RWB* 7).<sup>16</sup> If this looks like wishful thinking on Nietzsche’s part, a more sustainable thought also emerges at this time, namely, that the best form of resistance, the best source of limits on the single genius, lies in a *plurality* of more or less equal geniuses or forces. The conjunction of *emancipation* with the thought of genuine *pluralism* will have a long trajectory in Nietzsche’s thought. At this time, in its inception, it is explored by him in two contexts: the first is the Greek *agon*, conceived as a regime of reciprocal stimulation and restraint among a plurality of forces or geniuses; the second is contemporary democracy, identified in *HH* as the site of pluralism, of resistance and emancipation from tyrannical forces.<sup>17</sup> Thus, in aphorism 230 of *WS*, entitled “*Tyrants of the Spirit*,” Nietzsche writes: “In our time, anyone expressing a single moral characteristic, as do the persons of Theophrast and Molière, would be considered sick, and one would talk of his ‘fixe idée.’ [...] Nowadays a democracy of *concepts* rules in everyone’s head,—*many together* are the ruler: a single concept that would *wish* to be ruler is, as stated, now called a ‘fixe idée.’ This is *our* way of killing the tyrants,—we point to the lunatic asylum.”<sup>18</sup> These lines illustrate one of two characteristics of Nietzsche’s middle phase that stand out in contrast to his overall treatment of democracy. They are, first, his positive evaluation of democracy and second, his engagement with democracy as a political phenomenon. This can be seen in several texts, such as *WS* 289, where Nietzsche describes “democratic arrangements” as “quarantine institutions against the old pestilence of tyrannical desires,” or *WS* 275, where the “democratization of Europe” is seen as “a link in the chain of those enormous *prophylactic measures*, which are the brainchild of modernity,” as one in a series of modern “dams and fortifications against barbarians, against plagues, against the *enslavement of body and mind!*”

However, Nietzsche's position in *HH* does not represent a complete break with his former position. Nor does it represent a complete, unambiguous affirmation of democratic institutions; indeed, many of his later, deeply critical views are already anticipated here. To begin with the first point, even if there is an engagement with democracy as a political phenomenon, the political is still what it was for the early Nietzsche, a mere means for the advancement of cultural and human perfection. In the aphorism (*WS* 275) on democracy as a prophylactic measure against enslavement, the ultimate fruit is not *political* freedom but the "art of gardening," a reference to the *retreat* from politics described at the end of Voltaire's *Candide*:

Secure foundations at last, so that the future can build upon them without danger! It is no longer possible that the fruit-fields of culture will once again be destroyed overnight by wild and senseless mountain waters! Dams and fortifications against barbarians, against plagues, against *enslavement of body and mind*! And all of this, taken literally and crudely to start off with, is gradually understood in a higher and more spiritual way, so that all the measures mentioned here seem to be the brilliant preparatory groundwork for the highest artist of the art of gardening, who can only turn to his real task, when this one has been completed!— (*WS* 275)

Nor is Nietzsche unambiguous in his affirmation of democracy, even as means for a futural art of gardening. Buried in this aphorism is a worry about "something barren and uniform in the faces" of those working for democracy, as if the "grey dust" from their dam-building labor has "penetrated into their brains" (*WS* 275, *KSA* 2:671).<sup>19</sup> Similarly, the text (*WS* 289) on democratic arrangements as quarantine institutions against tyranny ends with the remark that they are "very useful and very boring."<sup>20</sup> Even where contemporary democracy is considered from a purely political (not a cultural) point of view, Nietzsche's affirmation is highly qualified. Thus, aphorism 293 of *WS* begins by reiterating the thought of emancipation: "Democracy wants to create and guarantee freedom [*Unabhängigkeit*] for as many as possible, freedom of opinion, of lifestyle and income." But the aphorism winds up by *deferring* this emancipatory concept of democracy *to the future*: "—I speak of democracy as of something to come. That which now already goes by that name differs from the older forms of government only because it is riding with *new horses*; the streets are still the same old ones, and the wheels are still the same old ones.—Is the danger with *these* vehicles of the people's welfare [*Völkerwohles*] really less than it was?" (*WS* 293). So even where the concept of democracy is focused on political freedom rather than culture, the value of contemporary democracy is qualified by Nietzsche: at best, it is a mere means for the future realization (not of culture, the art of gardening, but) of genuine political freedom. Whence these gestures of deferral? Why does Nietzsche deny or at least complicate the identification of democracy with emancipation at the very moment in which he first expresses it?

One clue is given in the closing line of the text just cited: the conception of democracy as a vehicle for the well-being of the people. While this seems harmless enough, it has an altogether different, more menacing aspect in another aphorism from this period, one that actually predates this one. In *HH* 472, Nietzsche describes the democratic conception of government as one in which “one sees in it nothing but a tool of the popular will [*des Volkswillen*], not an above in comparison with a below but merely a function of the one and only sovereign, the people” (*KSA* 2, p. 303). The argument in this text is that the concept of popular sovereignty has the effect of destroying the religious aura of the state, so that “modern democracy is the historical form of the *decay of the state*.” As we shall see, this thought returns in Nietzsche’s later thought on democracy. Of immediate concern is another implication of the concept of popular sovereignty, one that also returns in Nietzsche’s later thought under the rubric of “the autonomous herd” (*BGE* 202): Where government becomes “but a function of the one and only sovereign, the people,” does democracy not run the risk of replacing one kind of tyranny—the tyranny of the despotic genius—with another: the tyranny of the people? Under democracy, Nietzsche argues in *WS* 292, “all parties are now required to flatter the ‘people’ and to give it all kinds of reliefs and freedoms, whereby it finally becomes omnipotent” (*KSA* 2, p. 684). So if Nietzsche denies the emancipatory value of democracy in the moment that he expresses it, one reason is that democracy emancipates us from the concentration of power in a single despot or genius at the cost of establishing another kind of tyranny: that of the “people.” But that is not all. There is another reason for the rupture between democracy and emancipation, one that is implicit in the singular word “‘people.’” It is that Nietzsche doubts—while expressing—democracy’s claim to be the site of *genuine pluralism*; and without genuine pluralism, there can be no genuine freedom for Nietzsche, no effective resistance to tyranny, be it a single genius or a singular “people.” This doubt was already encountered in Nietzsche’s remarks that the faces of democrats are “barren and uniform” (*einformig*) and that democratic institutions are “useful but boring” (*langweilig*).

In a *Nachlass* note from 1880, these remarks come to occupy center stage in Nietzsche’s thought. This text is important because it brings together both reasons I have given for Nietzsche’s lack of confidence in democracy: the tyranny of the people and its promotion of uniformity, not pluralism. The text is also a milestone in Nietzsche’s thought on democracy, since it inaugurates a critical turn that will only abate to some extent in the late 1880s:

The more the feeling of unity with one’s fellow humans gains the upper hand, the more human beings are made uniform [*uniformirt*], the more they will perceive all difference [or diversity: *Verschiedenheit*] as immoral. In this way, the sand of humanity necessarily comes into being: all very similar, very small, very round, very accommodating, very boring. Christianity and democracy have done the most

to drive humanity along the path toward sand. A small, weak, glowing feeling of contentment equally distributed among all, an improved and extreme form of Chineseness, would that be the last image that humanity could offer? Inevitably, if we remain on the path of moral sensibilities until now. A great reflection is needed, perhaps humanity must draw a line under its past, perhaps it must address a new canon to all singular individuals [*Einzelnen*]: be different from all others, and take pleasure in each being different from the other; the crudest monsters have certainly been eradicated under the prevailing regime of morality thus far—that was its task; but we do not wish to live on thoughtlessly under a regime of fear in the face of wild beasts. For so long, far too long, the word has been: One like All, One for All [*Einer wie Alle, Einer für Alle*]. (KSA 9:3[98], 1880; cf. D 174)

In this text, Nietzsche's earlier concerns about the tyranny of the people and the promotion of uniformity under democracy are combined and concentrated in a new thought: the *systematic exclusion of difference*. A further novelty of this text—equally programmatic for Nietzsche's further thought—is its *focus on morality*, on *values*: It is by being “perceived” and branded as “immoral” that difference or diversity is excluded, to which Nietzsche responds by announcing a new moral “canon” of difference and the affirmation of difference, to be addressed to singular individuals (*Einzelnen*). Nietzsche's actual argumentation at the level of values is encapsulated in his closing words, “Einer wie Alle, Einer für Alle”: Insofar as morality is dominated by the Christian-democratic values of altruism (*Einer für Alle*) and equal moral worth (*Einer wie Alle*), it is having the inevitable consequence of breeding actual uniformity among people (*Einer wie Alle*), to the exclusion of difference. In Nietzsche's subsequent thought this concern comes to be focused on the democratic value of equality and the claim that in reality, “equality for all [*Gleichheit für Alle*]” is equivalent to a “making equal of all [*Gleichmachung Aller*]” (KSA 11:27[80]; also ‘*Ausgleichung*’: BGE 242, KSA 5, p. 183, 11:36[17]).

But on what grounds does Nietzsche object to this development? His objection, *nota bene*, does not entail a wholesale rejection of our Christian-democratic values, which are valued for eliminating the brazen immorality of the “crudest animals” of human history. His objection concerns the *cost* of this achievement, specifically the cost to *the future of humankind*, as expressed in the question: “Would this be the last image that humanity could offer?” It is important to see that this question does not simply reflect an elitist identification with the few singular individuals (*Einzelne*) against the “sand of humanity.” At stake for Nietzsche is not a few individuals but, rather, *the future of humankind* and the underlying worry that the concern for the equal distribution of happiness or contentment, as promoted by Christian-democratic values, and a concern for the future of humankind pull in opposite directions.

Four features, then, stand out in this text:

1. the claim that Christian-democratic values breed uniformity to the exclusion of difference;
2. Nietzsche's focus on morality or values;

3. the general or generic orientation of Nietzsche's objection to democratic values: toward the *future of humankind*; and
4. the claim that there is a tension between the happiness of all individuals, promoted by Christian-democratic values, and the future of humankind.

All four features are programmatic for the next phase in Nietzsche's thought on democracy, as we will see. But first we must take stock of the trajectory I have traced through the middle phase of Nietzsche's thought on democracy.

We have seen how, at the beginning of his middle phase (*HH*), democracy is conceived in positive terms as a countermodel to tyrannical concentrations of power: that is, as an alternative, *pluralistic* model of power that offers effective *resistance* to, and with that a form of *emancipation* from, tyrannical forces. We have also seen how, toward the end of this middle phase, Nietzsche's confidence in democracy has broken down under the weight of two considerations: that democracy only emancipates us from the tyranny of despotic power by establishing a tyranny of the mob, and the underlying realization that democracy promotes uniformity, "the sand of humanity," rather than genuine plurality and difference. This about-turn in Nietzsche's assessment of democracy raises a number of questions:

1. Where does Nietzsche now come to locate genuine pluralism if not in democracy? How *can* pluralism be realized and practiced?

And if democracy's failure as a site of pluralism also spells its failure as a form of emancipation,

2. What, then, becomes of the emancipatory claims of democracy for Nietzsche? How does he come to interpret these claims in the light of their collapse?
3. And what about Nietzsche's own emancipatory impulse: How does he come to articulate and locate the emancipatory impulse that he once identified with democracy?

### Nietzsche's Later Work (1883–1886)

These questions give us the key coordinates for understanding Nietzsche's thought on democracy in what is probably its richest and most important phase, the period leading up to *BGE* and *GM*, from around 1883–84 to 1886. In considering this later phase in Nietzsche's thought on democracy, I will restrict myself to a few lines of development that take off from the text we have just considered. For lack of a better word, I will call it *the pivotal text*.



In the pivotal text we saw that Nietzsche's concerns with the tyranny of the people and the promotion of uniformity under democracy are concentrated in the claim that Christian-democratic values systematically exclude difference. In Nietzsche's subsequent thought this is radicalized in the claim that a *hatred of authority* is endemic to democracy, what Nietzsche calls the "democratic idiosyncrasy against everything that rules and wants to rule, the modern *Misarchism* (to coin a bad word for a bad state of affairs)" (*GM* II:12, *KSA* 5, p. 315). This claim is often made in contexts that take up and criticize the emancipatory and egalitarian claims of democracy. Time and again, Nietzsche looks to hollow out these claims by arguing that misarchism is the underlying motivation and meaning of the democratic values of equality and freedom. A good example is note 26[282] (*KSA* 11) from 1884. Here Nietzsche begins with democracy's self-understanding as emancipation: "According to whether a people feels: 'The Few have the right, the insight, the gift of ruling etc.' or 'The Many have it'—one has an *oligarchic* regime or a *democratic* one." If these lines identify democracy with its own claims to freedom and equality in the sense of popular sovereignty or self-rule, the next paragraph reinterprets these claims in a way that collapses them. The text continues: "Monarchy *represents* the belief in One wholly Supreme Being, a leader savior demigod. *Aristocracy* represents the belief in an elite humanity and higher caste. Democracy represents the *unbelief* in great humans and an elite society: 'everyone is the same as everyone' 'At bottom we are all self-interested cattle and rabble'" (*KSA* 11:26[282]). Here the democratic ideal is recast in negative, nihilistic terms: It is because we are unable to believe in any authoritative figures or classes that we fall back on the ideals of popular self-rule and equality.

What Nietzsche here describes as "unbelief" soon takes on a more active, menacing aspect. In a subsequent note from the same notebook, he writes of the "skepsis of a democratic age that rejects the higher kind of human": "The psychology of this century is essentially directed against higher natures: they are supposed to pay for their humanity" (*KSA* 11:26[342]). By the time of *BGE* (two years later), this rejection has become an out-and-out "hostility." In aphorism 22, Nietzsche refers the physicist's belief in the lawfulness of nature to the "democratic instincts of the modern soul" and in particular, its belief in equality: "'Everywhere equality before the law—in this respect nature does not have it otherwise or better than us': a charming afterthought in which once again the hostility of the mob towards everything privileged and self-satisfied, as well as a second and finer atheism, is disguised. 'Ni dieu, ni maître'—that's how you want it: and therefore 'long live the law of nature'!—is it not so?" (*BGE* 22). In other texts from 1885–86 this "hostility" is then radicalized into "hatred" in connection with the slave revolt thematized in *GM*: a hatred on the part of malcontents who are only able to affirm themselves by projecting their self-hatred onto others

as a “hatred of those that are happy, proud, victorious” (*KSA* 11:35[22], pp. 517–18; cf. *KSA* 12:2[13]). In the end, misarchism is generalized by Nietzsche, as “a democratic baseline taste in all evaluation [*demokratischer Grund-Geschmack aller Werthschätzung*], in which the belief in great things and human beings turns into mistrust, and finally into unbelief and becomes the causal reason why greatness dies out” (*KSA* 11:35[22]).

This line of development enables us to address question 2 raised earlier: What becomes of the emancipatory claims of democracy, after Nietzsche rejects them? How does he come to interpret these claims in the light of their collapse? What we see under the rubric of misarchism is a sustained, increasingly radicalized effort on Nietzsche’s part to hollow out the emancipatory and egalitarian claims of democracy. The democratic values of equality and liberty are referred successively to unbelief, rejection, hostility, and finally a hatred of authority and rule, as their underlying motivation and meaning. But if Nietzsche rejects the emancipatory claims of democracy, where does he come to locate his own emancipatory impulse? How does he come to articulate the interest in freedom that he once identified with democracy?

For Nietzsche, as we saw, freedom is only possible under conditions of genuine pluralism. And insofar as democracy involves a systematic exclusion of difference, pluralism becomes impossible. In the pivotal text we saw Nietzsche’s earlier concerns with popular tyranny and uniformity concentrated in a concern with the exclusion of difference under democratic morality. In the later works these concerns only become more pronounced. Under the sign of misarchism, the exclusion of difference is radicalized into the motivating hatred behind democratic values. Under the sign of the “autonomous herd” (*BGE* 202), Nietzsche describes the dominant social type or group: the “herd-being” (*Heerden-Wesen*), whose life interests are served by those same values. It is therefore unsurprising that Nietzsche turns to those excluded by the autonomous herd for his hopes of emancipation. Nietzsche’s earlier preoccupation with tyranny is redirected from the figure of genius to that of “the autonomous herd,” transforming the question of emancipation: His question now concerns the sources of resistance to the masses, to the tyranny of mob rule (*Pöbelherrschaft*). At the same time, the figure of genius, recast as the deviant, nonconformist, or exceptional human beings (*Ausnahme-Menschen*), looks increasingly fragile and vulnerable to Nietzsche. His emancipatory impulse is detached from the tyranny of genius and transforms into a concern with protecting exceptional individuals from the mob. This much is clear from the texts on misarchism discussed above and from many others from this period. A typical example is note 26[89]: “Exceptional spirits go wrong more easily; the story of their suffering, their illnesses, their rage at the loud quacking about virtue among all the moral ganders etc. Everything conspires against them, they are embittered at always being out of place.—Danger in democratic ages. Absolute contempt as security measure” (*KSA* 11:26[89], p. 173).

At this point, it looks as if Nietzsche is regressing to his earliest position where he took the side of individual genius, with all its dangers of tyrannical excess, against the many. Or alternatively, it is as if he takes the side of an elite social class or caste: the *Ausnahme-Menschen* against the masses. Clearly, these are serious charges in considering the relevance and value of Nietzsche's critique of democracy today. They are not entirely wrong, but they do call for a differentiated response. In this context, I will restrict myself to four points.

First, it is wrong to see Nietzsche as investing exclusive and absolute value in the One or the Few against the Many, as he sometimes does in early writings. To see why, we must go back to the pivotal text. Here, Nietzsche's objection to the leveling tendency of democratic values is expressed in this question: "Would this be the last image that humanity could offer?" This is just one of the forms taken by the question of ends driving Nietzsche's political thought: What ought humankind to become? As such, it does not simply reflect an elitist identification with one or a few singular individuals (*Einzelne*) against the "sand of humanity." At stake for Nietzsche is not a few individuals but, in fact, the *future of humankind*, a concern that has its sources in a positive ethical impulse that fuels Nietzsche's thought from beginning to end: that is, his perfectionist demand that we overcome ourselves as we are, that we do everything to enhance or elevate the human species by extending the range of human possibilities. Exceptional or singular individuals figure *not* as the exclusive beneficiaries but as the great experimenters, as the key to realizing a perfectionist demand that has a *generic* or *general* orientation toward humankind (*die Menschheit, der Mensch, der Typus "Mensch," die Species "Mensch," die Pflanze "Mensch,"* etc.). This generic orientation is already present in many early texts, as I have argued elsewhere,<sup>21</sup> but it is most clearly expressed in the concept of responsibility (*Verantwortlichkeit*) used to define the real philosopher in *BGE*: the philosopher as "the human of the most wide-ranging responsibility, who has the conscience for the total development of the human being [*des Menschen*]" (*BGE* 61, *KSA* 5:79).<sup>22</sup> In the pivotal text, Nietzsche's perfectionism is expressed as a tension between the equal distribution of happiness or contentment advanced by democratic values, on one side, and the future of humankind, on the other. Thereafter, in *BGE*, this is radicalized into a stark *either-or* disjunction between compassion with suffering individuals, on one side, and compassion with humankind at large (*der Mensch* [*BGE* 225]) and its fate, on the other; or again, between the contraction of humanity (*Verkleinerung*) under the rule of utilitarian-democratic values, on one side, and the enhancement of humanity (*Vergrößerung, Erhöhung* [*BGE* 44, 212, 225, 257]), on the other. This disjunction between contraction and enhancement at the level of humankind is one of the key axes of Nietzsche's critique of democracy in *BGE*. It does not inscribe a confrontation

between two classes: the interests or absolute value of an elite class against the masses. Rather, it describes a confrontation between the domination of one type or disposition (the herd-being, the "misarchistic" *Grundgeschmack aller Werthschätzung*) under democracy and the fate of the entire species to which we all belong. Democracy, according to Nietzsche, confronts us with an irresolvable conflict between the interests of one type or disposition, which comes to dominate under democratic conditions, and the interests of the species as whole. The practical effect of this disjunction, as far as I can tell, is to force a choice upon us between the alternatives of enhancing or contracting humankind: We must choose *either* for the future of humankind—its enhancement—*or* for compassion with actual lives, at the cost of the species—its contraction. The disturbing implication of this line of thought is that, in respecting the equal moral worth of all individuals, we live carelessly: at the cost of the future of our species. This is not because there is something inherently wrong with equal moral worth as a value but, rather, because it allows one human type to flourish at the expense of others, with disastrous consequences for the whole of humankind.

Returning to the problem of regression, the charge that the later Nietzsche reverts to his earlier position raises once again the specter of the tyranny of genius and the question of limits. My second response to this charge concerns Nietzsche's pluralistic impulse. Earlier the question was raised: What happens to the thought of pluralism? Where does Nietzsche come to locate genuine pluralism if not in democracy? In Nietzsche's later thought, his pluralistic impulse, like his emancipatory impulse, migrates toward those excluded by the herd-beings. Or rather, it is *because* he conceives of them in the plural, as a pluralistic community of "exceptional humans," "philosophers," or "legislators of the future," that he places his hopes for freedom in them. Nietzsche is unclear—one should say systematically unclear—about these figures. The scanty and dispersed sources give us no clear picture of an ideal community and no clear decision on the relation of *Ausnahme-Menschen* to democracy.<sup>23</sup> What is clear is their task: the transvaluation of all values; and there are enough indications that Nietzsche conceives this in practice as a pluralistic *agon* of self-legislation and -experimentation inter pares.<sup>24</sup> The *agon*, if it is to be a nondestructive and productive conflict among more or less equals, depends not just on relations of reciprocal provocation and stimulation but also on relations of reciprocal limitation.<sup>25</sup> The later Nietzsche, then, does not regress to his early standpoint in genius and the ideal of self-limitation; rather, in conceiving the "higher" or "exceptional beings" in pluralistic, *agonal* terms, he returns to his central insight: that the best source of limits on the genius is "a second genius," that is, a *plurality* of more or less equal geniuses or forces. Nietzsche's youthful explorations of the Greek *agon*, as a pluralistic countermodel to tyrannical concentrations of power, is revived by the later Nietzsche and made fruitful for what he now sees as the central task: the transvaluation of all values.

Third, to understand this better, we must recall another programmatic feature of the pivotal text: Nietzsche's focus on morality or values. From 1883–84 on, Nietzsche's treatment of democracy is characterized by the prevalence of expressions like 'das demokratische Zeitalter,' 'der demokratische Geschmack,' and 'der demokratische Grundgeschmack aller Wertschätzung.' As these expressions indicate, Nietzsche's thought on democracy at this time revolves around a critique of modernity that has its center of gravity in morality or values. To be specific, Nietzsche engages democracy within the framework of a critique of the dominant values of modernity. This is well illustrated by a *Nachlass* text from 1884 that takes up the democratic value of equality: "I have encountered nobody with whom I could speak about morality in *my* way: thus far, no-one has been honest and bold enough for that. This could in part be a matter of chance. [. . .] In the main, however, I believe that mendacity in matters of morality belongs to the character of this democratic age. An age like ours, which has adopted as its motto the great lie 'equality among men,' is shallow, hasty and geared towards the semblance that all is well with humankind, and that 'good' and 'evil' is no longer a problem" (*KSA* 11:26[364]). Here Nietzsche's complaint against the democratic age concerns the unquestioning acceptance of its values, their apparent self-evidence, and the underlying assumption that all is well and morality is *no longer a problem*. For Nietzsche that *is* the problem, or at least the first obstacle to be overcome. For if the mendacity of the democratic age, typified by the slogan of equality, is to pretend that morality is not a problem, then Nietzschean honesty (*Ehrlichkeit*) requires that we problematize the democratic values of our age. As Nietzsche's own genealogical critiques show, this involves breaking the autonomy of our highest values and undermining their self-evidence by referring them back to their origins in the basic life interests of those who promote them. In this vein, the ideal of *Gleichheit für Alle* is identified by him with the actual *Gleichmachung Aller*, a process of equalization or leveling that serves the interests of that form of life that thrives and comes to dominate under the rule of democratic values: the "herd-being."<sup>26</sup> But genealogy is not solely negative. In its very radicality and comprehensiveness, Nietzsche's critique of values issues in the call for a transvaluation of all values. And it is as the creative sources of new values, born of the intensified atmosphere of a pluralistic contest of legislation, that exceptional individuals are valued by him. Once again, it is important to remember that when Nietzsche opposes the "old" Enlightenment of the "democratic herd" and the "equalization of all," he does so from a position in a "new Enlightenment" that serves the life interests not of a specific social class but of all of us: "the self-overcoming of man [*des Menschen*]" (*KSA* 11:27[80]).

My fourth and last response to the charges of regression and elitism is that Nietzsche's rejection of democratic values does not simply lead to a rejection of democracy in favor of aristocratic regimes. Even if he subjects democratic

values to a total critique, even if he recognizes more clearly now than ever what he already saw in *HH*, that democracy is the nihilistic form of decay (*Form vom Verfall*) of the state (*HH* 472), this does not lead to complete despair: “A declining world is a pleasure not *just* for those who contemplate it (but also for those who are destroying it). Death is not just necessary, ‘ugly’ is not enough, there is greatness, sublimity of all kinds with declining worlds. Also moments of sweetness, also hopes and sunsets. Europe is a declining world. Democracy is the *decaying form* [*Verfalls-Form*] of the state” (*KSA* 11:26[434]).<sup>27</sup> In his later writings, Nietzsche’s *philosophical* project of a “new Enlightenment” concerning our highest values is coupled—with increasing urgency—to a *pragmatic* concern with the (optimal) conditions for transvaluation. And in these contexts he often recurs, once again, to an insight from *HH*: that democracy is a major, unstoppable *Gesamtbewegung* (in contrast with the nation-state; *KSA* 11:26[352]).<sup>28</sup> The results of Nietzsche’s pragmatic deliberations, for anyone who tries to reconstruct his thought on this topic, are profoundly equivocal.<sup>29</sup> Nietzsche argues *both* that democracy represents the worst conditions for a caste of higher humans capable of the transvaluation of all values (e.g., *A* 43) *and* that it offers the best conditions for them (e.g., *BGE* 242); indeed, he argues for a whole *range* of positions between these two extremes. But that is the subject for another article.<sup>30</sup> At this point, it suffices to say that Nietzsche’s radical critique of democratic values is coupled with a pragmatic approach to democracy as both the worst and the best condition for transvaluation.

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## NOTES

1. William Connolly, *Identity/Difference: Democratic Negotiations of Political Paradox* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), especially x–xiii, 158–97; William Connolly, *Pluralism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005), especially 121–28; Bonnie Honig, *Political Theory and the Displacement of Politics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), especially chap. 3, 42–75; Lawrence J. Hatab, *A Nietzschean Defense of Democracy* (Chicago: Open Court, 1995); Alan Schrift, “Nietzsche for Democracy?” *Nietzsche-Studien* 29 (2000): 220–33. For further references, see also H. W. Siemens, “Nietzsche’s Political Philosophy. A Review of Recent Literature,” *Nietzsche-Studien* 30 (2001): 509–26.

2. Hatab, who devotes a chapter in *A Nietzschean Defense of Democracy* to Nietzsche’s critique of democracy, is the exception.

3. An indispensable resource for my research into the this topic was the article “Demokratie,” in *Das Nietzsche-Wörterbuch*, ed. P. J. M. Van Tongeren, G. Schank, and H. W. Siemens (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2004), vol. 1, 568–83.

4. All translations are mine.

5. This translates as “the democratic baseline taste in all evaluation” (*KSA* 11:35[22], p. 518). See also *KSA* 11:38[6], 13:14[22]; *BT* “Attempt” 4; *GS* 368; *BGE* 44, 210, 224, 239, 254.

6. This is well illustrated by two late texts. First, Nietzsche writes:

*The modern ideas as false.*

“freedom”  
 “equal rights”  
 “humaneness”  
 “compassion”  
 “the genius”  
 democratic misunderstanding (as a consequence of the milieu, of the spirit of the times)  
 pessimistic misunderstanding (as impoverished life[-form], as detachment of “the will”)  
 the *décadence*-misunderstanding (*névrose*)  
 “the people”  
 “the race”  
 “the nation”  
 “democracy”  
 “tolerance”  
 “the milieu”  
 “utilitarianism”  
 “civilization”  
 “women’s emancipation”  
 “popular education”  
 “progress”  
 “sociology” (*KSA* 13:16[82], 1889)

See also the “Attempt at a Self-Criticism” on the democratic age of the Greeks: “What if [...] the Greeks, precisely in the times of their dissolution and debilitation, became ever more optimistic, superficial, theatrical, more and more ardent for logic and a logical interpretation of the world, and so both more ‘cheerful’ and more ‘scientific’? What? Could it be that—in spite of all ‘modern ideas’ and the prejudices of democratic taste—the victory of *optimism*, the now dominant *rationality*, the practical and theoretical *utilitarianism*, together with democracy itself, with which it coincides,—are a symptom of declining force, of approaching senescence, of physiological fatigue?” (*BT* “Attempt” 4, 1886).

7. See, e.g., H. Ottmann, *Philosophie und Politik bei Nietzsche* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1987), 93, 109, on *SE*.

8. Daniel W. Conway, *Nietzsche and the Political* (London: Routledge, 1997), 2–3.

9. On Socrates/rationalism and democracy, see *KSA* 7:23[14], 2[3]; also *KSA* 12:9[20], 9[25]. On the “democratic origins of the chorus,” see *BT* 7, *KSA* 1:52–53; on the sources of this theory in the Schlegel brothers and Hegel, see B. von Reibnitz, *Ein Kommentar zu Friedrich Nietzsche, “Die Geburt der Tragödie” (Kap. 1–12)* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1992), 186–87. Empedocles’ failed program of democratic reform is also thematized in the early *Nachlass*, in contexts that (in contrast with Socrates) are rather positive about democracy: see, e.g., *KSA* 7:23[14], 8:6[28], 6[38], 6[50]. On this, see H. Caygill, “Philosophy and Cultural Reform in the Early Nietzsche,” in *The Fate of the New Nietzsche*, ed. H. Caygill and K. Ansell-Pearson (Aldershot: Avebury, 1993), 109–22.

10. See Richard Wagner, *Sämtliche Schriften und Dichtungen. Volksausgabe* (Leipzig: Breitkopf und Härtel, 1911), vol. 8, 3–29. Originally a letter written to King Ludwig in 1864, Wagner’s text was published in 1873. See Nietzsche’s enthusiastic references to it in his letters to Carl von Gersdorff of April 8, 1869, and February 3, 1873 (*KSB* 3:36, 4:131). See also S. Barbera, “Ein Sinn und unzählige Hieroglyphen,” in “*Centauren-Geburten*” *Wissenschaft, Kunst und Philosophie beim jungen Nietzsche*, ed. T. Borsche, F. Gerratana, and A. Venturelli (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1994), 217–33. The impact of Wagner’s essay on the early Nietzsche is clearly evinced in numerous texts, especially *BT* 18, *KSA* 1:115–116, 7:6[3], 7[167], 7[172].

11. Cf. *KSA* 7:7[121], 7[160].

12. Nietzsche writes, "Die Einwirkung des Genius ist gewöhnlich, daß ein neues Illusionsnetz über eine Masse geschlungen wird, unter dem sie leben kann. Dies ist die magische Einwirkung des Genius auf die untergeordneten Stufen. Zugleich aber giebt es eine aufsteigende Linie zum Genius: diese zerreit immer die vorhandenen Netze, bis endlich im erreichten Genius ein hheres Kunstziel erreicht wird" (*KSA* 7:6[3]). The terms 'Wahn, Wahnvorstellung,' and 'Wahngebilde' are also used intensively by Nietzsche in the early 1870s in connection with Schopenhauer's *Wahn* theory (see n. 13 below). This is especially so in *KSA* 7, notebooks 5 and 7, but see also *BT* 3, *KSA* 1:37; *BT* 21, *KSA* 1:132; and *BT* 15, *KSA* 1:99 (in connection with Socratism).

13. The expression 'Genius der Gattung' is used by Schopenhauer in his metaphysics of sexual love (*The World as Will and Representation*, trans. E. F. Payne [New York: Dover, 1958], vol. 2, chap. 44, 531ff.) to describe a mechanism of deception (*Wahn*) whereby individuals actually advance the interests of the species (*Gattung*) in pursuing what appear to them as the objects of their own desire. In Wagner's "ber Staat und Religion" it appears as the "spirit of the species" (*Geist der Gattung*) in the context of his account of Schopenhauer's *Wahn* theory. The young Nietzsche too applies it to art. As the Dionysian "oneness in the genius of the species" (*Einssein im Genius der Gattung*), opposed to Apollonian individuation and measure (*Maass*), it names "something never felt" (*etwas Nie-empfundenes*), an ecstatic sense of community in need of a new, non-Apollonian symbolic order, identified by Nietzsche with the "gesture of dance" (*Tanzgeberde* [*Dionysische Weltanschauung* 4, *KSA* 1:577; also *KSA* 1:574; *BT* 2, *KSA* 1:33]) but also with "tone" (*KSA* 7:3[21], 3[37]).

14. See, e.g., *KSA* 7:32[32], pp. 764–65 (cf. *HH* 577), 32[34], 32[61]. In *KSA* 7:32[35] Nietzsche remarks on the good fortune that Wagner was not born to a position of power and privilege and was not given the opportunity to exercise political power.

15. See also the retrospective note:

To win for *myself* the *immorality* of the artist with regard toward my material (humankind): this has been my work in recent years.

To win for myself the *spiritual freedom* and *joy* of being able to create and not to be tyrannized by alien ideals. (At bottom it matters little *what* I had to liberate myself from: my favorite form of *liberation* was the artistic form: that is, I cast an *image* of that which had hitherto bound me: thus Schopenhauer, Wagner, the Greeks (genius, the saint, metaphysics, all ideals until now, the highest morality)—but also a *tribute of gratitude*. (*KSA* 10:16[10])

16. Nietzsche writes, "Denn gerade mit diesem Gefhle nimmt er Theil an der gewaltigsten Lebensusserung Wagner's, dem Mittelpunkte seiner Kraft, jener dmonischen *Uebertragbarkeit* und Selbstentusserung seiner Natur, welche sich Anderen ebenso mittheilen kann, als sie andere Wesen sich selber mittheilt und im Hingeben und Annehmen ihre Grsse hat. Indem der Betrachtende scheinbar der aus- und berstrmenden Natur Wagner' s unterliegt, hat er an ihrer Kraft selber Antheil genommen und ist so gleichsam *durch ihn gegen ihn* mchtig geworden; und Jeder, der sich genau pruft, weiss, dass selbst zum Betrachten eine geheimnisvolle Gegnerschaft, die des Entgegenschauens, gehrt" (*RWB* 7).

17. There are also a few texts where *ancient* democracy is pitted against tyranny. See especially *KSA* 9:4[301]: Nietzsche's premise is that "all Greeks (fr. Gorgias in Plato) believed the possession of power as tyrant to be the most enviable happiness," and he goes on to argue: "The equality [*Gleichheit*] of citizens is the means for avoiding tyranny, their reciprocal invigilation and constraint" (cf. *KSA* 8:6[28]).

18. Nietzsche writes, "Jetzt herrscht die Demokratie der *Begriffe* in jedem Kopfe,—*viele zusammen* sind der Herr: ein einzelner Begriff, der Herr sein *wollte*, heisst jetzt, wie gesagt, 'fixe Idee.' Diess ist *unsere* Art, die Tyrannen zu morden,—wir winken nach dem Irrenhause hin" (*WS* 230).



19. Nietzsche writes, “Nun kann es Einem angesichts Derer, welche jetzt bewusst und ehrlich für diese Zukunft arbeiten, in der That bange werden: es liegt etwas Oedes und Einförmiges in ihren Gesichtern, und der graue Staub scheint auch bis in ihre Gehirne hineingeweht zu sein” (*WS* 275, *KSA* 2:671).

20. This worry is most emphatic in the *Vorstufe* to this text, which begins with the words: “One gains a more patient and milder attitude toward all the tiresome and boring [things] that the rule of democracy brings with it (and will bring with it—) when one views it as a centuries-long and very necessary ‘quarantine,’ which society --- in its own sphere in order to hinder the new ‘outbreak’ [? *die neue ‘Einschleppung’*], the new proliferation of the despotic, violent and autocratic” (*KSA* 8:47[10]).

21. See my article “Agonal Communities of Taste: Law and Community in Nietzsche’s Philosophy of Transvaluation,” special issue, “Nietzsche and the Agon,” *Journal of Nietzsche Studies* 24 (Fall 2002): 85–91.

22. Nietzsche writes: “Der Philosoph, wie *wir* ihn verstehen, wir freien Geister—, als der Mensch der umfänglichsten Verantwortlichkeit, der das Gewissen für die Gesamt-Entwicklung des Menschen hat” (*BGE* 61, *KSA* 5:79). It is hard to imagine a more general (*Gesamt*), inclusive (*umfänglichsten*) formulation than this. In *BGE* 203 Nietzsche describes the burden or “weight” of responsibility (*das Gewicht einer solchen Verantwortlichkeit*) borne by the philosophers of the future and their task, the “transvaluation of values”: on one side is the fear of a “total degeneration [*Gesamt-Entartung*] of the human being,” and on the other, the hope that “the human being is still not exhausted for the greatest possibilities.” In *BGE* 212, the breadth of this generic responsibility is then proposed as part of the notion of “greatness” (*Grösse*) required for the enhancement (*Vergrößerung*) of the human being: It is a matter of “how much and how much diversity one could bear and take upon oneself, how *far* one could stretch one’s responsibility” (“wie viel und vielerlei Einer tragen und auf sich nehmen, wie *weit* Einer seine Verantwortlichkeit spannen könnte”).

23. There are texts where he argues that the higher caste should be beyond politics (*KSA* 11:26[173]) and not exercise political power (*KSA* 10:7[21]), others where he argues that they should not just rule but also experiment with moral values (*KSA* 12:9[153]), and others where the new philosophers are supposed to be distinct from, but supported by, a ruling caste (*KSA* 11:35[47]). There are places where he advocates a sharpening of all oppositions (*Gegensätze*) and a removal of equality (*KSA* 10:7[21]) and others where he advocates “opening up distances [*Distanzen*], but not creating oppositions [*Gegensätze*]” (*KSA* 12:10[63]).

24. See, e.g., *KSA* 11:35[72]: “NB. There must be many *Übermenschen*: all goodness [or quality: *Güte*] develops only among equals. *One* god would always be a *devil*! A ruling caste [*Rasse*]. On the ‘rulers of the earth.’” On ‘Rasse’ as a *social* category in Nietzsche’s thought, see Gerd Schank, “*Rasse*” and “*Züchtung*” bei Nietzsche (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2000).

25. In “Homer’s Contest” (*KSA* 1:783–792), Nietzsche describes the Greek agon as a play of forces (*Wettspiel der Kräfte*) that is “inimical to the ‘exclusivity’ of genius in the modern sense, and presupposes that in a natural order of things there are always *several* geniuses who stimulate [*reizen*] one another to deeds, as they also hold one another within the bounds of measure [*des Maaßes*]. That is the crux of the Hellenic notion of contest: it abhors the rule of one [*Alleinherrschaft*] and fears its dangers; it desires, as a *protective measure* against the genius—a second genius” (*KSA* 1:789). The best available translation of this text is by Christa Acampora, trans., “Homer’s Contest,” *Nietzscheana* (North American Nietzsche Society) 5 (1996).

26. Nietzsche writes:

The new Enlightenment—the old one was [conducted] in the sense of the democratic herd. Equalization of all. The new [Enlightenment] wishes to show the ruling natures the way—to what extent *everything is permitted* to them that is not open to the herd-beings:

1. Enlightenment regarding "truth and lie" in living beings
2. Enlightenment regarding "good and evil"
3. Enlightenment regarding the form-giving transformative forces (the hidden artists)
4. The self-overcoming of man (education of the higher man)
5. The teaching of the eternal return as a *hammer* in the hands of the *most powerful* humans,—(*KSA* 11:27[80])

27. Cf. *BGE* 203; *TI* "Expeditions" 39; *KSA* 10:9[29], 11:34[146].

28. See *WS* 275, *KSA* 12:2[13]. But see also *KSA* 11:34[108]: "Ich nehme die demokratische Bewegung als etwas Unvermeidliches: aber als etwas, das nicht unaufhaltsam ist, sondern sich verzögern läßt."

29. See, e.g., Urs Marti, "*Der grosse Pöbel- und Sklavenaufstand*": *Nietzsches Auseinandersetzung mit Revolution und Demokratie* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1993), chap. 7, especially 212: "To draw a unified picture of them [the humans with a strong will] is not easy, given the abundance of futural visions"; and 233: "For better or worse, research has to make peace with the fact that Nietzsche did not give an unequivocal answer to the question, whether the coming aristocracy will exercise political rule, or exercise moral authority, as an educational elite in a political democracy."

30. I have tried to map out Nietzsche's equivocations in a typology of responses to democracy. See "Nietzsche's Equivocations on the Relation Between Democracy and 'grosse Politik,'" in *Nietzsche, Power, and Politics. Rethinking Nietzsche's Legacy for Political Thought*, ed. H. W. Siemens and V. Roodt (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2008), 231–68.

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