



## Last Lecture

*Heinrich Blücher's Last Lecture*

*From Bazelow's Notes and Tapes*

*[See also the **Letter** from Bazelow to Blücher]*

I

Life has become a burden to men. Everywhere and everyway the young tell us that life, that existence has no meaning. To their elders they say this, and their elders do not know how to answer them, do not know what to tell them. And yet the young, in their despair, have overlooked one question, a question to which one's elders do have an answer. For even if one does not know if there is a meaning to life he might still be able to say "yes my son, I may not know the meaning to life, because you are the only meaning I know. You are my meaning. Don't ask me about my life. Mine might be meaningless. Yet through you I have tried to become more meaningful than I ever was. You are my meaning."

There is a reason for respecting those who have brought you into the world regardless of what you might think of the world. This is a very hard lesson to learn. There are other such lessons. I cannot teach you these lessons. I can only share them with you. I can show them to you, I can help you on the way to find your own solutions, but more I cannot do. We can search for the truth together. For these little opinions that I have here now I have struggled for over fifty years.

The problems with which we are here confronted are as old as philosophy itself. How can a man transform the life he is given into a meaningful existence. Philosophy is concerned with the transformation of life. The word transformation has a great meaning. It means to transform old forms into new forms and these new forms must be invented. Man has the possibility to become a transformer, to bring about the transformation of his own life into one of which he is the master. To be able to exist in the sense of giving a meaning to one's life; this is the possibility of man and only man has this possibility.

Mostly, human beings live by the ideas of others. Living at such a price, if you are not skeptical, you feel much safer. Yet there is another side to the coin. When man does this man stops thinking. In paying this price man's purpose is lost. It is in such times, when men have stopped thinking, in the midst of the storm when we are running about trying to find a tree to cling to, that the task of philosophy comes in. When all opinions have become arbitrary opinions; such a time

can be a great curse or it can be the greatest chance that humanity can have. To be able to do away with old beliefs and become transformers, to be able to fight for peace instead of war, to be able to change the history of mankind up to now. Formerly I could escape these challenges. I could lean on history, or on nature, or on God. Every time, I fell down. I must now learn to walk on my own. Before we can learn to walk we must learn to stand erect. It is a long process in a human being's development to learn this. To learn not to lean on something. Not to walk on crutches.

Any idea accepted for too long becomes superstition. Man is a born maker of ideas. In himself, he is invisible. His person is not discoverable; it shows only in his actions. Man is foremost a doer, and in doing he discovers that to think and act consciously is a very heavy task. Our problem then is this. Man is in the world. What can he do with it?

The ancient Persian prophet Zarathustra once had a very curious idea. He said that man has the strange capability of striving for the better and rejecting the worse. He believed that we are given a life filled with the most beautiful and the most just possibilities and that it is up to us to realize them. If we have missed them, then it is we who are the ultimate losers.

To be free for these possibilities is to be free to pursue wisdom for it is only wisdom that can free us. Freedom is presupposed in wisdom, for freedom means to be free for the search of wisdom. Wisdom and freedom are inseparable. And between them is man, the only "intentional" being. This means that only man can be free.

On the other hand, arbitrariness is the opposite of freedom. Arbitrariness will destroy any kind of freedom visible. It is arbitrariness which is destroying the society we now live in.

It is now that we must ask how we have come to this place, how did we get here. For the question of the meaning of man and of his task is tied to the question of freedom, and the question of freedom is tied to history. Perhaps in order to see man and freedom clearly we must start by analyzing the forces that have worked against man and against freedom. This means that we must investigate the process of dehumanization, because it is the precondition of our times. If the riddle of the world and of all things is man, then let us look into the riddle.

## II

It is said that ours is a time of no belief, for man has lost all of the things he can believe in. This is not so. Man still has at least one belief, an absolute negative one. This belief is called nihilism. Nihilism means nothingness, the devaluation of all values, and the devaluation of all values begins with man because he is the creator of values. This phenomenon of nihilism first given voice by Nietzsche and Kierkegaard has become the condition of our times. They were the first thinkers to have lived nihilism through to its conclusions. They begin by asking a simple question. How can we out of our experience get the idea of nothingness? The answer is that the idea of nothingness represents our supreme experience of the idea of death. We are afraid to become nothing. We do not speak of this idea because we take it for granted. There are other ideas of which one does not speak and which one takes for granted. I am told that in Greek

culture no one ever mentioned the word freedom. Not even Socrates or Plato speaks of freedom. Socrates has no theory of freedom. He has only a fact, and this fact is so self-evident that he does not have to talk about it. One never talks about possessing what one has.

Now any philosopher, any true philosopher, must look at things and ideas that are silently presupposed. Freedom cannot be proved, and yet the greatest minds that have ever lived have acted as if it must be proved and always they have failed. Such freedom as they have sought degenerates into commandments. Even when one speaks of "free will" one introduces only another commander for if only my will is free then I am not free. Philosophers have looked everywhere for freedom. Some have said that only the mind can be free but I say that I am not interested in your thinkable freedom. That has already been done for me by others. We can speculate in thought into eternity, we can go on for a whole lifetime, and what we would have lost is our life. Such freedom becomes empty when it becomes eternal. We prove everything, and we prove nothing. Historically, freedom has been a metaphysical question. And then with Kierkegaard and Nietzsche the question of "nothingness" is raised, the "anti-metaphysical" question. And yet neither those who raised the question of freedom, or the question of nothingness knew that they were attempting to answer a futile question, because both questions are "absolute" questions.

Kant has said that as soon as you attempt to prove the existence of an absolute you come upon one contradiction after another. To attempt to answer "what is freedom", to give it a theoretical definition, is as futile as asking the question "what is nothingness" for both questions are metaphysical and therefore unanswerable. Unless as Kant realized, one ties these questions to concrete facts they become meaningless. It is for this reason that Socrates refused to answer such questions for he realized that they could not be experienced. Once, when he is asked what he thinks of death he answers that he knows nothing of death, because no one will ever die and then returns to tell us about it.

Yet these are still questions that must be asked for they are existential questions despite their unanswerability. If you stop at some point in your life asking unanswerable questions then you find that you are no longer able to ask answerable ones. If you do not ask them you lose your very existence. The very meaning and task of human life is at stake. Kant had said that no man can live without making three assumptions he cannot prove. God, immortality, and freedom.

Freedom came into the world with the idea of wisdom. It was a Greek idea. There is one unique idea of freedom and this idea is shared by only two people. Zarathustra and Socrates. When Socrates died the Greek Republic died. This is what Plato realized. In killing one man they killed the very instrument that makes freedom possible. It is Socrates who first makes the observation that every man is the sum of all men, every man is a singularity. He is here in the world only once and he is absolutely irreplaceable. It is Socrates who first asks the fatal question "who is man"? Who is man, what is he capable of, what are his possibilities? I want neither religious or natural explanations, for these will go on forever. I want an answer "now", and only philosophy can give us this.

The capacity slumbering within man is tremendous. There is something like "might" in man which makes him even more of a riddle. Man is a speculative being if he is anything. Man is the

only being who can develop, on only one condition, that he begins with himself. Man is the giver of meaning for no one else thinks of the meaning of things. Man puts meaning into things and when he forfeits this he becomes worthless. Man is a speaking being, he is accountable for the words he speaks.

All of this was first realized by Socrates for in relation to everything in the world only I can ask the question "who is man", "what are his possibilities"? Today, we have forgotten how to ask these questions. Hundreds of years after Socrates had been put to death Nietzsche wrote "I am alone and rightly so, because of all men I am the only one left who asks who is man and what are his possibilities?" Nietzsche had believed he was the last philosopher, the last man. He had seen that everyone by his birth is a philosophic person. He is cursed, condemned, to ask questions forever. He is the only being who asks questions, because he is the inventor of questions. And yet today there is no one as little respected as man. Men show other men how to die for them, but not how to live for them. Man has indeed become the forgotten man. What we must now develop is a metaphysics of man.

### III

In eighteen forty, eighteen fifty, and eighteen ninety, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, and in a way even Marx saw the coming of nihilism long before it was recognized by other men. Today everyone knows it. We all try to find reasons for it; we say that it is all a product of the human mind or will.

Socialism, Communism, was a kind of new hope, and now it has become the greatest blunder, the greatest defeat we have ever suffered. And all of this was accompanied by the greatest scientific age humanity has ever seen. Positivism became the new philosophy and promised to finally deliver all worthwhile truth into our hands.

We have said that man is a speculator, a born questioner, that he is the maker of values, but man is something more. Man is also a dreamer, and he will live and die for his dreams. To have come to where he is man has passed through many stages of dreams. There are in all three stages of speculative metaphysics, and each of them has produced a certain type of man who we have deified. The first, is the ancient stage of the "myth", the stage of eastern metaphysics, in which everything and everybody changes into something else, something other than what it is. The universe is conceived as "the one" and within this all embracing whole everything is interchangeable. Even death is not an absolute. In the stage of the "myth" we see the creation of "the sage" who is deified, and in time will become the philosopher, and then the scientist.

In the next stage we see the opposing creations of the Hebrew and Greek traditions which ultimately merge. The Hebrew sets up the absolute God who develops only after the east has built its metaphysical foundation and man defines himself in relation to this God. The Greek, contributes to the dream of Heraclitus and the later philosophers, the dream that the world is a cosmos and is so well ordered that all movement is in accordance to the order of law. In the later Christian tradition the Greek and Hebrew merge, and in this stage we see the creation of the "saint" whose purpose it is to die.

The final and last stage is the stage of the great metaphysical systems such as those of Leibnitz and Hegel who create those great systems of dreams that fall and crumble at their feet. Science, history, all are worshiped, all take the place of the fallen God. With the worship of history, of science, and of civilization, we see the creation of the "hero", the last great metaphysical type to be deified. The fate of the hero is that he destroys himself and everything else along with him. The history of metaphysics depends upon a few dreams and a few dreamers who have ruled the world. In the beginning, in the ancient world so rich in myth, the fate of man revolved about the deities he created. His very being stood or fell with the absolutes that were a product of his imagination. Only Confucius and Buddha could see the myths for what they were. The mystic sage, who replaces words with a cosmic intuition, who wishes to overcome the tyranny of language, can only do so in a negation of the very qualities that make man human. Confucius realizes that man cannot think without words, even if they have become lies in the mouths of those who use them. "There comes a time in the life of men when the words must be set in order." The words must be set in order, because man is a speaking being. He is therefore responsible for what he says. In Buddha, we see the consciousness of the falsity of all absolutes, the last desperate attempt to overcome the falsity of the universe through an act of will in which the human being becomes lost forever.

With the transition to the Greek world a new orientation comes into being. In the Greek world and only in the Greek world man discovers the "Logos". When Heraclitus says "I looked into myself, and what did I find-I found the Logos" he discovered the instrument that would change the course of history. The logos created science, but the logos only fulfilled one aspect of man's nature. It did not help him in the human dimension. On the contrary, man discovered he was only the plaything of the logos, the next below God. Man set the logos against the myth, and now, centuries later, the logos has destroyed all of the myth. Both Plato and Aristotle could see what results could be achieved by the logos, and with them we see the emergence of the concept of the "great man". In time, the great man will be worshiped as the "hero". But what they did not understand is that the logos can take no responsibility for our well being. The logos could be used against the myths so long as they were only myths, but now the logos has itself become our last tyrannical myth, for we have turned it into a Gods; now it is a myth as well. This transformation could not have come about without the help of "the great men" who have shaped our history.

Leibnitz was the first to believe "that if I knew every movement in the universe I can predict everything that will occur in nature." Leibnitz had believed, as had Heraclitus, as had Plato, as had Aristotle before him, that everything in the universe was in order. This is a Greek ideal. Leibnitz tried to unite the Greek (Platonic) and Christian ideals and considered it possible to believe in them both. He helped to create the dream of science that there existed a calculable universe free of contradictions and antinomies. Leibnitz then transferred this connection of nature and law to history. Every event in nature hangs together with other events, and if I can discover the law that unites them I can predict the future. We shall see that this notion was to have a profound effect upon Hegel who could believe with Leibnitz that nature was absolutely predictable.

It was Hegel who deified history, who carried to its logical conclusions the worship of history and the great men of history. The philosopher Hegel who has influenced generation upon generation, that great phenomenon Hegel, made possible the idea of progress. Historical process and progress thinking start with Hegel. In Hegel we see the most remarkable synthesis of every metaphysical dream that has ever existed. God, Being, the Absolute is in the world and we can see him in the world working through us and through history. All of this Hegel told us, was for the sake of freedom. But it is a freedom that is imposed upon us and is given. We are liberated without knowing it. The course of history aims at our freedom, and this is absolutely guaranteed us. Hegel united two things in philosophy that had never been united before. The concept of freedom and the concept of necessity. In Hegel, freedom and necessity are one, freedom by compulsion so to speak, because history compels us to become free. Man must be free and so must conquer freedom in his own life. The method of synthesis Hegel uses he calls the dialectic and it is the most devilish method ever invented, because with it he promises to unite all opposites. In this he becomes the first cultural philosopher. He thought he knew the world, all of it, and he thought that all of religion, science, philosophy, and history could be united within this one universal system. He was the first to fulfill what all of us want instinctively, that all contradictions, all antinomies, be resolved and united. It was the greatest and most glorious dream, greater than that of Plato who tried to construct a perfect state around a metaphysical absolute. There was not a single cultural phenomena that Hegel left out. I wish I could convey to you, could give you an idea of the utter mastership that had gone into the creation of this one great dream. It is one of the greatest achievements of the human mind. But unfortunately it was the death of the human mind. For the opposites will not ever be unified, and we have paid the greatest of prices in learning this.

In mathematics since the time of the Greeks men had attempted to solve a similar problem. Men since the time of Euclid had wondered whether or not it would be possible to create a figure that was both a circle and a square. For over twenty centuries our lives have been dominated by both of these figures. The greatest of minds have tried, have nearly come close, but this feat has never been accomplished. Then in the twentieth century, a young engineer began to wonder whether or not it would be possible to create a figure that was "neither" a circle or a square. With the help of a computer he worked for several days and was able to construct such a figure. It was the only original geometric figure created in the twentieth century, and it was created by a man who had the clarity of vision to believe that opposites can never be unified, they can only be mediated.

You can never unify opposites, because they are all creations of the human mind. It is like the idea of squaring the circle. The circle can never be squared since the mind has brought both figures into existence to be eternally contradictory. A problem can be solved if the two objective facts "appear" to be contradictory, but no conflict can be solved. The most simple experiences of human life should have told him that. Martin Luther perhaps was right when he said "logic is a devilish invention, one thing leads to another". Perfectly true. Under the worship of history, of great men, of the logos, we have become the destroyers and robbers of nature. The logos left to itself, proceeds ruthlessly and gloriously. After Hegel, all metaphysics breaks down. He was the last universal philosopher. All of those that follow, Marx, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Schopenhauer, no longer accept the entire metaphysical dream of Hegel but instead fall under the sway of one

aspect of that dream. Marx, embraces the belief long nurtured in Judaism of the chosen people who for him become the proletariat. This class shall be the holy class, and with them truth and justice will come to imminence.

The next break comes with Kierkegaard who says I want neither the God of the logos or the God of metaphysical dreams but the God of Isaiah, Isaac, and Jacob. I want a God with whom I can live, not one with whom I can speculate. Kierkegaard searched for something in which one can place one's faith for he saw the hell coming. He understood that if one must believe in anything then let him believe in God for otherwise he will begin to believe again in great men, in history, or in other metaphysical dreams.

Nietzsche on the other hand wanted to destroy all Gods. Nietzsche all of his life was true to his first proposition; he became the first philosopher who did not give any commands. Nietzsche asked "can anyone teach us a joyful science", not the eternal thou shall or thou shalt not. Up until his time two trends in metaphysics had existed. The metaphysics of theology and the metaphysics of ontology. The decision to turn against everything and anything was made by Nietzsche. He called himself the first nihilist and the first to have prophesied the coming of nihilism. Nietzsche believed God was dead because he had died in the hearts of his contemporary.. He saw that the idea of God stems from the idea that man has of himself, mainly that he is a limited being and that he wants for himself to be an unlimited being. Man wanted what he could not have. This same truth had been discovered by Kierkegaard years before Nietzsche. Kierkegaard said to us that life is absurd, because man will never be free and yet he has the idea of freedom in himself. That he both can deny God and yet he creates within himself the idea of God.

Nietzsche, to be sure, does not call himself an atheist. For atheism simply becomes another religion. Kant had shown that you cannot prove the existence of an absolute. What Nietzsche says is "granted I cannot prove that God exists or doesn't exist, but you have missed the point. I don't want him to exist, so get out of my way." "I do not want God to be because I do not want someone above me telling me what to do. I want to know what man can do, not should do."

But no sooner does Nietzsche do away with God than he creates another absolute to replace him. Only this time it is the will to power, the eternal return, and superman. Nietzsche tried to get more power for man. He thought that he was a complete realist. He thought that it was power above all that we are striving for, power at any price, but this power is not power any more but unbridled violence. All morality systems are worthless to Nietzsche. They vanish. And so all that is left is power and the violence of power.

#### IV

The writer, Franz Kafka, once said that "every revolution evaporates, and leaves behind the slime of a new bureaucracy." This, the most pessimistic formulation of a revolution, in opposition to Karl Marx, has become a precondition of our times.

All German philosophers and poets who had supported and understood the French Revolution eventually turned their backs on it and became reactionaries. Only two did not. Only two remained faithful to those principles which had created the democratic ideals. One was Kant, the old Kant, senile, awaiting death who upon being told of the Reign of Terror, of the senseless slaughters and deaths, awoke from his bed and said "the revolution has backfired, we have spoiled it, then let us try it again." The other was Holderlin who wrote "with all of my heart I hate the damn breed of priests and tyrants, but above all I hate the geniuses who keep them company." Of the whole crowd, these were the only two who had the courage to wish to see the ideals tried again. Not even Hegel, the great Hegel, who knew everything, had this courage.

Revolution is a very serious business. I know. I have been in five of them. That is enough, even to teach a dumb guy like me something. Since the time of Plato, all political philosophy has revolved around one problem. To try to find an organization in which human beings could live and work productively together. In nineteenth century France when defining what it was to be a citizen, it was only an answer to what was a bourgeoisie. All systems up until now have not realized Plato's dream. Any society by definition is not great. Even in America, the greatest of all experiments, we have rejected our inherent greatness.

The word "republic" by definition means the common thing. That which we have in common. Friedrich Schiller once wrote "that the greatest work of art the Greeks ever created was the erection of the polis." But even they were prisoners. Politicians are prisoners of metaphysical ideologies. They act not upon reason but upon belief. These ideologies lead to a denial of freedom. Every government power has the inner tendency to keep silent those with another opinion. Our biggest fault is that we have placed such governments in power and have not held them accountable for their power.

The last and perhaps greatest political ideology, or metaphysical belief was the dominance of history and the state. What we have witnessed instead is a reversal of history and a defamation of the state, whose foundation rests not upon democratic principles, but upon warfare and nationalism. We have built the state into as perfect a war machine as possible. And now with the threat of world annihilation we cannot use this machine.

There is at the core of every human being a metaphysical assumption. This is because men act upon belief. We all believe. Belief is easy. Hegel believed in history. He believed that God could be found in history and in the state. Marx believed in the proletariat. Kierkegaard believed in the one unknowable God who will someday judge me; who can ever know what or who this God is. Nietzsche believed in the will to power. And how many have paid with their lives for such beliefs?

No Mr. Hegel. God cannot be found in history. History consists of a series of attempts to build communities. There is no straight path. It can reverse itself at any time. Nothing is predictable in history. An event is brought into existence by human beings. It moves in strange curves which defy our understanding. History is not the work of saints. It is the work of bloody dilettantes. Only until we understand this can we survive the catastrophe of history. Hegel claimed to have had the final answers and how dearly we have paid for that dream. He left for his students only forever to interpret his ideas. Marx's reversal of Hegel did not prevent him from using Hegel's



methods. He could destroy the God of Hegel only to invent new Gods. Economics and matter. History has been of our own making and can only tell us our mistakes. Do you still want to worship that? There are no monsters except those set into the world by men.

It is the same way with nature. Nature has become unreliable from a human point of view. The ancient security of a divine relationship with nature we can no longer have. Men have trusted history, and have trusted nature for too long. Ideas are dangerous. There must have been some principle in Hegel, some principle in Marx and Nietzsche that went wrong. Toward the end of his life Nietzsche was becoming too "naturalistic" in his thinking. His belief in "energy", "growth", all of these terms he got from biology. He had become biological in his thinking and was no more philosophical. He tore apart all of the old beliefs. God, justice, he could only mock those who were just. His biologism became a kind of religion. He created as a last act of desperation the will to power and the superman; all of this at a time when the preconditions for these phenomena had died. But you cannot have the superman. The superman presupposes that you have man, and this you have never had. Humanism has shared the same fate. Nietzsche was the greatest humanist. He wanted to make out of man a God, that is he wanted to make man into an absolute.

And yet despite all of this Nietzsche knew the futility of these metaphysical dreams. He did not want to publish the work he had finished toward the end of his life. They were published by his sister after his insanity. Toward the end of his life he wrote a letter to the Swiss historian Jacob Burckhardt. He said "I am sitting here in the mountains alone. No one listens to me any more. I am thinking back upon all I have done and all I have written, and I am wondering if my words have not fooled me."

No, we have to learn to despise the will to power. The will to power is only for those who are powerless. Talleyrand, Napoleon, were not great men. Because they had not been "men" first. In the nineteenth century we lost all of our dreams. In his book Reason And Existenz Karl Jasper's traces this process through the lives and works of Kierkegaard and Nietzsche. With the death of the Greek belief in a cosmos of law in which all events are regulated and are destined for a preconceived end, came the death of men's dreams. Both Kierkegaard and Nietzsche replaced this faith with a nihilistic faith, a faith born of desperation.

Our last attempts to get a command from somewhere is lost to us. On the contrary we have to resist for we can no longer be commanded. We must now make up our own minds, we must now choose for ourselves and for each other, because we are alone. So we have every reason to turn back to the only man who ever understood and shared our experience, and that was Socrates. He was the only man who ever said that "you will never be able to tell me what to do." Because no one single human being, or nation, or state, has the truth, and should ever have the truth. Our only possibility is to pursue the truth and therefore to enlarge it.

When early man looked out into nature he actually saw and spoke to the Gods in which he placed his trust. He believed in the existence of his myths. In the nineteenth century, when Hegel, Marx, and Freud create their myths, they no longer see or hear the Gods any more but they believe in them anyway, and each of them call their myths scientific. We on the contrary

have seen that there are no more metaphysical dreams. To those who still believe them we must ask how many will have to die for your damn dreams.

V

A great scientist of Logic, Hans Reichenbach, once wrote "we are on such a sure way with science. Everything is so precise and logical. Science gives us so much. We find out more and more. If only those damn philosophers would stop asking those unanswerable questions."

The discovery of the scientific capability could never have been made without philosophy. We have said that once you stop asking unanswerable questions you lose the capacity to put answerable questions to yourself. Science can put power into our hands but it can never give us an aim or a goal. It can never answer the eternal philosophic question, "why" and "what for". The trouble with what science has been and is, is that it can never give us an ultimate account of itself. It can never stop. It is a process that never comes to an end. Isaac Newton, toward the end of his life, compared himself to a small boy kneeling on the sea shore who all of his life had been diverting himself by now and then finding a smoother pebble or prettier shell than ordinary, while the great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before him. Nature we can never completely know, because nature is infinite and is an infinite task. When science rejected philosophy it created out of man a monster, and then cried to philosophy for help. They cry for philosophy to give us man, after man has nearly destroyed himself by his own selfish worship of his mind.

Since the nineteenth century man through science has progressed beyond his most imagined dreams but he has developed none of his inherent powers of mental growth. Science can help man's mind to imitate nature but that is all. Man is an outgrowth of nature; his very human activities presuppose that there will only be men on this globe. This planet may be the only planet where man is possible. Heidegger was right when he called the twentieth century the second promethian age, because through physics man had stolen the fire from the Gods. And yet the true scientist as the true philosopher have something in common, because he is a being in love. The scientist in his work as the philosopher must believe in the possibilities and the changeability of man. We must never ask of science what it cannot give us. We must realize as did Nietzsche "that man lives between two question marks." That a human being is a vessel of infinite possibilities and potentialities of value. One can never have understood such a being. Categorized or conceptualized him. One can never possess such a being, because if you succeed you have abolished that being. You have destroyed it, have eaten it up.

There is a grain of truth in science just as there is a grain of truth in theology and ontology. If the world is not a cosmos then we should try to make it one. Religion can become of use to us, we might want God to be if for no other reason than so man might not think of himself as a God. Kant believed that God might still be a possibility if only his voice could appeal to our conscience. Just as the circle and square do not exist in nature but only in the minds of men, yet to us they have represented value, so perhaps an infinite being might still exist for us. Jesus had believed that man could behave as if he were a child of God, even if this were not so.

## VI

Man is greater than all of the universes together, because he knows that he dies, while the universe knows nothing" thus wrote Pascal. This is the price we pay for knowing that we live. To be given our life. Any other creature lives his life, but does not "have it". Pascal had believed that might not this observation be the foundation for the possible glory of man? Might we not be able to do something with our life and by this faculty transcend ourselves?

Humanity has never existed before. Humanity is only a task of man, a task not yet completed. The task of humanity, this, the dream of Socrates and Kant, or Zarathrustra and Jesus. Man is given his life. All I have wanted to do is to put in a few things that might give a meaning to that life. Yet the philosopher can never give you this. He can never give you absolute answers. He can never tell you to love. He can only recommend enmity and friendship. He can only tell you of the questions he has asked, and help you to ask these questions of yourself. That is all that he can do for you. The task of philosophizing is then your own. To philosophy as philosophizing there will never be an end. It is an infinite process, and there has never been nor will there ever be a man who cannot do this. Every man is born to philosophize, and the supreme task of philosophy is to give to the human being his own life, his own humanness when the time has come. Philosophy has only the right to appeal to those experiences which everyone can experience. I have said that no man can live without asking himself the questions "why" and "what for". What I have meant is not that you can't live, but that you should not want to live unless you have asked yourself these questions.

Man is world conscious, God conscious, and man conscious. Man has consciousness of the whole of existence, the whole of Being. The longing of man to find an absolute will never stop. There are periods in history of extreme God consciousness. Perhaps ours is such a period. Man is a carrier, and a lousy carrier at that, of grace. The only progress he knows of is that which he can immediately do, the progress of humanness. There is only one value in the world and that is man himself. Man is the highest value in the world and we must stand by him, even where most men say nothing of him. The question of "who" is man has only bothered a few people in history. Socrates, Buddha, Nietzsche, Zarathrustra.

We cannot become saints any more, or geniuses, or heroes. We can only become more human. We can never become wise. We can only become more and more wise. The hero, the genius, the saint; these are all gone and they can no longer help us. There is only one task left. Do you want to become human? Do you want to become a human being? Prove it, for it is this for which you must strive. To exist means to have one's life, and to have the feeling of that life as being absolutely personalized. I am convinced that everything in this universe is very much alive. Those phenomena that are alive do not live. They are lived. Only upon this acceptance can you say "yes" to yourself, only then can you unite a cool head and a firm heart.

My friends. I hope that someday you will forgive me for having tortured you this way. This will probably be the last time I will be able to teach you. I am getting older, and will not be with you much longer, and so why shouldn't I tell you what I have seen, and thought, and felt?