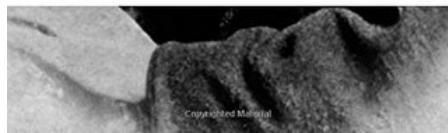


BEYOND GOOD AND EVIL

FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE



Beyond Good and Evil

Friedrich Nietzsche

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Beyond Good and Evil

Friedrich Nietzsche

Beyond Good and Evil Friedrich Nietzsche

Beyond Good and Evil: Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future is a book by philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche, first published in 1886. It draws on and expands the ideas of his previous work, Thus Spoke Zarathustra, but with a more critical and polemical approach. In Beyond Good and Evil, Nietzsche accuses past philosophers of lacking critical sense and blindly accepting dogmatic premises in their consideration of morality.

Specifically, he accuses them of founding grand metaphysical systems upon the faith that the good man is the opposite of the evil man, rather than just a different expression of the same basic impulses that find more direct expression in the evil man. The work moves into the realm "beyond good and evil" in the sense of leaving behind the traditional morality which Nietzsche subjects to a destructive critique in favour of what he regards as an affirmative approach that fearlessly confronts the perspectival nature of knowledge and the perilous condition of the modern individual.

Beyond Good and Evil Details

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From Reader Review Beyond Good and Evil for online ebook

Bnief says

I recommend, but with a warning. The vast majority of people will not get much out of this book. Filtering through these reviews, I see a lot of people who are clearly not meant for Nietzsche's writing. They tend to fall under a couple of categories

- 1) Easily Offended: when Nietzsche says something they find offensive, they are turned off reading the book. Nietzsche will offend you. However...
- 2) People who make a superficial reading and criticize accordingly. This follows from 1. Those who are initially offended always seek more ways to find themselves offended, and read Nietzsche like he was an idiot. Seek and ye shall find. If you want to read Nietzsche as such, he will give you plenty of material.
- 3) Those who want a clear list of premises and a linear argument. Nietzsche's thought is ordered. Much of this book develops thematically though, and not through premises. Some won't like that style, but there is a reason Nietzsche is renowned for his writing. This leads into...
- 4) People who don't think like Nietzsche. Because Nietzsche doesn't write straight treatises, you need to understand the lines of thought he proposes. Those who don't see those lines commonly write negative reviews complaining about how Nietzsche doesn't "prove his assertions". This leads to the final....
- 5) People who don't understand Nietzsche's project. This also has a lot to do with Nietzsche's style. This book is not supposed to give formally structured arguments. If you read Nietzsche according to some rubric you deem appropriate, you miss his point entirely.

Suggestions:

1. Just because something is wrong, it doesn't mean it lacks value. Stop reading Nietzsche like a science textbook filled with facts. Also, stop reading him like he is attempting to make a logically impenetrable argument in defense of a single thesis.
2. Look for the nuances, and appreciate them. Was Nietzsche a misogynist? Yes. He was also a very thoughtful misogynist whose writings on women actually do hold some value. He contextualizes these passage in the introduction to that section, where he explicitly recognizes his own prejudices as a personal stupidity. Read in that light, his comments are actually quite interesting. Secondly, he writes of the condition of "woman" in many passages, not "woman" as a fixed essence. The two are quite distinct. Much of what is offensive at first glance is actually passing judgment upon the character of humanity at large. When he argues, for example, that men had good reason for not allowing women to speak in church, he isn't making an argument that women are inferior to men. Rather, it is an argument based upon the equality of sexes. He doesn't want to give women the chance to prove themselves just as foolish as men. Behind their silence, Nietzsche notes, they are untainted by their "real" nature. Whether or not you take Nietzsche to be making a serious suggestion here, he is obviously not making a offhand misogynistic comment. In the same way we don't dismiss the Greeks on the grounds of their caste based society, it is silly to dismiss Nietzsche for a misogyny he acknowledges as his own weakness.
3. Nietzsche writes to spark a line of thoughts and questions, not to answer all of them. Tons of the complaints start from the presupposition that Nietzsche should write according to a goal they have established for him. If you don't understand Nietzsche's goals, don't fashion your own for him.
4. It is entirely possible that you are not the type of person who can identify with Nietzsche on any sort of personal level. His work isn't meant to be read in a removed way. If you don't understand his criticisms on a personal and emotional level (not just logically), this book may not be for you. Just don't make the leap and call him unintelligent or a loose cannon. Most of the times, it is his readers that are bringing excessive emotion to the book, and their emotional reading that renders it obtuse.

Saleh MoonWalker says

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J.G. Keely says

I can think of few instances where an author's reputation is more different from the reality of who he was, what he believed, and what he wrote--perhaps only Machiavelli has been as profoundly misunderstood by history. Today, Nietzsche tends to be thought of as a depressive nihilist, a man who believed in nothing, and an apologist for the atrocities of fascism--but no description could be further from the truth.

There probably are not many men who had more reason than Nietzsche to feel resentful and miserable: he grew up a sickly child, prone to severe headaches which often left him literally blind with pain. Then, during his brief career in the cavalry, he tore several muscles in his side, and while serving as a medical orderly in the Franco-Prussian war, contracted a number of diseases. These incidents would affect his health for the rest of his life, leaving him bedridden and in pain for hours or days at a time.

It would not have been unreasonable to give in to misery and bitterness under such conditions, but on those days when Nietzsche felt well enough to write, he would emerge from his room with renewed passion and vigor, taking long walks in the beauty of the countryside before returning home to labor in producing a philosophy not of misery, but of joy. Contrary to his reputation, Nietzsche rejected nihilism outright--he thought that if the world does not provide your life with a clear meaning, it is up to you to go out and find one (or create one), not to wallow and whinge.

Likewise, he spent much of his life railing against the foolishness of nationalism and bigotry--indeed, his famed falling out with the composer Wagner was over the increasingly nationalistic style of music the latter was producing. So, that being the case, how did he gain such an unfortunate reputation at all?

The first reason is that, after his death, his sister took over his estate, and as she herself was a German nationalist and anti-semitic (as was her prominent husband), she had a number of her brother's papers rewritten to support these execrable positions and then published them posthumously in his name. Of course, this couldn't have fooled anyone actually familiar with Nietzsche's works and ideas, as the rewrites were in direct contradiction to his previous writings, but it still fooled many.

The second problem with the interpretation of his work is one that mirrors Machiavelli precisely: the author's observations on the nature of the world are mistaken for suggestions for how the world *should* be. It's like reading a book about crime scene investigation and, because it admits that murder exists and describes the methods by which it is done, assuming that it is an instruction book for murderers, when in fact it is the opposite: an instruction of how to combat them and stop them.

Both Nietzsche and Machiavelli had a similar approach: so the world can be a brutal place, a place where people gain power not by being wise and respected, but by dominating and taking advantage of others--what are we going to do about it? For Nietzsche, one of the necessary things we must do to free ourselves from this dominance over body and mind is to recognize that 'good' and 'evil' are just words, words that have been used by the powerful to justify anything they might choose to do--their 'just wars' against the 'evil foe', while that foe invariably preaches the same story in reverse, painting themselves as the hero, while in actuality both

sides are motivated by greed and the desire for power.

To say that someone is 'evil' is to say that they have no rational motivation for what they do, that we should not attempt to understand them, but should oppose them without thinking about why. It's a powerful tool to deny reality, and so, as individuals, if we refuse to accept definitions of what is good or evil as they are handed down by those in power, we will have taken the first step to freeing ourselves from mental tyranny.

This was what Nietzsche meant by 'The Superman': that the man of the future, if he is to be free, cannot allow anyone else to define his life for him, cannot take authority for granted, but must question the world without as well as the world within, to discover for himself what is important and what is true. His famous 'Will to Power' is the personal decision to wrest control of your life from those who would seek to dominate you. To be free means being a philosopher.

And this is something I have tried to achieve for myself; but to unwind prejudice and ignorance is a lifelong battle, and I'm certainly grateful to have, in my search, an ally like Nietzsche (and the late Nietzsche scholar Rick Roderick). Many have been the days when I felt run down and exhausted, put upon and disrespected by an impersonal world bent on breaking to its will, and at those times, Nietzsche's joyful and witty deconstruction of that ridiculous, artificial world has proven an invaluable comfort to me. There is no authority who can tell you who you are, no church, no government, no university, no job, and no individual. In the end, it is up to you to create yourself.

Elena says

A bit of well-meaning advice right at the start: don't read Nietzsche for moral insight or you'll drive yourself insane with rage, or else inhale some of the poison gas here. Read him instead for his insights into the nature of value, truth and knowledge. Nietzsche angers us most when he most successfully shows us how naked we humans are without our most cherished faiths - whether it be in human nature, natural law, the power of reason, or in a transcendent being to ground our incomplete, finite, utterly contingent existence into a cosmic meaning. He shows us that value lies at the center of reasoning, and that morality, as well as every ideal of excellence, falls because every purely rational, metaphysical grounding for value has failed. He also reminds us how much of what we take to be knowledge is normative through and through, and also in danger of crumbling in a naturalistic worldview. Therein lies his true contribution.

Much that is said about Nietzsche is ridiculously point-missing and amounts to no more than a nitpicking over details that are peripheral to his system. Peripherals such as his virulent misogyny don't, I think, suffice to diminish the value of his key contributions to philosophy. He is a challenging thinker to come to terms with in part because he doesn't deign to present an airbrushed counterfeit of himself, but instead presents his thinking about the conflicting sides of his nature - including those areas filled with festering resentment and, at times, hatred. We expect philosophy to proceed from a much more edited, manicured persona, and it is right here, at the start, that he defies our expectation and instead chooses to put his whole personality on the table for our dissection. All of it. He is unique in that he tries to philosophize with his whole self. We cannot read him unless we strive to do the same and attain a bit more honesty about the complexity of what drives us.

As Vaihinger pointed out in his "The Philosophy of As-If," Nietzsche's work can best be read as taking the Kantian critical project to its radical conclusion. This is because he asks the questions that even Kant didn't feel the need to ask, namely, questions about the foundations that make critique possible - any

critique! I have to admit with Vaihinger that Kant and Nietzsche are best understood in terms of each other. Nietzsche's work furthers the Kantian exploration of the structure of experience by taking into account the ways that our embodiment shapes meaning in ways that Kant's transcendental starting point prevented him from taking into account. Nietzsche takes his stance with the embodied, experiencing, meaning-creating subject. It is this starting point that motivates the epistemological perspectivism and constructivism which leads to his notoriously radical critiques of foundational metaphysical concepts.

Nietzsche shows here how the materialist paradigm, by pushing value and meaning out of its reigning world-picture, leaves us with the existential problem of overcoming nihilism. I understand nihilism as the severing of a vital, sustaining link between mind and world; it is the loss of our capacity to register the external world as a source of value and meaning. This work brings the problem of value center-stage. Somehow we must find a source of meaning within subjective activity entirely unmoored from sustaining connection with the external world. Whether the alienated self, conceived as creator, suffices to provide itself with such a source of meaning - which I think it doesn't - is the big question his philosophy leaves us with.

His self-description as an inverse Socrates turns out to be literally true here, though perhaps his real enemy is Plato for his attempt to co-opt Socrates. Much that Nietzsche does is to undo the Platonification of Socrates, which misleads us into replacing the fundamental question of self-knowledge with the question of metaphysics. Plato has perverted the purpose of philosophy – Know Thyself - by seeking to reduce the process of self-knowledge to the process of a metaphysical speculation that seeks to situate the self in an objective order. Scientific cosmology is no answer, either, for him.

The only thing that'll fix the damage, he says here, will be to go back to the pre-Platonic, Socratic roots of critique, and to dig deeper, to ask the truly foundational questions anew, and without loaded dice. And the big, unasked question, for him, is: What is the value of truth, if we understand that its only grounding is the embodied striving of individuals to realize their characteristic mode of existence?

Most important is his claim that accepting the starting point of the embodied subject logically leads us to see ontology as a species of axiology – i.e., of aesthetics and morals. His analysis shows how metaphysics after Plato has been structured in terms of a tacitly presupposed normative, and ultimately aesthetic definition of truth. One can recall Plato's normative definition of the forms as the only objects that really count as knowledge. This is especially evident in Plato's metaphorical identification of the True with the Beautiful and the Good in Diotima's speech in the Symposium, where he normatively defines the highest act of knowing as one that is simultaneously cognitive-theoretical, morally transformative and aesthetically satisfying. Instead, Nietzsche busts the construct time and again to show how ontological principles and epistemological rules are rightly seen as mere coordinates set by "the perspective optics of (human) life," which define the shape the real can take for us.

Ontologies are constructs that are defined in relation to embodied perspective-taking. The golden thread that runs through his scattered, rambling critiques of "the prejudices" that grounded the philosophies of the Stoics, the Kantians, the Cartesians, the Christians, and even the materialist atomists, is his exposition of the way that each has committed the fallacy of ignoring embodiment, while presupposing creative, embodied processes of meaning-making in order to get its thinking in motion. Ignoring embodiment has led to reifying its products into ontologies which he characterizes as "aesthetic anthropomorphisms."

The key to his argument (especially in his essay, "On Truth and Lies") is giving cognitive priority to image-based, rather than linguistic thinking, and showing that the latter is based on the former. In his analysis, metaphysics emerges as the product of an aestheticizing simplification of the real, which abstracts from real, experienced particulars in order to construct general patterns that are then "baptized" with the honorific

status of “first principles.” This imagistic process generates all the “aesthetic anthropomorphisms” and “regulative fictions” that grounds all our reasoning. Among those foundational constructs listed by Nietzsche are: substance, individual thing, object, ego, causal agent, causal relation, law of nature, forms, ontological principles, etc. All such epistemic and metaphysical principles are grounded entirely in a subjective, ultimately aesthetic necessity. They define, in other words, the parameters within which we can maintain a coherent, life-enhancing perspective on the real. Ultimately, for Nietzsche, these beliefs in a permanent order did not win out because they were “the most true, but the most useful.”

Even logic, with its (to Nietzsche, infamous) claim to purity and disembodied independence from the human condition, isn’t immune, as he notes in his discussion of “the fictions of logic.” He points out the ways that logic is based on presuppositions that correspond to nothing in reality, as, for instance, the ideas of equality, identity, and perfect isolability of individual things which can correspond to the logical variables.

Mathematics, too, according to him, is grounded on “aesthetic anthropomorphisms” that are reified into ontologies. Mathematical reasoning, according to Nietzsche, cannot get off the ground without the foundational “illusion of identity,” of individual things, and of substances, since mathematical concepts such as lines would not be possible without the substance-mode ontology that these myths support.

And what about the physicist’s pride and joy, the atoms and the laws of nature? Both are, in Nietzsche’s eyes, abstract residues of our “mythological dreaming.” “Let us beware of saying that there are laws in nature. There are only necessities: there is nobody who commands, nobody who obeys, nobody who trespasses.” “The total character of the world, however, is in all eternity chaos--in the sense not of a lack of necessity but a lack of order, arrangement, form, beauty, wisdom, and whatever names there are for our aesthetic anthropomorphisms.” Nothing, absolutely nothing, escapes his stringent reorientation of philosophy in terms of the constructive processes of the embodied subject.

Even Kant’s critique of reason, the instrument of all knowing, assumed too much right at the start, and thereby fell short of asking the truly foundational questions. “How are synthetic judgments a priori possible?” Kant asked himself – and what really is his answer? ‘By virtue of a faculty. (...) But is that – an answer? An explanation? Or is it not merely a repetition of the question? How does opium induce sleep? ‘By virtue of a faculty.’” Nietzsche suggests here that Kant is begging the question that such principles are accessible to us embodied existents. “But such replies belong in comedy, and it is high time to replace the Kantian question ... by another question, ‘Why is belief in such judgments necessary?’ – and to comprehend that such judgments must be believed to be true, for the sake of the preservation of creatures like ourselves; though, they might, of course, be false judgments for all that!”

He goes on to note that “synthetic judgments a priori should not ‘be possible’ at all; we have no right to them.” Kant thus assumed too much when he assumed their possibility. He assumed we had a “right” to such principles. Instead, a genuine critique of reason must consider the chilling possibility that human nature may just not be the kind of thing that is made for the kind of truth that we have thus far thought we sought. From Nietzsche’s perspective, then, it looks like Kant didn’t altogether “critique” the ontological principles of past metaphysics; rather, he projected them inward, as “faculties” in the subject that support “synthetic a priori principles.”

To all of the pseudo-discovery projects of past metaphysics, Nietzsche retorts “you would like all existence to exist only after your own image.” It wasn’t knowledge of the real that was sought, after all, despite our explicit (and self-flattering) claims to the contrary. The traditional metaphysical approach to self-knowledge involved us in an effort to “measure reality against the purely invented world of the unconditional and self-identical.” “Philosophy is this tyrannical drive itself, the most spiritual will to power, to the ‘creation of the

world, 'to the causa prima.'

Nietzsche points out that we cannot assume what most needs proving, namely, that there is an ontological correlate to our truth and value concepts. He asks us instead to start by “(s)upposing, that is, that not just man is the measure of all things.” From this reversed starting point, we can no longer assume that knowing the truth will be knowing the good and the beautiful, as Plato did. Knowing the truth may not bring us the fulfillment we seek. Truth may be ugly, and it may be evil. It may not be about the furtherance of life, but may instead reveal its insignificance. If we can't assume objective normative standards as the grounds of truth, then the question of the status of truth hinges on identifying the true nature of our drives, since it is our drives that remain as its only possible foundation. “I do not believe that a ‘drive to knowledge’ is the father of philosophy; but rather that another drive has … employed understanding … as a mere instrument.” So which drive powers the pursuit of knowledge?

“Behind all logic… there stand valuations, or, more clearly, physiological demands for the preservation of a certain type of life.” It is the drive to the realization of our characteristic mode of life that powers all we do, including our pursuit of knowledge. Perhaps the best motto of Nietzsche's thought can be expressed in one of his followers', Ernst Becker's, words: “We create the world that we need in order to discover ourselves.” If we were honest, Nietzsche says, we would recognize that the true value of a judgment, for us, is not its truth value, but rather its “life-promoting” value. As he puts it in *The Gay Science*:

“We have arranged for ourselves a world in which we can live - by positing bodies, lines, planes, causes and effects, motion and rest, form and content; without these articles of faith nobody now could endure life. But that does not prove them. Life is no argument. The conditions of life might include error.”

Even though such basic ideas have a subjective necessity by virtue of their being part of “the perspective optics of life,” and because, as such, they have “their regulative importance for us,” we must recognize that they may have limited accuracy as “mere foreground estimates.”

I think that such observations make Nietzsche's analysis of the epistemological consequences of Darwinism much more accurate than is that of most other more optimistic evolutionists. He realizes that if reason is but the late adaptation of an organism, it loses even that last (albeit relativized, perspectivized) transcendental foundation that Kant sought to give it. What kind of a truth can an organism claim, whose reason is but an organ adapted to seeking out the conditions in which the organism can secure its wellbeing? Knowledge, as part of this larger organic self-furthering project, is but an instrument to wrest control over the environment, to impose our shape over it, and to ultimately reduce the world to our own terms.

So, the take-home points, for me:

-ontologies are formalized "lifeworlds" (in Husserl's terms): i.e., they reflect our attempts to bridge the divide and conceive the world as our home; they also specify what the world must be like if it is to support and fulfill our drive to realization,

-the psychological function of the pursuit of knowledge has more to do with our quest for self-realization than with the attainment of impersonal, objective truth, and

- we cannot make the oh-so convenient, yet fundamental assumption of post-Platonic metaphysics, the assumption that objective truth is life-affirming. Perhaps such truth, once purged of our life-affirming constructs, spells out a world that is radically Other and opposed to life's strivings (an entropic universe, anyone?).

Now take a breath for a minute and really think about how deep this criticism really cuts. As a friend of mine put it, it is difficult to abide with Nietzsche on this point, to really follow him and take our questioning this far. It is difficult to sustain this level of critical elucidation of these tacit life-practices which alone ground our thinking, even though, each time, we erase our steps and delude ourselves into thinking that we're setting up our edifices on the firm foundation of the structure of being itself.

The big question is, of course, whether Nietzsche's is the -inevitable- conclusion of the critical tradition that Kant initiated. Is this the inevitable last word? Does this tradition, if pursued intransigently, really leave us in this abysmal pit of doubt? Does the fact of the knower's embodiment really mean the dissolution of all foundations? We must come to grips with Nietzsche much more carefully if we are to answer these still-vital questions.

????? says

Samadrita says

Beyond Good and Evil simplified

- by Nietzsche's *Ghost* (with the borrowed use of an uncouth female GR reviewer's desktop)

i) I hate Germans and their silly jingoistic sense of self-worth.

ii) Women are fucking stupid and have no depth. *'They're not even shallow.'*

"It is with Germans almost as it is with women: one never fathoms their depths; they don't have any, that is all."

iii) No bloody German university or professor spares a thought for my writings. Miserable old fools. I approve of the lone, goodly Danish professor who sees the value of my work though.

"Ten years-and nobody in Germany has felt bound in conscience to defend my name against the absurd silence under which it lies buried: it was a foreigner, a Dane, who first possessed sufficient refinement of instinct and courage for this, who felt outraged by my alleged friends."

iv) Screw notions of traditional morality.

v) Screw the Church. Screw religion.

"The concept of "God" invented as a counterconcept of life - everything harmful, poisonous, slanderous, the whole hostility unto death against life synthesized in this concept in a gruesome unity! The concept of "beyond", the "true world" invented in order to devalue the only world there is - in order to retain no goal, no reason, no task for our earthly reality!"

vi) Screw Martin Luther for restoring Christianity at the very moment it was on the verge of annihilation.

vii) Jews are cool. So was Zarathustra.

viii) Europe and the world are headed along the path of war and destruction the likes of which have never been witnessed before.

"For when truth enters into a fight with the lies of millennia, we shall have upheavals, a convulsion of earthquakes, a moving of mountains and valleys, the like of which has never been dreamed of. The concept of politics will have merged entirely with a war of spirits; all power structures of the old society will have been exploded-all of them are based on lies: there will be wars the like of which have never yet been seen on earth."

Disclaimer:- Before I am labeled a philistine and the philosophy majors, Nietzsche enthusiasts, Doctoral students and venerated college professors descend on me with their (metaphorical) pitchforks, the format of this review is not to be considered a veiled mockery of the great philosopher or an affront to his ideas. Just a flippant response to a first reading. To be taken in good humor.

Ahmed Ibrahim says

Keith says

For those of you who are unfamiliar with him, Friedrich Nietzsche was an angry little man who protected himself from the Mean Old World by swaddling himself in an exaggerated ego (and an even more exaggerated moustache).

Rather than suggest that you read any or all of his works, I've taken the liberty of creating a "Nietzsche Book Generator" that you can use to construct your very own philosophical tomes, in the comfort of your own home!

Just follow these simple steps:

- 1) Make one or more completely ridiculous claims
- 2) Cover your ass by asserting that anyone who disagrees with you is simply too stupid to understand what you're saying (aka "The Emperor's New Clothes" method of argument)
- 3) When you run out of things to say, just write the most misogynistic thing that comes to mind
- 4) Be sure to dazzle the reader with your endless supply of Latin clichés
- 5) Repeat steps 1-4 two hundred times or so, and you've got yourself a "book"

Then all that's left is to sit back and prepare to be taken seriously by a large number of otherwise intelligent people!

Barry Pierce says

Nietzsche, the original Meninist. *#NotAllPhilosophers*

Trevor says

290. Every deep thinker is more afraid of being understood than of being misunderstood.

If Nietzsche had started here – rather than nearly ending with this thought – he might have been more comprehensible. His readers might have said – ‘oh, right, so that is how it is going to be, is it? We’re dealing with some smart-arse that is going to play games with us – well, play away…’

But, he doesn’t start here – he starts here:

“SUPPOSING that Truth is a woman--what then?”

Now, my lecturer at university got very excited over this idea. In fact, he was writing his doctorate on precisely this idea – called it something like ‘Nietzsche’s Women’. So, I pretty much read this book as if it was written as an exploration of truth being defined as whatever a sort of German version of Victorian sexual relationships would have had the stereotype of ‘woman’ be. And really, Nietzsche, to me, simply doesn’t sustain this metaphor at all. Later in the work, when he talks of women (a highly sexist version of women, admittedly) but he talks of women, not of truth.

I ought to say something about how the book is structured. Firstly, there is a Preface, nine parts and a final sort of ramble that I guess is supposed to be quite ‘artistic’. The whole is divided into 296 numbered paragraphs. Some of these paragraphs can go for a couple of pages (which gets to be a pain in the bum to read, as they are thick text and quite dense). Others are aphorisms and can be quite direct: “141 The belly is the reason man does not easily take himself for a god” – or obscure to the point of incomprehensibility: “184 There is a wild spirit of good-naturedness that looks like malice”. Some of these end up on desk calendars, most don’t.

The paragraphs which I think my lecturer must have struggled over most were those from 233 to 239 – where Nietzsche discusses the ‘weaker sex’. This seems to me to be standard sexist nonsense and says

nothing interesting about either women or truth.

Right then – my division of the spoils!

The Good:

From 247: “The preacher was the only one in Germany who knew the weight of a syllable or a word, in what manner a sentence strikes, springs, rushes, flows, and comes to a close; he alone had a conscience in his ears, often enough a bad conscience: for reasons are not lacking why proficiency in oratory should be especially seldom attained by a German, or almost always too late. The masterpiece of German prose is therefore with good reason the masterpiece of its greatest preacher: the BIBLE has hitherto been the best German book. Compared with Luther's Bible, almost everything else is merely "literature"--something which has not grown in Germany, and therefore has not taken and does not take root in German hearts, as the Bible has done.”

I like this because I think it is based on a profound truth, that texts written that are not written to be voiced often do sound hollow and lack something very important.

I also liked some of the aphorisms, not least, “132. One is punished most for one's virtues” (yeah, tell me about it) and the final one which since I first read it about 20 years ago has stayed in my memory and been something I have sought to avoid, “185. ‘I do not like it’ – Why? – ‘I am not up to it.’ – has anyone ever answered like that?” I would like to think that I have tried to be someone who has answered like that – that is, to admit (to myself, if no one else) when I have not understood something because it is beyond me. But this aphorism is even deeper than this – nevertheless, one should seek to avoid talking of disliking something because it hurts one's vanity in its being too far beyond where one is currently up to.

The Bad

I find his rants against democracy and socialism – against what he calls the ‘herd mentality’ – quite obnoxious. From 202: after discussing Anarchists who are... “Apparently in opposition to the peacefully industrious democrats and Revolution-ideologues, and still more so to the awkward philosophasters and fraternity-visionaries who call themselves Socialists and want a "free society," those are really at one with them all in their thorough and instinctive hostility to every form of society other than that of the AUTONOMOUS herd (to the extent even of repudiating the notions "master" and "servant"--ni dieu ni maitre, says a socialist formula); at one in their tenacious opposition to every special claim, every special right and privilege (this means ultimately opposition to EVERY right, for when all are equal, no one needs "rights" any longer);” the rant continues on and on in yet another example of Nietzsche's endless sentences – and one (I can only assume) that doesn't read terribly well even in German despite his own advice quoted earlier. As one who is proud to call out – even in French, if necessary – Neither God nor Master! his rants did nothing to convince me otherwise. Having seen some of the morons who float to the top and call themselves ‘cream’ – I will happily struggle against every special right and special claim.

His criticism of the English in 252 “It is characteristic of such an unphilosophical race to hold on firmly to Christianity--they NEED its discipline for "moralizing" and humanizing” is the sort of trite and pointless nonsense, meant only as an insult, that undermines his arguments generally.

The Evil

I have a rather visceral reaction to some topics – eugenics is one that poisons the very depths of my heart's

blood. I find it hard to think clearly about something that I have such a potent reaction against – and naturally, Nietzsche is quite in favour of such hideous excesses. When he doesn't talk about Darwin in contempt, he reiterates the least interesting conclusion - the need for a 'struggle for existence' to strengthen the 'race' (oh how the rightwing love such notions as 'survival of the fittest' – as if human culture wasn't premised on mutual protection to make us strong despite all of our frailties – see for example: 262 "A species arises, a type becomes fixed and strong, through protracted struggle against essentially constant unfavourable conditions" – oh yeah, says who?).

And so he begins his most obnoxious part of the work, "What is Noble?" with the line: "Every elevation of the type 'man' has hitherto been the work of an aristocratic society". Or in 258, "Its (an aristocratic society's) fundamental faith must be that society should not exist for the sake of society but only as foundation and scaffolding upon which a select species of being is able to raise itself to its higher task and in general to a higher existence." Blah, blah, blah. At university, when I would point to passages like these and complain about their obnoxious implications – that the majority of humanity is cast in the role of the play thing of the 'powerful' – I would be told not to see such statements as being about 'society' as such, but rather about the individual. And this has become the standard, the received reading of Nietzsche – that he was really about taking control of one's own life and making life an artistic project and such blather – but I've never been able to read him in this way. His pronouncements on society are clear and unambiguous. He may not be the forerunner of Hitler, as he was made out by his sister, but the fact remains he is not hard to twist into a rightwing ideologue – his views are poisonous to society. And they are meant to be read as a social formula – I have yet to be convinced otherwise.

Beyond

I've gone back to reading Nietzsche again because twenty years ago I read him and hated him. Since then I've read many commentaries and listened to some lectures from the Teaching Company in which he is greatly praised by people I found quite sensible and worthwhile. I thought that perhaps I really had disliked him because I was not up to him. But if that was true then, it is still true now.

I find Modern Philosophy's obsession with the individual and the 'meaninglessness' of the world to be a dead end. I find it as dull as dishwater and part of the reason I stopped reading philosophy and went on to reading about the advances in neural science instead, for example. I quickly become bored with obscurantism, and if there is one thing that the children of Nietzsche do exceptionally well it is obscurantism – Oh Heidegger, Oh Sartre, Oh Derrida... - As wrong as that might make me – I'm just not interested enough in the rants of someone who simply does not want to be clear. Life is too short.

Now, an aside.

Throughout this book there are odd punctuation marks – perhaps the cause of the sentences never seeming to come to an end. Anyway, one of these marks is : - and it seemed a bit out of place, but also made me think of smileys or emotes or whatever these hideous things are called “:-)” Except in this case they looked like little penises scattered throughout the text. After a while I couldn't help feel this was quite appropriate.

Szplug says

As with my review of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, the below comprises the notes I jotted down—deciphered as

best could be managed against the near hieroglyphic obfuscation of the chicken riot I call handwriting—when this was read some dozen or so years ago. As I failed to consistently make clear what were Nietzsche's words, as set against my own thoughts on the latter, the non-italicized portions may represent one giant act of plagiarizing. Luckily for me, the man seldom presented himself as possessing a litigious personality.

Gradually it has become clear to me what every great philosophy so far has been: namely, the personal confession of its author and a kind of involuntary and unconscious memoir; also that the moral (or immoral) intentions in every philosophy constituted the real germ of life from which the whole plant had grown.

The free and unfree wills are mythology—in real life it is only a matter of strong and weak wills.

We manipulate our prejudices and desires with language to make our symbols and interpretations *be* reality—this is our inscribed presumption.

Our highest insights must—and should—sound like follies and sometimes like crimes when they are heard without permission by those who are not predisposed and predestined for them.

Why does there have to be a *truth* and *falsity* in opposition? Why not gradations of values? Why can't the world that concerns us be a fiction and why does it need an author?

There is something about truth, about the search for truth; and when a human being is too human about it—he seeks to do only the good—I bet he finds nothing.

Has the text of the past finally disappeared under the interpretation? Has *noble posterity* misunderstood the whole past and in that way alone made it *tolerable* to look at?

The Free Thinker:

Nietzsche is basically detailing a plan for the new philosophers—they will be men of solitude, men who can attain the *esoteric*; look down from on high where *good and evil, virtue and vice* cannot be so easily compartmentalized through *yes* and *no*. Above all, their search cannot be thought of as being undertaken for the good of society. Suffering cannot be eliminated, happiness cannot be guaranteed, and the new philosophers will have to face many painful *untruths* and be very courageous. They cannot limit themselves by such sentiments as *generosity* or *pity*, or like things that deplete their spirit.

On the Religious:

Early Christianity comprised more *suffering*, more of a continual suicide of reason and freedom and pride, and an enslavement at the same time. The *saint* has always fascinated, because of our historic swings between *voluptuousness* and *asceticism*, and the sense of a great *will* taking control; the sense that this *will* must have had or served a *Powerful Purpose* in doing so.

The Old Testament: Passionate and glorious language, violent—*big-souled*. *The New Testament:* Loving and tender, mostly abnegative—*small-souled*. The Greek religion was noble because it had a sense of great *gratitude* for life; felt that life is a *boon*.

Modern philosophy, as epistemological skepticism, is anti-Christian but *not* anti-religious, either overtly or

covertly. From a surety in the soul (the "I") modern philosophy has come to wonder if the "I" is only apparent, that is, that the *think* may create the "I".

The three greatest of the religious rungs of cruelty are:

One: Sacrifice of something dear (eg, one's firstborn) to god—this is the *Pre-Moral Stage*.

Two: Sacrifice of one's nature to God—this is the *Moral Stage*.

Three: Sacrifice of God to the Nothing—this is our *Modern Times*

It is the profound, suspicious fear of an invincible pessimism that forces whole millennia to bury their teeth in, and cling to, a religious interpretation of existence: the fear of that instinct which senses that one might get a hold of the truth too soon, before man has become strong enough, hard enough, artist enough.

Aphorisms Which Gave Me An Hermeneutic Steamer:

Whoever despises himself, respects himself as one who despises.

A soul that knows it is loved but does not love itself betrays its sediment: what is at the bottom comes up.

Heavy, heavy-spirited people become lighter precisely through what makes others heavier, through hatred and love, and for a time they surface.

The great epochs of our life come when we gain the courage to rechristen our evil as what is best in us.

The devil has the broadest perspectives for God; therefore he keeps so far away from God—the devil being the most ancient friend of wisdom.

Whoever fights monsters should see to it that in the process he does not become a monster. And when you look long enough into an abyss, the abyss also looks into you.

Whatever is done from love always occurs beyond good and evil.

The thought of suicide is a powerful comfort: it helps one through many a dreadful night.

The high spirits of kindness may look like malice.

Natural History of Morals:

*Every morality is, as opposed to *laisser-aller*, a bit of tyranny against "nature", also against "reason".*

Nietzsche declares that morality is the setting of obedience over a lengthy period and in a single direction—philosophers and moralists *knew* the answers that they wanted before they asked questions. Morality crushed and tyrannized much of *nature* within man and made him stupid in so doing; yet it was perhaps needed for *spiritual discipline* to harden and shape European Man.

Humans are accustomed to lying. Our senses dislike the new and prefer the familiar; our instincts, by nature, lead us to prefer the *truth of instincts*—*Man is much more of an artist than he knows*.

Nietzsche further hammers upon the authoritarian strain in man:

Nothing has been exercised and cultivated better and longer among men so far than obedience.

Men have thus ingrained inside them an instinct for *Thou Shalt!*

It seizes upon things as a rude appetite, rather indiscriminately, and accepts whatever is shouted into its ears by someone who issues commands—parents, teachers, laws, class, prejudices, public opinions.

Love thy neighbour stems from fear thy neighbour.

Everything that elevates an individual above the herd and intimidates the neighbour is henceforth called evil.

*The imperative of herd timidity—we want that some day there should be **nothing anymore to be afraid of**. Throughout Europe, the will and way to this day is called progress.*

Nietzsche mocks the *Objective Man*—the man who accepts everything, who has no ideas of his own but is a mere vessel for the ideas and beliefs of others. He is a *mirror*, reduced to acceding or refusing, to saying *Yes* and *No*. Nietzsche further mocks the *Skeptic*—the man who doubts everything and will never say *Yes* or *No*, but ever hesitates and has thus lost his will. Doubts exists more, and skepticism flourishes, the more civilized a country has become. However, Nietzsche admires the *stronger and more dangerous skepticism* introduced to Germany and Europe by Frederick the Great—this is a virile and manly skepticism that leads to great expeditions, efforts, and exertions of the will.

Moral judgements and condemnations constitute the favorite revenge of the spiritually limited against those less limited—also a sort of compensation for having been ill-favored by nature—finally, an opportunity for acquiring spirit and becoming refined: malice spiritualized.

Our Virtues:

Modern man does not understand the devotion to things that attract the higher and choicer tastes he calls the *disinterested* action, thinking it selfless; but even the *highest* disinterested action in truth is exceedingly interested and interesting. *Done for love*—but everything done for love is egotistic. *Done for sacrifice*—but a sacrificer knows that he wanted and got something in return, perhaps a part of himself *for* a part of himself.

Nietzsche avers that the religion of modern man is *Pity*—though through all the noise of its preachers can be discerned a sound of *self-contempt*. The man of modern ideas is immeasurably dissatisfied with himself; he suffers, and his vanity wants him—*needs* him—to suffer along with others, to feel pity.

Sections 223 and 224 are flat-out brilliantly prophetic about the potential burgeoning of *multiculturalism*. The modern taste is for the *infinite*: we dress in the costumes of all cultures and drink the waters of all times—we cannot stand and measure things, but long for, crave the *eternal*, even as our instincts, in the play of chaos, run towards the past. Limitations or highest valuations seem an infernal stasis, while the boundless horizon, abandonment, the primal and unmeasured appears rife with the promise and thrill of life.

The *Last Men* wish to abolish suffering: the *Higher Men* hold that to be an end that makes man contemptible

and ridiculous. The discipline of suffering is what allows Man to transcend his limits. Man is both *Created* and *Creator*, and so necessarily *should* and *must* suffer; be broken, burned, and reformed, that he might *create* to overcome himself.

Nietzsche explains how cruelty has always been needed for man to break through his comfortable thoughts and notions: the spirit is all too happy to assume masks to maintain illusions—sometimes the will revels in ignorance. The cruelty of intellectual conscience must be able to break or shatter these other wills in order for man to grow.

The demoralization of Europe is making races and peoples more alike—is the flattening and the mediocritization of man. This new herd society of good workers will thus be comprised of people as in need of command as of sustenance—the masses will be produced for *slavery* in the subtlest sense. But this will allow select individuals to become stronger and richer than ever before imaginable—an involuntary arrangement for the cultivation of *tyrants*, taking that word even in the spiritual sense.

Peoples and Fatherlands:

Nietzsche says Wagner wrote perfect *German* music for his day—it looked fondly at tomorrow whilst yearning for the past; the Germans were people of yesterday and tomorrow—they had no *today*. Mozart and Beethoven wrote music for *Europe*, changed Europe. With the birth of the Romantics, German music became dangerous, a music not of Europe but rather of *Fatherlands*.

Nietzsche further finds the English to be the un-philosophical people, the vulgar nation, creator and implementer of *Modern Ideas*. They are non-musical—and hence succumbed to *The Spirit of Gravity* from *Zarathustra*. The French are the creators of *Noble* ideas in Europe, but their soul is being corrupted by the *small virtues* of the English.

What is Noble:

Nietzsche holds that all enhancements of man have arisen within an aristocratic society: a noble caste of barbarians, strong in will to power and uncorrupted by *anarchy among the instincts*, takes advantage of the inherent exploitation that is a primordial fact of all history.

Master Morality and *Slave Morality* often exist, side-by-side or intermingled, in modern man. *Master Morality* is value-creating, one wherein good and bad are paired as *noble vs contemptible*. It creates value from oneself, not from outside judgements. It provides aid to the weak from an excess of power, the source of gifts, never from pity. Pity is contemptible. A hardness of heart is needed. *Slave Morality* bears the marked distinction of being a morality of pity, acting for others *disinterestedly*, ie from selflessness, compassionate feelings and a warm heart.

Master Morality possesses a reverence for age and tradition; personal honour in doing one's duties, of which said duty is only to one's peers, for friendships and enmities. The lower castes are treated beyond Good and Evil—but duty demands that pity be given its appropriate place downwards. *Slave Morality* looks to progress and the future, and disrespects tradition. All the world are brothers and equals—pity is extended and extendable to *everyone*. It is inherently suspicious towards the values of a *Master Morality*, and is invariably a morality of *utility*: industry, happiness, friendship, compassion. It is designed specifically to ease suffering.

In *Master Morality*, the Good inspire, and wish to inspire, fear. The Bad is the contemptible. In *Slave Morality*, The Evil are those who inspire fear. However, the Good in a *Slave Morality* has also to inspire

some degree of contempt, because the Good is not dangerous. In all *Slave Morality* cultures the language tends to bring closer together the words *Good* and *Stupid*.

The noble man arises from an area beset by nature and/or neighbours. Only a tradition of hard, firm, unchanging laws and severity allows the state's continued existence; only when one no longer exists within such life and death environs does that hardness thaw and people begin to prize the individual. Corruption sets in as all individuals inevitably learn to preach mediocrity.

The noble soul is egoism—it has no vanity and only treats *thoughtfully* with its peers. The noble soul is used to looking straight ahead, slowly, or down: rarely does it stray upwards because it already *knows itself to be at a height*. It is not vain because it doesn't require the good opinion of others to provide it with a self-confidence or self-esteem it does not have already have. Support from others is *alien* to the noble soul.

Nietzsche is saying herein that the noble soul has *reverence* for itself. Many aspire to be noble—and none can say *who* will be a genius and great—but this self-honour must be *innate*. Everywhere that men gather, there also will gather the urge to *commonality*. The noble soul will be drawn to what are virtues for it: solitude, courage, insight, sympathy. *Raphael, born without hands, would still be a great artist!*

The perception through illusion and mask that true life is a great and endless *suffering* causes *nausea*—the non-noble soul will choke on this nausea and learn to loathe himself and life; the noble soul will spit out the nausea and continue revering life.

Man invented the *good conscience* in order to be able to enjoy his soul as *simple*. In this way the entirety of his morality is an enduringly opaque veil allowing him enjoyment of the sight of the soul.

[Dionysus] once said: "Under certain circumstances I love what is human"—and with this he alluded to Ariadne who was present—"man is to my mind an agreeable, courageous, inventive animal that has no equal on earth; it finds its way in any labyrinth. I am well disposed towards him: I often reflect how I might yet advance him and make him stronger, more evil, and more profound than he is."

"Stronger, more evil, and more profound?" I asked startled. "Yes," he said once more; "stronger, more evil, and more profound; also more beautiful"—and at that the tempter god smiled with his halcyon smile as though he had just paid an enchanting compliment. Here we also see: what this divinity lacks is not only a sense of shame—and there are also other good reasons for conjecturing that in several respects all of the gods could learn from us humans. We humans are—more humane.

knig says

Why exactly, should I strive to be kind, and not cruel? Why am I being taught to be fair and not selfish all my life? Why should I subscribe to equal rights, non discrimination, egalitarianism and freedom of speech?

Nietzsche posits that the above mentioned virtues and aesthetic and or moral imperatives (or indeed any imperatives) are merely legacy, the result of Darwinian (although he does not use this word) qualities which have ensured the survival and prosperity of the 'issuing' authority. Good and evil, salvation of the soul and

growth has nothing to do with it. As social structures change, so does the concept of morality. This of course, is the point, where his ingenious treatise of master and slave morality comes in.

Under 'feudal' conditions, it is the rulers who determine the conception of 'good' and morality. 'We truthful one's – the nobility in ancient Greece called themselves, as it is a fundamental belief of all aristocrats that the common people are liars, insignificant, and cowards. It is obvious that everywhere the designations of moral value were applied first to men, and were only derivatively applied at a later period to actions. The noble man regards himself, then as a determiner of values, he does not require to be approved of, he alone passes the judgment.' On slave morality: 'supposing the abused and oppressed were allowed to moralise? What will be the common element in their moral estimates? Probably a pessimistic suspicion with regard to the entire situation of man will find expression, perhaps a condemnation of man together with his situation. The slave has an unfavourable eye for the virtues of the powerful, a scepticism of anything 'good' there honoured- he would fain persuade himself that an happiness found there was not genuine. Those qualities which serve to alleviate the existence of sufferers are brought into prominence: it is here that sympathy, the kind, helping hand, the warm heart, patience, diligence and humility attain to honour, for here they are the most useful qualities, and almost the only means of supporting the burden of existence. Here is the seat then of the famous antithesis of good and evil.'

In essence, it is this 'slave morality', which arose incumbent on certain socio-economic conditions which no longer exist today, which has prevailed, and which tells me to be kind and fair, and not cruel. Why has it prevailed? Because it has been propped up by the Church for its own reasons(according to Nietzsche) which are not the subject of my review.

Under this argument, there can be no intrinsic value attached to say my being 'kind' or "equitable" or any such : it is an essence an arbitrary signifier, devoid of inherent 'good or evil', simply a(n evolving) measure of utility imposed by the establishment in order to normalise expected intragroup behaviour, based on social and cultural conditions at the prevailing time.

The idea that morality is a tool for managing expectations is intriguing. In essence, in any subject-object interaction, the qualitative determination of the action in terms of 'good and evil' is not objective phenomena: it is simply an arbitrarily shared agreement between the two entities. The bible, for example, condones slavery. In the Unforgiving Slave (Mathew 18:21-35) there are a lot of people throwing themselves at each other's feet (depending on rank) and debate on forgiveness: should you do it 7 or 77 times 7 times. But, interestingly, neither slave nor master seem in the least bit preoccupied about the institution of slavery. There is an expectation, an agreement, on both sides of the equation, at that particular time, that slavery is a non negotiable condition, and certainly not contra-morality.

The ethical quandary arises when their is a mismatch between subject object expectations. So, how many times should you forgive? 7? 77? Not at all? What determines this decision?

The negation, in the first instance, of a universal morality ' The demand for one morality for all is detrimental (to the higher man)' which can be applied as a 'sympathetic action' and the determination of person specific morality is informed particularly by 'the power to will', namely that intra-group, we are not all equal. A hierarchy of power, circular in nature, is established whereby everyone surrenders their will to someone else, everyone has power over someone else.

Therefore, a 'sympathetic action' (i.e. moral action) is not an independent, objective and universal phenomenon but must be, by default, be derived from the dynamics of the specific subject-object agreement from which it emanates. In essence, a 'higher excellence' individual' is the originators of his own 'personalised' morality, which will constantly adapt and evolve according to the specificity of the recipient.

The above process is relevant only to higher excellence individuals (e.g. superman), e.g. those who do not follow the slave mentality outlined above. And it is by no means a pain free process: the man who is a product of contrary instincts finds himself the hotbed of values which struggle with one another, and are seldom at peace. It is a weak man whose desire is that the war within him should come to an end; happiness appears to him in the character of a soothing medicine : the happiness of repose, undisturbedness, of repletion': which effectively portains the shutdown of mental faculties and free will, the strive for perfection and completion, a 'dumbing down' and surrender to the status quo, the non crystallisation of endless possibility. Instead, Nietzsche argues, 'if men, in addition to their powerful and irreconcilable instincts, have also indoctrinated in themselves a subtlety for carrying on the conflict in themselves, there then arises those marvellously incomprehensible and inexplicable beings, predestined for' ...conquest, achievement, fulfilment.

In essence, suffering is an essential prerequisite and necessary for the cultivation of human excellence. If an individual were to internalise the norm that suffering must be alleviated, then instead of suffering to 'create', all energy is wasted, squandered in self pity and lament.

A possible explanation for Nietzsche's insistence on suffering is his conception of a human being is one constituted by non conscious-type facts that determine his actions: 'One will become only what one is' and 'he can only follow to the end what is fixed about him'. His argument here is informed by a reversal of the Cartesian 'I am therefore I think' to 'I think, therefore, I am', caveated with an epiphenomenological explanation of the occurrence of thoughts; a thought arrives 'when it wishes, not when I 'wish. Consequently it follows that actions are not caused by conscious but rather than unconscious will. If so, then it is not possible to resolve a conflict against one own self.

So far, so much waffle. (Not that Nietzsche doesn't waffle: because he does). Epi consciousness, will of power, normative and descriptive components of morality, so the fuck what? Where exactly is the 'show me the money' shot here?

I come away with:

I suffer. Its been a life-long project; with an end goal to alleviation. Now, I am free, because I I accept that suffering is OK: its a non balancing equation. I do not need to 'gas' it, I need to accept it. Its not something I will ever neutralise. If you can't beat them join them. I will NOT waste anymore energy in suppression tactics. I will, instead, harness it and make it work for me. God, the relief....

I will no longer measure my worth in accordance with accepted dogma, and penalise myself if I feel I fall short. Morality is arbitrary: there is no objective good and evil. I will make my own morality. It is OK then, to take the path less travelled, and not subscribe to 'slave morality'. If there is subject –object disagreement, is it possible, perhaps, that you are wrong and I am right? Does your disagreement and sense of entitlement obviate my sense of reason?

My life is determined by 'will of power'. You can go on and disagree, be a Jesuit. But. I accept that I will hurt people, and that people will hurt me, despite my best efforts. Even when I think I'm labouring for the 'greater good', someone will be coming unstuck for it. This is OK. It is a fallacy to strive for perfection in the non hurting business. One man's poison is another man's meat.

But finally. The money shot. I don't need to hate myself. Instead of wasting energy on penitence and self flagellation, I need to be finding my own 'little community.' I would much rather sin with a group of five than suffer in isolation amongst millions. If I failed you: you weren't for me. We just don't have ' subject object' agreement.

I don't want to give up my morality for you.

I don't want you to give up your morality for me.

I want us to share a morality.

Is this a drunken review?

Tara says

Nietzsche definitely had the Will to Power. The Power to Argue Logically, Employing Thoroughly Supported, Well-Developed Premises and Reaching Incisive, Cogent Conclusions...not so much. Still, I did find quite a few of his wittily-phrased sass attacks pretty entertaining. Mostly.

Håkon says

Beyond Good and Evil is a profound book about the Power, passion, and love of individuals. Nietzsche offers us in this book a way of life, in which one's Will to Power is the fundamental principle of society, and the individual.

Nietzsche criticizes every philosophy hitherto, as having been deceived by a presupposed moral system, or at least a moral end-goal, therefore not reaching for truth, rather, making truths so as to validate its moral preachings.

Christianity too, fell into the trap of valuing truth, despite the fact that there was nothing truthful about it. This lead Christianity to create truths and mis-truths in order to add value to that which they perceived to be the righteous path.

One would therefore assume that Nietzsche was a supporter of the Scientific method, but even this, he says, is a falsity, for the goal of science, for most scientists, would be to create Utopia through science, therefore a moral evaluation.

What Nietzsche rebelled against here was the magnitude through which these moral systems preached truth, yet ignored the fact that there was nothing true about the statements made. It was the hypocrisy of it. Be honest. Call it what it is. A mis-truth, to rationalize one's morality. Only when man admits to its mis-truths, can it go about being "moral".

If you want all your beliefs criticized and questioned, and also all other people's beliefs criticized and questioned, this book does it to perfection. Few philosophers are able to critique all systems of belief with such passionate and rich language, and still do it so naturally. Almost impulsively.

Many have criticized Nietzsche for his nihilistic nature. But this is frankly not true. Nietzsche is filled with passion of life, which one can obviously see through his writing, and is also incredibly capable of love, for it is Beyond Good and Evil, he argues, that one can truly love that which deserves it.

Steven Walle says

I enjoyed the writings of this philosopher. The author was a strong thinker of the eighteen hundreds. His philosophy goes strongly against the western thought of Christianity. Instead of the slave morality that Christianity imbrases, his philosophy celebrates living in the moment.

I recommend this book to all.

Enjoy and Be Blessed.

Diamond
