

BEYOND GOOD AND EVIL

FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE

Preface

supposing truth is a woman
philosophers like love-sick suitors who don't understand the woman-truth
central problem of philosophy is Plato's error:
denying *perspective*, the basic condition of all life

On the Prejudices of Philosophers

1) questioning the will to truth
who is it that really wants truth? What in us wants truth? Why not untruth?

2) origin of the will to truth out of the will to untruth, deception
can anything arise out of its opposite?
A dangerous questioning?

Nietzsche sees new philosophers coming up who have the strength for the dangerous "maybe." Note in general Nietzsche's preference for the conditional tense, his penchant for beginning his questioning with "perhaps" or "suppose" or "maybe." In many of the passages throughout this book Nietzsche takes up a perspective which perhaps none had dared take up before, a perspective to question what had seemed previously to be unquestionable. He seems to constantly be tempting the reader with a dangerous thought experiment. This begins with the questioning of the will to truth and the supposition that, perhaps, the will to truth may have arisen out of its opposite, the will to untruth, ignorance, deception.

3) the supposition that the greater part of conscious thinking must be included among instinctive activities
Nietzsche emphasizes that consciousness is a surface phenomenon
conscious thinking is directed by what goes on beneath the surface
contrary to Plato's notion of *pure reason*, the conscious intellect, Nietzsche supposes, is not necessarily in control

4) supposition that untruth is a condition of life
thus the falseness of a judgment is not necessarily an objection
What counts is whether it is "life promoting, life preserving, species-preserving, perhaps even species cultivating."

This thought experiment of untruth as a condition of life can be traced back to the early essay "On Truth and Lie in an Extramoral Sense": truths are illusions that we have forgotten are illusions and to the Apollonian art drive in *The Birth of Tragedy*
the creation of beautiful illusions which are necessary to life
the capacity to create necessary fictions without which we could not live

5) criticizing philosophers who think they have purely discovered their truths, those who think they have obtained some 'objective' or 'neutral' standpoint
challenging this assumption Nietzsche suggests they are all "wily spokesmen for their prejudices which they baptize 'truths'"
calls out Kant in particular, for thinking he has obtained such a standpoint with his 'categorical imperative'

6) important passage focusing on Nietzsche's psychology of the unconscious drives
every philosophy a kind of personal confession and unconscious memoir

this echoes the *Preface to The Gay Science* in which Nietzsche suggests philosophers philosophize out of their sicknesses (himself included!)

9) questioning the Stoics and their vow to live “according to nature”
 Nietzsche challenges this view by suggesting there is nothing “stoic” about nature:
 “nature” Nietzsche suggests is wasteful beyond measure, indifferent, without purpose, without mercy and justice,
 perhaps living is wanting to be other than this nature
 thus untruth as a condition of life
 Nietzsche criticizes what he sees in the Stoics: their attempt to read into “nature” their own image
 but all philosophers have done this
 all philosophy “creates the world in its own image”
 “Philosophy is this tyrannical drive itself, the most spiritual will to power, to ‘the creation of the world’”

10) first reference to “nihilism” in his published writings
 criticizing the metaphysical opposition between “the real and apparent world”
 also criticizing the quest for certainty which has been the dominant theme in modern philosophy
 the reference to nihilism is to the
 “puritanical fanatics of conscience who prefer even a certain nothing to an uncertain something”

11) criticizing Kant for thinking that he had ‘discovered’ a new faculty in man,
 the faculty for *synthetic judgments a priori*
 Nietzsche proposes replacing Kant’s question: How are synthetic judgment a priori possible?
 with the question: “Why is belief in such judgments *necessary*?”

12) rejection of materialistic atomism
 Kaufmann’s footnote informs us that Nietzsche’s reference here is to an obscure 18th century Jesuit philosopher, Boscovich, who defined atoms as only centers of force and not particles of matter
 Nietzsche takes up Boscovich’s view with his notion of the will to power as play of forces
 before Einstein, Nietzsche is thinking through the notion of matter as force

13) questioning whether the instinct for self-preservation is really the most basic drive
 “A living thing seeks above all to *discharge* its strength—life itself is *will to power*; self-preservation is only one of the indirect and most frequent *results*.”

14) supposition that even physics is only an interpretation and exegesis of the world
 to what extent is Nietzsche’s supposition about physics correct? Is even physics only an interpretation?
 reference to Plato’s thinking as a *noble* way of thinking
 Plato’s thinking was an overcoming of the world (really what all philosophy does according to
 Nietzsche’s hypothesis about philosophy as the most spiritual will to power)

15) the previous passage suggest Nietzsche’s rejection of realism
 this passage shows his rejection of idealism
 Nietzsche’s position then evades the dichotomy of realism/idealism

16) criticizing the “immediate certainties” of philosophers
 especially Descartes “I think, therefore, I am”
 and Schopenhauer’s “I will”

17) taking up further this critique of Descartes’ certainty
 Nietzsche suggests that a thought comes not when “I think” but when “it” wishes

18) it is not the least charm of a theory that it is refutable
the hundred times refuted theory of “free will” owes its persistence to this charm

19) now takes up his own refutation of the theory of “free will”
for Nietzsche the will is not the best known thing in the world, but something complicated
“Willing seems to me to be above all something *complicated*, something that is a unit only as a word”
the will is thus not a unity but a plurality
and what is strangest: we are at the same time the commanding and obeying parties
we deceive ourselves with the concept of “I”
grammar deceives us in thinking that the will is a unity
there is a deception, then, even in the notion of the “I”

20) further exploration of the falsifications of grammar
strange family resemblance of all Indian, Greek, and German philosophizing
can be traced to common family of Indo-European languages
suggests that philosophers of Ural-Altaic languages (such as Japanese) might have a different view
perhaps it is the common grammar of Indo-European languages with their noun based language
which leads to a metaphysics of Being, the view that reality is unchanging

21) questioning the notion of the *causa sui* (the self-cause)
this passage illustrates further Nietzsche’s supposition about the necessity of untruth
“It is *we* alone who have devised cause, sequence, for-each-other, relativity, constraint, number, law, freedom, motive, and purpose; and when we project and mix this symbol world into things as if it existed ‘in-itself’ we act once more as we have always acted—*mythologically*. The “unfree will” is mythology; in real life it is only a matter of *strong* and *weak* wills.”

22) Nietzsche uses his experience as a philologist to criticize a common failing of philosophers:
the attempt to read into “nature” what one really wants to find in “nature”
for the philologist, this is a “bad mode of interpretation”
“somebody might come along who, with opposite intentions and modes of interpretation, could read out of the same “nature,” and with regard to the same phenomena, rather the tyrannically inconsiderate and relentless enforcement of claims of power—an interpreter who would picture the unexceptional and unconditional aspects of all ‘will to power’ . . .”

23) all previous psychology got stuck in moral prejudices and has not dared descend to the depths
Nietzsche dares to descend to the depths (opening up depth psychology)
“To understand it [psychology] as morphology and *the doctrine of the development of the will to power*”
Nietzsche clearly is warning the reader here that this descent into the depths is a dangerous descent:
“And yet even in this immense and almost new domain of dangerous insights; and there are in fact a hundred good reasons why everyone should keep away from it who—*can*.”

The Free Spirit

24) again the theme of the necessity of illusions
the will to knowledge arises out of the will to ignorance
the will to knowledge is not the opposite of the will to ignorance but its refinement

one might notice a theme drawn from the teaching of evolution
just as it was shocking when Darwin showed that the human being arose out of what was animal
the human being not as the opposite of the ape but its refinement

Nietzsche suggests a similar evolution of knowledge
 man could not live without a constant simplification and falsification
 even science “at its best seeks most to keep us in this *simplified*, thoroughly artificial, suitably constructed
 and suitably falsified world—at the way in which, willy-nilly, it loves error, because, being alive, it loves
 life.”

25) warns philosophers to beware of martyrdom
 to sacrifice oneself for the sake of truth
 such philosophers take their truths too seriously
 Nietzsche finds more truthfulness in question marks than in solemn gestures
 necessity of the good solitude for the philosopher
 Nietzsche is especially critical of the stupidity of moral indignation
 such indignation is a sure sign one has lost his philosophical sense of humor

26) this “good solitude” further explored
 “every choice human being strives for a citadel and a secrecy where he is saved from the crowd, the
 many, the great majority”

27) Nietzsche calls attention to the difference in *tempo* of his thought
 it is hard to be understood when one thinks quickly (like the current of the Ganges)
 while everyone else thinks like the tortoise
 Nietzsche admits he does everything to be “hard to understand”

28) again the problem of *tempo* is considered
 “a German is almost incapable of *presto* [rapid tempo]”

29) on esoteric writing
 against the modern disposition toward equality and equal rights
 Nietzsche emphasizes the necessity of the esoteric for the philosopher
 the esoteric looks down from above
 the philosopher should aspire to such heights
 not seek what is common
 “What serves the higher type of man as nourishment or delectation must almost be poison for a very
 different and inferior type. The virtues of the common man might perhaps signify vices and weaknesses
 in the philosopher.”

32) a hint of his project concerning the self-overcoming of morality

33) the morality of self-denial is questioned
 along with the aesthetics of disinterestedness (Kant’s aesthetics)

34) important passage on Nietzsche’s perspectivism:

Forgive me the joke of this gloomy grimace and trope; for I myself have learned long ago to think differently, to
 estimate differently with regard to deceiving and being deceived, and I keep in reserve at least a couple of
 jostles for the blind rage with which the philosophers resist being deceived. Why *not*? It is no more than a moral
 prejudice that truth is worth more than mere appearance; it is even the worst proved assumption there is in the
 world. Let at least this much be admitted: there would be no life at all if not on the basis of perspective
 estimates and appearances; and if, with the virtuous enthusiasm and clumsiness of some philosophers, one
 wanted to abolish the “apparent world” altogether well suppose *you* could do that, at least nothing would be left
 of your “truth” either. Indeed, what forces us at all to suppose that there is an essential opposition of “true” and
 “false”? Is it not sufficient to assume degrees of apparentness and, as it were, lighter and darker shadows and

shades of appearance different "values," to use the language of painters? Why couldn't the world *that concerns us* be a fiction?

36) important passage taking up an experiment (*Versuch*) concerning the drives: thinking is merely the relation of the drives to each other

Suppose, finally, we succeeded in explaining our entire drive life as the development and ramification of *one* basic form of the will—namely, of the will to power, as *my* proposition has it; suppose all organic functions could be traced back to this will to power and one could also find in it the solution of the problem of procreation and nourishment—it is *one* problem—then one would have gained the right to determine *all* efficient force universally as—*will to power*. The world viewed from inside, the world defined and determined according to its “intelligible character”—it would be “will to power” and nothing else.

38) raising the problem of interpretation
on the one hand criticizes the many interpretations of the French Revolution
the event so widely interpreted
“that *the text disappeared under the interpretation*”
yet his concluding remarks suggest it is questionable whether one can ever discover the text behind the interpretation

39) “Nobody is very likely to consider a doctrine true merely because it makes people happy or virtuous”
wonder what Nietzsche would have said of the pragmatist William James?
“Something might be true while being harmful and dangerous in the highest degree.”
Thus, once again, the experiment concerning the necessity of untruth
or “we have art *lest* we perish of the truth” (*WP*, 822)

40) important passage on the mask
“Whatever is profound loves masks. . . . Every profound spirit needs a mask”

41) importance of not remaining stuck (being attached) to a person, a fatherland, or even science, not even to one's own detachment

42) the new species of philosophers
A new species of philosophers is coming up: I venture to baptize them with a name that is not free of danger. As I unriddle them, insofar as they allow themselves to be unriddled for it belongs to their nature to *want* to remain riddles at some point these philosophers of the future may have a right it might also be a wrong to be called (*at*)tempters (*Versucher*). This name itself is in the end a mere attempt (*Versuch*) and, if you will, a temptation (*Versuchung*).

43) will these new philosophers still love truth?
Are these coming philosophers new friends of "truth"? That is probable enough, for all philosophers so far have loved their truths. But they will certainly not be dogmatists. It must offend their pride, also their taste, if their truth is supposed to be a truth for everyman—which has so far been the secret wish and hidden meaning of all dogmatic aspirations. "My judgment is *my* judgment": no one else is easily entitled to it—that is what such a philosopher of the future may perhaps say of himself. . . .

44) these new philosophers, these “free spirits,” take up a questioning “beyond good and evil”

What is Religious

This chapter develops Nietzsche's critique of religious values or 'what is religious.' While the general subject here might include 'what is religious' in the broadest sense, and thus might be applicable to any religion, the central target is, of course, Christianity. The main theme of Nietzsche's critique is that so far, and especially in Christianity, everything that is 'religious' has been a symptom of a weariness with life. Could there be a life-affirming religious life? A life-affirming Christianity even?

46) this section develops a critique of religious 'faith'

One might compare this with the youthful letter to his sister (*The Portable Nietzsche*, 29-30)

Nietzsche begins by making a distinction between the faith of

'original Christianity' and that of 'a Luther or a Cromwell' (in other words 'Protestantism')

in any case, from the beginning Christian faith has been

"a sacrifice of all freedom, all pride, all self-confidence of the spirit; at the same time enslavement and self-mockery, self-mutilation"

Nietzsche describes the "god on the cross" as a revaluation of the values of antiquity

this revaluation was the revenge of the slave against Roman nobility

Nietzsche attempts a revaluation of the values of Christianity

47) on religious 'neuroses' or religious asceticism—solitude, fasting, chastity

Nietzsche wonders how the denial of will in ascetic ideals even became possible

this leads Nietzsche to question the whole phenomenon of the saint

this passage anticipates his examination of ascetic ideals in *On the Genealogy of Morals*

51) the "will to power" of the saint

in questioning how the saint became such a powerful figure that even the most powerful human beings bowed worshipfully before him, Nietzsche refers to the "will to power" of the saint

this suggests that Nietzsche's notion of the "will to power" should not be taken as

a desire for power which could be contrasted with the saint's desire for holiness or whatever. . .

every interpretation of existence, even the saint's, is an expression of the "will to power" or "life force"

the question for Nietzsche in examining various interpretations of existence

is not whether this "force" is there, but rather what kind or what quality of "will to power"

expresses itself in that interpretation of existence

generally, Nietzsche's perspective is to ask whether the "will to power" expresses

an affirmation or a weariness with life

52) here Nietzsche comments on the difference between the Jewish "Old Testament"

and the Christian "New Testament"

Nietzsche clearly thinks the "Old Testament" is a much better book

to have glued the "New Testament" to it to make *one* book

"is perhaps the greatest audacity and 'sin against the spirit' that literary Europe has on its conscience."

55) on religious cruelty

Nietzsche writes of a "ladder of religious cruelty, with three principle rungs:

1) once one sacrificed human beings to one's god

2) then, "during the moral epoch of mankind" (Christianity), one sacrificed one's own strongest instincts

3) it became necessary to sacrifice God himself (the death of God as the outcome of the Enlightenment)

56) 'eternal recurrence' as a counter-movement to world-denying interpretations of existence in this important passage Nietzsche suggests that it was thinking through pessimism to its depths which led him to open his eyes to the opposite ideal:
 "the ideal of the most high-spirited, alive, and world-affirming human being who has not only come to terms and learned to get along with whatever was and is, but who wants to have *what was and is* repeated into all eternity"

59) further examination of pessimism
 it was a suspicious fear of an incurable pessimism that led whole millennia to the religious interpretation of existence
 a fear that man is not strong enough, not artist enough

61) the philosopher as Nietzsche understands him also will use religions in his project of cultivation and education
 here he acknowledges that asceticism can be a means of self-overcoming
 a means of ennobling a people
 refers to the Brahmins—thus the asceticism of ancient India
 suggests a common sort of overcoming in Christianity and Buddhism
 both taught the lowliest how to place themselves into an illusory higher order of things

62) concluding section of this chapter emphasizes his condemnation of Christianity
 the passage begins emphasizing the theme that "man is the *as yet undetermined animal*"
 this obviously one should recognize as the idea of the *Übermensch* from *Zarathustra*
 the *Overhuman* Zarathustra speaks of is the one willing to continually overcome him or herself
 I think perhaps one should not think of the *Übermensch* as something already accomplished
 this perhaps would be one thing to think about in comparing and contrasting Nietzsche's *Übermensch* with the notion of Enlightenment in Asian traditions
 in India, especially in the Vedanta notion of the *jivan-mukta*, the idea is of one who has already completed the task of becoming enlightened
 the project of self-overcoming has been completed
 this notion is also there in Buddhism with the notion of the 'Buddha,' the one who has been 'awakened'
 I think of the *Übermensch* as the goal of continual self-overcoming

necessary to this process of continual self-overcoming is that aspects of the self must perish
 this is a common theme in Asian traditions of self-overcoming
 the great Zen master Hakuin spoke of "the Great Death"

the problem with the "above mentioned two greatest religions"
 (here he is obviously referring to Christianity and Buddhism mentioned at the end of the previous section)
 is that their concern to ease suffering leads to the desire to "preserve whatever can possibly be preserved"
 the problem is that this leads to the preservation of "*what ought to perish*"
 this thought certainly leads to the dangerous, "wicked" thoughts Nietzsche takes up at the beginning of the final chapter
 thus it is crucial to see the context of this thought-experiment
 Christianity, Nietzsche suggests, worsens the European race
 it has led to the preservation of what should have perished
 and that is the self-destructive, life-denying will to power of the sufferer
 the Christian revaluation of the values of antiquity inverted
 "all the love of the earthly and of dominion over the earth into hatred of the earth and the earthly"
 Christianity is thus 'the most calamitous arrogance'
 in not seeing man strong enough to "form *man* as artists"

in other words, in not seeing humankind as an artistic project
 not seeing man as the undetermined animal
 not seeing humankind as noble enough for an order of rank
 have thus led to the preservation of man as the herd animal

Epigrams and Interludes
 (Aphorisms 63-185)

Natural History of Morals

this chapter takes up a 'natural history of morals'
 the notion of such a 'natural history' already challenges the Christian conception of morality
 as something that has no history in the natural evolution of humankind
 but as something that comes to us already completed on tablets from God
 this project Nietzsche takes up more fully in the *Genealogy*

186) a general critique of previous moral philosophy
 all moral philosophy so far only aimed at providing for a rational foundation for morality
 thus it missed the problem of morality itself

another mention of the will to power in the concluding paragraph
 what he suggests here is that the very attempt to provide such rational foundations for morality
 doesn't make sense "in a world whose essence is will to power"
 the point here is that there are no rational foundations for morality
 morality has always been the "voice of the will to power" as Zarathustra put it
 the values of a people express the quality of their will to power
 in other words, the values of a people are the product of the hidden drive-life,
 the hidden psychology of the people
 the attempt to provide rational foundations is just an attempt to rationalize
 what this 'soul' at first desired

192) another passage emphasizing the artistic process in all 'knowing'

Just as little as a reader today reads all of the individual words (let alone syllables) on a page—rather he picks about five words at random out of twenty and "guesses" at the meaning that probably belongs to these five words—just as little do we see a tree exactly and completely with references to leaves, twigs, color, and form; it is so very much easier for us simply to improvise some approximation of the tree. Even in the midst of the strangest experiences we still do the same: we make up the major part of the experience and can scarcely be forced *not* to contemplate some event as its "inventors." All this means: basically and from time immemorial we are—*accustomed to lying*. Or to put it more virtuously and hypocritically, in short, more pleasantly: one is much more of an artist than one knows.

This passage continues the theme of the necessity of Apollonian illusions
 also a continuation of the ideas expressed in the early essay "On Truth and Lie"
 also one might note the implications this might have for painting
 interesting that Nietzsche writes this at the same time the Impressionists
 developed a style of painting which emphasizes just this process of approximation

195) this passage introduces the theme of *On the Genealogy of Morals*
 the theme of the slave revolt in morals
 "the Jews have brought off that miraculous feat of an inversion of values"
 "This inversion of values (which includes using the word 'poor' as synonymous with 'holy' and 'friend')
 constitutes the significance of the Jewish people: they mark the beginning of the slave rebellion in

morals.”

Kaufmann notes here that this passage should be compared with numerous other passages where Nietzsche considers Judaism

Nietzsche was a harsh critic of anti-semitism

the fact that Wagner was a notorious anti-semite

was one of the reasons for Nietzsche's break with Wagner

198) moralities as recipes against the passions

they generalize where they should not

Nietzsche's preference for the conditional should be remembered

he never puts forth a morality for everyone

Nietzsche does not seek to provide an answer for the problem of morality

he seeks instead to pose the problem which has never been posed

199) important passage as the notion of “bad conscience” is introduced

thus calls out the moral hypocrisy of the moral commanders of Christian morality

they “command” as if they merely “obeyed”

the point here again emphasizing that Christianity pretends its morality

comes from God and not from themselves

compare this passage to the 1886 Preface to *The Birth of Tragedy*

in which Christianity and art are opposed

Christianity denies art in the sense that it denies that there was anything artistic about morality

in other words, it denies that morality is a human product

Christian morality as herd morality

reduces human beings to herd animals who are capable only of “obeying” not “commanding”

not capable of taking responsibility for their morality

not capable of overcoming their morality

thus not capable of self-overcoming

Nietzsche esteemed Napoleon for his strength as a “commander”

201) further developing the notion of Christianity as herd morality

“everything that elevates the individual above the herd and intimidates the neighbor is henceforth called *evil*”

202) the problem with European [Christian] morality

is that it thinks that the problem of morality has been solved

“one now *knows* in Europe what Socrates thought he did not know and what the famous old serpent once promised to teach—today one ‘knows’ what is good and evil.”

Nietzsche goes on to say that “the *democratic* movement is the heir of the Christian movement”

to what extent is Nietzsche's critique of the herd morality of Christianity applicable to our democracy?

203) toward new philosophers

Nietzsche closes the chapter with a sketch of the new types of philosophers he sees coming

if the previous sections were all parts of his critique of the past

the lion-stage of saying ‘no’ to the values of the past (from the first chapter of *Zarathustra*)

then this passage would be the child-stage, the capacity to create new values

We Scholars

this chapter looks forward to those new philosophers

204) at first, however, it begins by criticizing philosophy reduced to theory of knowledge
 it is often said that modern philosophy begins with Descartes putting epistemology
 or theory of knowledge as primary
 many philosophers today still consider epistemologically centered philosophy as the only legitimate
 philosophy
 criticizes the “philosophers of reality” or the “positivists”
 ‘positivism’ was a dominant trend in late 19th early 20th century philosophy
 the early Wittgenstein was a ‘Logical Positivist’
 the later Wittgenstein rejected this ‘positivism’
 much of analytic philosophy could still be regarded as epistemologically centered philosophy

205) the genuine philosopher is the one who “feels the burden and the duty of a hundred attempts
 (*Versuchen*) and temptations (*Versuchungen*) of life—he risks *himself* constantly, he plays the wicked
 game—“

208) a passage important for its political implications
 “The time for petty politics is over: the very next century will bring the fight for dominion of the earth—
 the *compulsion* to large-scale politics.”
 It is certainly obvious that the next century to which Nietzsche referred, which many have called “the
 American century” due to the ascendancy of the U.S., was indeed such a fight; but it is equally obvious
 that this struggle is far from over. If the 20th century is indeed “the American century” then one might ask
 what did indeed triumph? Was it the triumph of democracy and freedom or corporate control and private
 wealth?

210) the philosophers of the future
 again emphasizing the philosopher as attempter and tempter

211) important passage on will to power
 begins by emphasizing a difference between the genuine philosophers
 those who take up the wicked game of experimenting with knowledge
 and engaging with tempting, dangerous thought-experiments
 with philosophical laborers and scientific men
 I suspect most academic philosophers today would still be classified by Nietzsche as ‘philosophical
 laborers’

Nietzsche contrasts these laborers with genuine philosophers:

*Genuine philosophers, however, are commanders and legislators: they say, “thus it shall be!” They first determine
 the Whither and For What of man, and in doing so have at their disposal the preliminary labor of all philosophical
 laborers, all who have overcome the past. With a creative hand they reach for the future, and all that is and has been
 becomes a means for them, an instrument, a hammer. Their “knowing” is *creating*, their creating is a legislation,
 their will to truth is—*will to power*.*

212) these genuine philosophers will be the bad conscience of their time
 his point here is that the genuine philosopher will always be the one to question the established values
 he will always find himself in contradiction to popular opinion
 in this way the genuine philosopher is untimely
 this obviously develops a main theme of Nietzsche’s writings from the mid 1870's

213) drawing further comparisons between the philosophers of the future and artists emphasizes that there is an order of rank among states of the soul and the order of rank of problems accords with this the problems which preoccupy philosophical laborers correspond to a lower rank of soul to the problems which concern the genuine philosophers

Our Virtues

This chapter takes up further Nietzsche's revaluation of all values by examining 'our virtues'

214) what are the virtues of these philosophers of the future? Nietzsche begins answering this question by directing the reader to "look for them in our labyrinths—where, as is well known, all sorts of things lose themselves..." the labyrinth is an important metaphor for Nietzsche obviously the reference is to the story in Greek mythology in which Theseus must find his way in and out of a labyrinth to slay the minotaur we find the same reference in the crucial passage of *Zarathustra* in "The Vision and the Riddle" when Nietzsche addresses his readers in other words, the ones who will be able to read him the attempters and tempters who "do not want to grope along a thread with cowardly hand" Theseus found his way out of the labyrinth by leaving behind a thread on his way in. Nietzsche's texts are a kind of labyrinth I guess I'm trying to lay down some threads for you to make your way through Nietzsche's labyrinth reading Nietzsche requires courage for the labyrinth taking up the difficult questions and not groping along a thread with cowardly hand

the next few sections take up some of Nietzsche's revaluations

216) in response to the Christian virtue of loving one's enemies

Nietzsche recommends something else: despising when one loves what is he getting at here?

let's say you find a weakness in your lover

does one's love lead one only to comfort the beloved and not challenge them to overcome this weakness or does the true lover challenge the beloved to self-overcoming?

220) one of the virtues celebrated by modern philosophers is that of disinterestedness

especially one thinks of Kant, for whom this virtue is important in both morals and aesthetics

Nietzsche ridicules this disinterestedness as masking from itself its interestedness

at the end there is again a reference to truth as a woman

the emphasis here is that this woman-truth should not be violated

225) another traditional virtue up for revaluation is pity

this obviously poses a central problem in developing a comparison between Nietzsche's thought and Buddhism

Nietzsche suggests here that there is perhaps something amiss with the goal of abolishing suffering

I think one has to keep in mind here Nietzsche's own experience with suffering (remember the preface to *The Gay Science*)

Nietzsche's experience lead him to recognize the value of suffering as a stimulus to self-overcoming

228) all moral philosophizing has been a soporific

the same point made in *Zarathustra* regarding the teachers of virtue who taught one how to sleep well

points out that as there is an order of rank between human beings there will also be an order of rank of moralities
this emphasis on an order of rank indicates that Nietzsche's perspectivism should not be regarded as a nihilistic relativism where all is just a matter of opinion and everyone's opinion is as good as another's

229) even a reevaluation of cruelty?

This passage obviously takes up a disturbing thought but before one simply dismisses this one might consider the history of Christianity and cruelty one might consider all the implements of Christian cruelty how this manifested in the dark ages through implements of torture in order to "save souls" and the much more subtler forms of cruelty still employed by Christians today Nietzsche makes reference to the cruelty of the Spanish inquisition—"the Spaniard at an auto-da-fe" the last paragraph turns to the kind of cruelty Nietzsche is perhaps recommending: it is the cruelty of the philosopher toward himself when one "forces his spirit to recognize things against the inclinations of his spirit. . ." in other words, forcing oneself to face 'terrible truths' taking up the dangerous, wicked game... Such a seeker after knowledge "acts as an artist and transfigurer of cruelty" "in all desire to know there is a drop of cruelty"

230) an important lengthy passage explaining further what he means by spirit and thus what kind of spiritual development Nietzsche encourages

231-232) this begins a number of troubling passages in which Nietzsche claims to state a few truths "about woman as such"

it is important to keep in mind here that in the system of oppositions which structures Platonism woman is connected with the artist, and to appearance, and illusion, the lie, etc. a major part of Nietzsche's whole project is to get philosophers to recognize themselves as artists thus he is critical of the movement of woman wanting to become scientific (that is, not artists)

Peoples and Fatherlands

most of this chapter takes up Nietzsche's critique of German culture

240) the first section begins with some reflection on Wagner

241) against Wagner and so much of German culture which emphasized duty to the fatherland Nietzsche identifies himself as a "good European"

251) important passage for those who still think Nietzsche was an anti-semite here he acknowledges the Jews as the "strongest and purest race in Europe" the Nazis who tried to appropriate Nietzsche obviously ignored this passage Nietzsche suggests it "might be useful and fair to expel the anti-semite screamers from the country"

252) some harsh words for the English "what is offensive even in the most humane Englishman is his lack of music, speaking metaphorically (but not only metaphorically): in the movement of his soul and body he has no rhythm and dance" wonder what he would have made of the Beatles?

I suspect he and Lennon would have got along famously of course their rhythm and dance came from American rock and roll which came from the rhythm and blues which came from Africa...

254-256) has high praise for the French

“the seat of the most spiritual and sophisticated culture of Europe”
 contrasts Bizet, “the *south of music*,” with Wagner and German music
 while living in Genoa, thus southern Europe, Nietzsche frequents performances of Bizet’s opera *Carmen*
 during these years

What is Noble

this chapter brings all these reflections to a culmination
 some of these passages contain some of Nietzsche’s most dangerous and wicked thoughts
 one has to make one’s way through his labyrinth very carefully if one is not to get lost
 one might also remember what he said earlier at §229
 the “spiritual cruelty” he recommended in which one forces oneself to face difficult truths
 he now takes up in examining ‘what is noble’

257) every enhancement or further evolution of man has required an aristocratic society
 “and it will be so again and again—a society that believes in the long order of rank and differences in
 value between man and man, and that needs slavery in some sense or other”
 well, just in exactly what sense is slavery needed?
 “truth is hard”

Nietzsche enquires about the origin of a noble culture
 the hard, terrible truth Nietzsche emphasizes here is that
 every higher culture began as a consequence of a barbarian conquest of a weaker, more peaceful people
 the nobles were always originally the barbarians
 their strength, Nietzsche emphasizes, was not merely physical, but a “strength of soul”

258) probably the most troubling passage
 every good and healthy aristocracy
 “accepts with a good conscience the sacrifice of untold human beings who, *for its sake*, must be reduced
 and lowered to incomplete human beings, to slaves, to instruments”
 how is one to respond to this?

Is this simply where Nietzsche goes over the edge and where we must leave him?

Interesting choice of metaphor follows:

an aristocracy accepts that society must not exist for society’s sake
 the point, again, is that humankind as it is today or “society” is not an end
 if the goal is the continual self-overcoming of humankind
 then all of what we are now should be a sacrifice for the humankind of tomorrow
 [our society today seems to have the opposite value of sacrificing the future of humankind to come for the
 comfort and pleasure of society today]
 now the interesting metaphor: the society of today must be like the oak tree which is but the scaffolding
 for the tropical vine (the *Sipo Matador*) to reach the heights

259) one of the most important passages on will to power
 “life itself is *essentially* appropriation, injury, overpowering of what is alien and weaker...”
 It is naive to think that the “exploitative aspect” can be removed from human beings
 that is like inventing a way of life that would dispense with all organic functions

“Exploitation” does not belong to a corrupt or imperfect and primitive society: it belongs to the *essence* of what
 lives, as a basic organic function; it is a consequence of the will to power, which is after all the will of life.”

260) important passage on distinction between master and slave moralities
this will be further developed in the *Genealogy*
by “master morality” and “slave morality” Nietzsche means two basic types of moralities
or like opposite polarities of moralities
and between these extremes there may be many different moralities
modern moralities are mixtures of these two basic types
the two basic types may exist alongside one another even in a single soul

268) what is common
here Nietzsche examines a number of forces which compel human beings into what is common
or, in other words, into being herd animals
communication in language itself requires having common experiences
thus the average “common” person has the advantage

270) more on how suffering makes one noble

289) important passage on the philosopher’s text
the philosopher as a hermit (certainly not one who is common, but one who stands outside the herd)
does one not write books precisely to conceal?
every word a mask

294) there is an order of rank among philosophers depending on the order of rank of their laughter
“I should actually risk an order of rank among philosophers depending on the rank of their laughter—all
the way up to those capable of *golden* laughter. (§294)”

295) the return of Dionysus

296) written and painted thoughts
in this last passage Nietzsche addresses what he has just written
see my essay “Written and Painted Thoughts” extracted from my dissertation on the course web page