

## The Wise, Hero Man and His Characteristics from Nietzsche's Viewpoint

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**Abstract:** Nietzsche has had an enormous influence on the thoughts of intellectuals and artists. He is a philosopher who is different from others. He wrested the hammer of philosophy and smashed to pieces the idols of one millennial value after another. He regarded himself as another Christ in another era, an era longing for tidings of a different kind, tidings of an abundant and powerful life. Nietzsche's wise and heroic man loves life, possesses ambition and fertility, is abundant with positive energies, and is opposed to all weakness and self-belittlement. He is courageous and adventurous. This short paper focuses on Nietzsche's wise and heroic man and his characteristics. [Muhammad Hossein Mardani Nokandeh. The Wise, Hero Man and His Characteristics from Nietzsche's Viewpoint. Life Science Journal. 2011;8(2):739-745] (ISSN:1097-8135). <http://www.lifesciencesite.com>.

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### 1. The wise man and his characteristics

From Nietzsche's point of view, human beings own various natures and temperaments and their energies, gifts, fertility, and will to power are unique (Dast-gheyb, 1998). Only a few can discover their existent energies and transform their potential abilities into actual ones, since most people lack vital, abundant energy, or sufficient power and ambition to achieve their objectives (Razavi, 2002). In fact, Nietzsche emphasizes the unlikeness and inequality of human beings and strongly dissents from proponents of equality and those preaching the equality and similarity of individuals (Nietzsche, 1900). To separate, rank, and evaluate individuals (from nations), he refers to the fertility of nature (the grade of each being's consistency with vitality and instinct) and the power of spirituality (the power of creation, insight, and construction) and, with his metaphorical language, determines their "superiority" and "wisdom" (Jaspers, 2004). In short, one can describe the temporal and spiritual characteristics of Nietzsche's powerful, fertile, and wise man in several ways. He adores life and, like Dionysus, is abundant with vitality. In other words, a lively man answers, "Yes!" to his time (Blackham, 1952), and accepts the good and evil of his fate (Cuppitt 1988), since the follower of *The Gay Science* knows that life is a crucible for setting the hallmark for human beings. The opposite, tragic process of life (i.e. the biological examination), sets the fertility and self-control of the existence of every individual (Fooladvand, 2004). He enjoys the power to will, ambition, or a particular energy (Ashori, 1973), since he, himself, has a strong connection to the powers of vitality and life (Daybreak, 1881). In other words, a strong-hearted man will not repress his instincts and natural desires, but strive to express, guide, and cause his nature to

flourish and flow (Nietzsche, 1900). He favors ambition, fertility, and an ascending life and, as a result, can transform his potential power into an actual power and realize his wants to "become what he is" (Razavi, 2002). He is possessed of passion (Fooladvand, 2008) and has, essentially, a Dionysian nature (Nietzsche, 1886). As a result, he is passionate and self-opposite and pays more attention to the whisper of passion than the call of reason (Magee, 1978). However, this lover's abundant passion is different from transient excitement and emanates from an inner fire (Cuppitt, 1988). Furthermore, he, like Dionysus, is disobedient, fearless, and adventurous (Winchester, 1995). He is a disciple of knowledge, spirituality, and construction, and one could even consider him a Gnostic or clear-sighted man, due to his zeal for knowing and his interest in discovering (i.e. the faculty of seeing or insight) the truths of the revealed world (Nietzsche, 1900). In a sense, through superabundance of imagination and thought and creative substance, this clear-sighted free-thinker steps into the glorious realm of the land of visions with the faculty of insight and imagination in which the world is concretized and objectivity transforms into mentality. Surely, this discoverer of the land of visions is a gallant person with self-control and superabundant thought, energy of imagination, and creativity (Farhadpoor, 2001). As such, the Nietzschean true man (Nietzsche, 2003) is both the result of an abundance of vitality and ambition and the fruit of superabundance of oppositeness, passion, spirituality, and fertility. Like Don Juan Castaneda, he searches for other horizons and undergoes strange experiences. He fearlessly welcomes his fate and boisterous time (Mc Daniel, 2000), is continuously in an unbalanced position or unusual circumstances, and, as a result, constantly

feels duality, disintegration, and other disasters of personality and dissolution (Razavi, 2002). Nietzsche writes, "...sometimes the idea runs through my head that I am living an extremely dangerous life, for I am one of those machines that can explode" (Pirooz, 2001). Yes, Nietzsche is one of the tragic, wise men (Pirooz, 2001) and belongs to a race in which the superabundance of their beings accompanied by events puts them on the edge of the cliffs of ecstasy and delirium (Ansell-Pearson, 1994). As the labyrinthine of cognition looks for adventure, the wise gallant knows well that "craziness is a danger in the way of men of wisdom" (Ashoori, 2002).

Nietzsche regards humankind as the greatest fruit of evolution, and emphasizes that evolution does not end with humankind. This does not mean that another being greater than humankind will be created, but, rather, that the human will evolve within himself until overcoming himself. Nietzsche intended to return humankind to its original innocence (the innocence before laying down moral principles) and, to do so, one should overcome morality that is the source of good and evil, and overcome his humanity, which is different than morality in origin. Where he reaffirms, "human being is a being who should overcome himself," or one "should go beyond his good and evil," he is pointing out the passing of humankind from the era of morality.

Nietzsche believes that the Superman is a new man who has overcome his humanity and has surpassed all good and evil. He is proud, free, light-hearted, calm, strong both physically and mentally, and the greatest yes-sayer. The Superman is generous not for the sake of helping the poor and needy, but because it is required by his nature. His generosity is no weakness. It is a power. His generosity and power are like sunrays that shine on high and low places, land and sea, villages and deserts alike. He does good for people not for the sake of doing good as he is not desperate for it, but to fulfill his nature. Moreover, he enjoys gaiety and the spirit of dancing and healthiness.

## 2. Rearing the hero and the superman

Explicating the concept of the "Superman" and rearing the Hero were some of Nietzsche's most brilliant goals. From his perspective, the Superman or Hero is first one who is self-sufficient, self-reliant, and independent of any other beings. Second, his major characteristics must represent power, strength, and ambition.

### 2.1. Conditions for Rearing the Hero

To rear the Hero, Nietzsche believes, "self-confidence is the strongest cramp, the most severe whip, and the most powerful wing." Heidegger

explains this situation as "saying yes to oneself"—the expression adapted from Nietzsche himself—and asserts, "The heroic souls are those who, in the most tragic situations, say 'yes' to themselves and enjoy suffering pain and agony. The soul of the Hero is the embodiment of paradoxes and uncertainties." This embodiment of paradoxes and uncertainties means the spiritual and mental preparations to accept the metamorphosis in thoughts and beliefs, which are the requirements for the Hero souls. For Nietzsche, the principle of equality is opposite to the goal of ethics. Equality causes a kind of monotony and psychological inertia. In *The Will to Power*, Nietzsche proposes that "... the concept of the 'equal value of men before God' is extraordinarily harmful; one forbade actions and attitudes that were in themselves among the prerogatives of the strongly constituted—as if they were in themselves unworthy of men."

The Hero possesses the lion-will: "Hungry, fierce, lonesome, God-forsaken: so doth the lion-will wish itself. Free from the happiness of slaves, redeemed from Deities and adorations, fearless and fear-inspiring, grand and lonesome: so is the will of the conscientious." Humankind must make use of all its resources and powers to rear the Hero. In this regard, Nietzsche says, "I love him who laboureth and inventeth, that he may build the house for the Superman, and prepare for him earth, animal, and plant: for thus seeketh he his own down-going." Then, he adds, "I love those who do not first seek a reason beyond the stars for going down and being sacrifices, but sacrifice themselves to the earth that the earth of the Superman may hereafter arrive." This down-going and victimization results in the over-going of man in the form of the Hero. Thus, this down-going is the same as over-going: "I love those that know not how to live except as down-goers, for they are the over-goers."

Nietzsche, in all his writings, speaks of the "will to power," whereas, in the discussion of rearing the Hero or raising the Superman, he moves beyond that and speaks of the "will to danger," saying, the Hero steps beyond the will to power and risks moving toward the will to danger. The sign of the Hero and Superman and "and the bright sign of standing over life is the will to danger. Of course, life essentially means being in danger. Not only this, but also life is like the instinctive search for the life that has elevated to a higher power degree, with the danger of living." Now, Nietzsche, in Germany's framework of traditional thinking, looks positively to war:

In *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, Nietzsche has designated one whole chapter of the first part

to war and warriors, in which, to warriors he addresses, “Ye shall love peace as a means to new wars--and the short peace more than the long... war and courage have done more great things than charity. Not your sympathy, but your bravery hath hitherto saved the victims... Man shall be trained for war, and woman for the recreation of the warrior: all else is folly.”

Nietzsche highly recommends war as a remedy for retardation of nations. War is a purifying power, a treatment for nations that grow weak and humble. If these nations are to continue to live, war can be a prescribed remedy. The national responsibility needs treatment as much as the individual responsibility does. For Nietzsche, the concept of heroism has two theoretical and applied elements, the theoretical part of which applies to philosophy, and the philosopher as the Hero.

The philosopher, as we free spirits understand him—as the man of the greatest responsibility, who has the conscience for the general development of mankind—will use religion for his disciplining and educating work, just as he will use the contemporary political and economic conditions.

The values of the Hero's life cannot be assessed and measured by standards of ordinary life. He moves beyond the existing values. His life is, in essence, beyond movement. In this regard, Nietzsche declares:

The motives of the Superman's acts are indescribably various and baffling. For instance, a word like ‘pity’ illustrates nothing, whatever it may be. The paramount principle is this feeling: ‘who am I?’ Who is the other in relation with me? The value of judgments is constantly at work.

*To love* is one of the indispensable qualities of Heroes. To perform beyond conventional values is “heroism” and this quality is reinforced by the power of love in the Hero and “What is done out of love always takes place beyond good and evil.” The Hero, in the theoretical scope, is the philosopher himself, and the philosopher, to attain his sublime objectives, must take the first steps according to conventional criteria. In other words, one cannot reach Hero status overnight, but should begin with what is easily accessible.

It may be necessary for the education of the real philosopher that he himself should have once stood upon all those steps upon which his servants, the scientific workers of philosophy, remain standing, and must remain standing he himself must perhaps have been critic, and dogmatist, and historian, and besides, poet, and collector, and traveler, and riddlereader, and moralist, and seer, and ‘free spirit,’ and almost everything, in order to traverse the whole range of human values and estimations, and that he may be able with a variety of eyes and consciences to look from a height to any distance, from a depth up to any height, from a nook into any expanse. But all these are only preliminary conditions for his task; this task itself demands something else—it requires him to create values.

The heroic life, philosophical thought, and values creation, are all risks. Living outside of common norms requires that one stake one's body and soul and forget all about peace and quiet. One who is made of life keeps up with society and one who wishes to create values must pass this stage. It is in a dangerous life and “in the period of great dangers that philosophers are created—when the wheel of time spins fast, philosophers and artists replace the lost myths.” Nietzsche describes this life as dangerous and one that jeopardizes oneself in the position of “declaration of war on factions”:

A declaration of war on factions is necessary from the supermen's side! Wherever there are some middle-class who work together to accomplish nobility are used for the purposes of ‘people’ and ‘females’ and work in the direction of public poll and the dominancy of the debased. But, we should take revenge and bring the whole issue—which began with Christianity in Europe—to light and judgment.

The essence of all qualities and characteristics of the philosopher as the Hero is power. Of course, this is in the first grade of spiritual power that provides us with the possibility of thinking about great criteria and “What determines rank, sets off rank, is only quanta of power, and nothing else.” Finally, quoting from his favorite hero Zarathustra, Nietzsche says, “I teach you the Superman.”

## 2.2. The Ultimate Goal of the Hero's Existence

Nietzsche declares the modern age as the historical end of metaphysics. As divinity is the symbol of that period, the modern age is the end of divinity; hence he states his famous maxim "God is dead." The thought of rearing the Hero and Superman is a substitute for divinity. In this regard, Heidegger says, "The Superman is a plan to substitute for a god who has died. Therefore, the death of God necessitates the creation of the Superman. Nietzsche, in *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, states, 'Dead are all the Gods. Now do we desire the Superman to live? Let this be our final will at the great noontide!' Regarding the replacement of Superman for God, Nietzsche reiterates, "Once did people say God, when they looked out upon distant seas; now however, have I taught you to say, Superman."

Substituting the Superman for God is for nothing but legislation and setting values. Henceforth, humankind itself bears the responsibility for its affairs and making its own legislations. Preparation for becoming the legislators of the future, the masters of the earth, at least our children. Basic concern with marriages. "Therefore, O my brethren, a new nobility is needed, which shall be the adversary of all populace and potentate rule, and shall inscribe anew the word "noble" on new tables. The Superman is the meaning of the earth. Let your will say: The Superman shall be the meaning of the earth! I conjure you, my brethren, remain true to the earth and believe not those who speak unto you of super earthly hopes! According to one of Jaspers' interpretations, one of Nietzsche's prime motives in defying divinity and declaring its termination is a release from the "fear of death." One of man's psychological problems is the fear of death and Nietzsche associates this with the divinity concept:

Nietzsche is one of a series of thinkers who wish to overcome every form of death because it is existentially ruinous and a sign of an existence which is not self-based. However, it seems that Nietzsche's ultimate goal (i.e. the creation of the Superman) is by far more original than man's independence, his ruling, his self-basedness, and his fear of death. From his perspective, to create a genius (i.e. the Superman or Hero) is the goal of culture that, in turn, is the goal of life. Literally, life cannot be lived without goals. In particular, a life without divinity seems meaningless and goalless. Therefore, certain goals must be set. This goal is the plantation and growing the prettiest flower of humankind - the genius who has a noble and genuine mind and is a noble man, which has been described as Superman in Nietzsche's latest thoughts. From Nietzsche's point of view, recognizing the probability of the Superman plan is the perfectness of life. He says, "I love him who liveth in order to know,

and seeketh to know in order that the Superman may hereafter live."

Man must constantly fight to rear the Hero, the genius, and the Superman. To rear the Superman, short peace and a long war is better than long-lasting peace.

Your enemy shall ye seek; your war shall ye wage, and for the sake of your thoughts! And if your thoughts succumb, your uprightness shall still shout triumph thereby! Ye shall love peace as a means to new wars--and the short peace more than the long. You I advise not to work, but to fight. You I advise not to peace, but to victory. Let your work be a fight, let your peace be a victory!

Despite the shortsightedness and narrow-mindedness, this war is not for bloodshed and this Hero is not like Hitler. By contrast, this war is a sacred one for setting high human values and for releasing man from superstitions like weakness, tyranny, humiliation, and nothingness. It is a war of all human instincts against all inhuman ones.

### 2.3. The Hero's Potential Deviations

Rearing the Hero and the Superman may be vulnerable to various threats, the most mortal of which are scientism, motherly affection, slavish moralities, and the wickedness and platitude of quasi-heroes. The dangers that beset the evolution of the philosopher are, in fact, so manifold nowadays, that one might doubt whether this fruit could still come to maturity. The extent and towering structure of the sciences have increased enormously, and therewith also the probability that the philosopher will grow tired even as a learner, or will attach himself somewhere and 'specialize' so that he will no longer attain to his elevation, that is to say, to his superspection, his circumspection. The other danger is motherly compassion, which is offensively and bitterly expressed about women. Nonetheless, one should not consider this anti-feminist as these qualities take the form of compassion for women and that is why they are labeled "effeminate."

And finally, woman! One-half of mankind is weak, typically sick, changeable, inconstant—woman needs strength in order to cleave to it; she needs a religion of weakness that glorifies being weak, loving, and being humble as divine: or better, she makes the strong weak—she rules when she succeeds in overcoming the strong. Woman has always conspired with the types of decadence, the priests, against the



"powerful," the "strong," the men. Woman brings the children to the cult of piety, pity, love—the mother represents altruism convincingly.

The Superman plan may be exposed to other dangers, as well. J. P. Stern suggests, "In recent Nietzscheism periods, nothing more than Hitler's life and deeds have been the embodiment of the will to power. Even if we presume (although there are evidences to prove this) that the truth goes beyond what was imaginable for Nietzsche."

#### 2.4. Characteristics of the Hero

If the traditional disciplining becomes dominated and the ordinary values overwhelm, the Hero, then, will be imperiled by degeneration and everydayness. Manliness will be replaced by weakness and perseverance by pity and then, "So much kindness, so much weakness do I see. So much justice and pity, so much weakness. Round, fair, and considerate are they to one another, as grains of sand are round, fair, and considerate to grains of sand. Modestly to embrace a small happiness—that do they call submission, and at the same time they peer modestly after a new small happiness. In their hearts they want simply one thing most of all: that no one hurt them. Thus do they anticipate every one's wishes and do well unto every one. That, however, is *cowardice*, though it be called 'virtue.'"

Imposed weakness may penetrate the man's psyche in different ways and jeopardize the Hero. As Nietzsche says, "Weakness as a task: weakening the desires, the feelings of pleasure and displeasure, the will to power, to a sense of pride, to want to have and have more; weakening as meekness; weakening as faith; weakening as aversion and shame in the face of everything natural, as negation of life, as sickness and habitual weakness--weakening as the renunciation of revenge, of resistance, of enmity and wrath."

Realizing the Nietzsche's Hero inevitably leads to race purification and superiority. Nietzsche points out this issue in places in his writings and, as mentioned before, Nietzsche does not believe in equality. Regarding the relationship between equality and race superiority, he says, "Requiring equal rights is against racism." Elsewhere he says, "There is only nobility of birth, only nobility of blood." He encourages people to move toward superiority. He says, "Blessed remote period when a people said to itself: I will be *master* over peoples! For, my brethren, the best shall rule, the best also willeth to rule and where the teaching is different, there the best is lacking!" To avoid these imposed weaknesses, the Hero must take risks. Thus, taking risks is the vital

characteristic of the Hero. By doing so, he will be safe from the dangers of degeneration and routineness. Moreover, by breaking with tradition and mythical ages, the Hero paves the way for creation, creativity, and accomplishing heroism.

The Hero does not look for emotional influences. The embarrassment for emotional influences is one of the distinct signs of the Hero. The underlying sign of the Hero is taking risks and heroic living's primary motivation is living dangerously! This is the secret of the most fruitful harvest of entity.

Another quality of the Hero is his practicality, especially his military-like practicality. From Nietzsche's viewpoint, martial jobs are the best jobs. However he does not mean to favor Hitler, here. His much-adored figure is Napoleon. In his view, "the highest human beings, such as Caesar, Napoleon" should be the flag-holders of life. Also, he says, "I am thinking, e. g., of Napoleon and Bismarck. The rivalry with strong and unintelligent wills, which is the greatest obstacle, is small. Who doesn't topple these 'objective' gentlemen with weak wills, like Rancle or Renan!" By comparing the Hero to such martial leaders as Napoleon and Caesar, Nietzsche does not intend to wage war and cause bloodshed. The point is a practical power and creativity.

One who creates persistently is a "Mother-Man," in the broad meaning of the word. One who know only the pregnancies and the deliveries of his own soul, who does not have time to think about himself or his work, one who compares himself to others, and applies his taste but easily forgets it, releases or does not use it. Yet, he may finally create works beyond his own understanding and critical mind in such a way that, afterward, his ideas and opinions may seem stupid to himself. Nietzsche illuminates his courageous heroic soul through a comparison where relationships between soldiers and commanders are more nobler than the ones between workers and masters.

Every military civilization is, at least until today, far better than those called "industrial." With their present forms, these are the most degenerated types of life ever. Law is a requirement for industrial civilization. We wish to live and we should sell ourselves, but we humiliate one who abuses this inevitable situation and buys the worker. It is a strange thing to obey powerful people who create fear or even fright.

The Hero is independent, needless of others, self-reliant, responsible for his own work and life, and free from restraints imposed by others. He is a "Superman, proud and free, happy, and calm, strong in both physical and mental terms, and the greatest yes-sayer of life. He is the real Dionysus. He even says yes to death, as he says yes to life like what he

is.” Such a being, as the noble type of man, considers himself as the establisher of values. He does not need others’ approval. He judges himself: what harms me is a harm by itself. He knows that it is only himself who attaches value to all things. He is the creator of values. In other words, the good are noble by origin and from the aristocracy. They create values and their own moralities. To make readers appreciate the behavior of freedom, Nietzsche says, “Use your own feet to ascend! Do not allow others to ascend you! Do not sit upon the heads and shoulders of the strangers.” Again he expresses the same theme with another interpretation: “O! Nobler men! Learn to place yourself upon your own appropriate feet.” Man’s freedom or slavery are in direct contact with his power or weakness and man’s power can be measured by his freedom. The more powerful, the freer and the weaker, the more useful. “Man’s power, or, in other words, his weakness can be assessed by the amount of faith by which he needs to grow or by the number of recourses he relies on and, due to that, he does not want others to resort to them.” The freedom and independence of the Heroes—or philosophers, theoretically speaking, —are the source of controlling, governing, and legislating.

The real philosophers, however, are commanders and law-givers; they say: ‘Thus shall it be!’ They determine first the Whither and the Why of mankind, and thereby set aside the previous labor of all philosophical workers, and all subjugators of the past—they grasp at the future with a creative hand, and whatever is and was, becomes for them thereby a means, an instrument, and a hammer. Their ‘knowing’ is creating, their creating is a law-giving, their will to truth is—will to power.

This is why philosophers are neither scientists, nor artists, nor the pious, nor divine men. They are, however, the powerful free-standing beyond all values and criteria and they can be called “the highest” when it comes to categorization. The philosophical life of the Hero and the Superman requires dispensing with traditional rules and regulations. This, in turn, necessitates a deeper understanding of the world. Ignoring the appearance of rules, customs, and ordinary mottoes of life can penetrate into the depth of the world. Perhaps, with perseverance in doing so, the moment promised by Nietzsche arrives and the “conviction” of the philosopher becomes actualized. In this regard, Nietzsche says, “There is a point in every philosophy at which the ‘conviction’ of the philosopher appears on the scene.”

Among historic figures people like Napoleon and Cyrus came close to the Nietzschean ideal Hero in character. They were the embodiment of autocracy, self-assurance, self-containment, personality independence, and freedom of conventions. “Such men as Napoleon must come again and again and confirm the belief in the autocracy of the individual.”

From Nietzsche’s perspective, the relationship between the Superman and man is like that of man and the ape and this is to bring the position of freedom into focus: “What is the ape to man? A laughingstock, a thing of shame. And just the same shall man be to the Superman: a laughingstock, a thing of shame.” In another comparison, he likens man to a “polluted stream,” and Superman to a “sea.” This is the sea that can tolerate the pollution of the river, “Verily, a polluted stream is man. One must be a sea, to receive a polluted stream without becoming impure. Lo, I teach you the Superman: he is that sea; in him can your great contempt be submerged.” Nonetheless, merely because Nietzsche has chosen Napoleon, one should not assume that he only admires physical strength. His ambition is not only a powerful beast, but a man with the highest mental maturity and of course physical excellence. Thus, with utmost certainty, Nietzsche says, “Humankind must surpass himself, as the Greeks did. He should not recourse to non-materialistic imaginations. ... The goal is a noble culture with the whole body not only with mind.” Nietzsche describes the free, heroic Superman thus:

To redeem what is past, and to transform every “It was” into “Thus would I have it!”--that only do I call redemption! Will--so is the emancipator and joy-bringer called: thus have I taught you, my friends! But now learn this likewise: the Will itself is still a prisoner. Willing emancipateth: but what is that called which still putteth the emancipator in chains? “It was”: thus is the Will's teeth-gnashing and loneliest tribulation called. Impotent towards what hath been done--it is a malicious spectator of all that is past. Not backward can the Will will; that it cannot break time and time's desire--that is the Will's loneliest tribulation. Willing emancipateth: what doth willing itself devise in order to get free from its tribulation and mock at its prison?

### 3. Conclusion

Nietzsche is a super-ambitious philosopher who ascends mountains and pinnacles and loathes descents to low places. He denounces whatever leads

to self-belittlement or baseness. Great characteristics, manners, and thoughts become great men. Likewise, sordid manners and debased thoughts suit low, mean human beings - called "the flies of the market-place" by Nietzsche.

Thus, Nietzsche, despising the "ceremonial clowns," the mean, and the "flies of the market-place," searches for a wise, original, superman who stands above all moral and religious values and principles, who has overcome his humanity, and who has reached the pinnacle of human evolution. It is a wise man who is unattainable, but should be either found or made.

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