

Philosophy 108: Nineteenth Century Philosophy (Nietzsche)

Spring 2009

Professor Donald Rutherford

Sequoyah 147

TuTh 5:00-6:20

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In a notebook entry from 1885, Friedrich Nietzsche posed the question that lies behind all of his writings: “what does it mean to us today to *live* philosophically, to be wise?” Nietzsche’s writings accomplish many things, but they remain most basically a confrontation with the question of the nature of philosophy and of what it means to live as a philosopher. The question cannot be avoided, for Nietzsche is unwilling to take for granted that the philosopher as a type is even possible in his day. With the challenges he raises to traditional notions of philosophy and its goal of timeless wisdom, it may be “too late” for the philosopher; “his best days are over.” In his place, we find only the pretender to philosophy: “a *dilettante*’ with a thousand little snail-like feelers.... he no longer leads, he no longer commands. If he wanted to do so, he would have to become a great actor, a kind of philosophical *Cagliostro*.” So one might conclude. But Nietzsche does not rest with this conclusion. The problem as he sees it lies not merely in demonstrating the possibility of philosophy as a coherent form of inquiry but in cultivating the person who, at this point in history, is capable of living as a philosopher. “The wise man has too long been confused with the scholar, and even longer with the religious enthusiast.” The philosopher cannot be confused with either of these types; nor is he someone who has retreated from engagement with life, extricating himself “from an ugly game.” Rather, the person qualified to claim the mantle of philosophy is someone who has “tried out life personally in a hundred ways, so as to have something to say about its value.” “In short,” Nietzsche concludes, “we believe that a man must have lived absolutely ‘unphilosophically’ according to the received ideas, above all not to have lived in timid virtuousness, in order to reach judgments on the great problems from his own *experience*. The man with the widest experience, compressing it into general conclusions: ought he not to be the most powerful?” (Quotations from Nietzsche, *Writings from the Late Notebooks*, ed. R. Bittner, pp. 19-20)

I. Texts:

F. Nietzsche (tr. W. Kaufmann), On the Genealogy of Morals/Ecce Homo (Vintage)

F. Nietzsche (tr. R. J. Hollingdale), Untimely Meditations (Cambridge)

F. Nietzsche (ed. W. Kaufmann), The Gay Science (Vintage)

F. Nietzsche (tr. W. Kaufmann), Beyond Good and Evil (Vintage)

F. Nietzsche (tr. W. Kaufman), The Portable Nietzsche (Penguin)

B. Leiter, Routledge Philosophy Guidebook to Nietzsche on Morality (Routledge)

R. Solomon and K. Higgins, What Nietzsche Really Said (Schocken). E-book (restricted to UCSD IP addresses): <http://site.ebrary.com/lib/ucsd/docDetail.action?docID=2002190>

II. Requirements

1. Midterm exam on Thursday, April 23 (30%)
3. One 5-6 pp. paper on *Beyond Good and Evil* due on May 12 (topics will be handed out one week in advance) (30%)
4. Final exam (40%)
 - Option 1: Cumulative final during scheduled exam time (June 11, 7-10 p.m.)
 - Option 2: Research paper (10+ pp.) drawing on Nietzsche's writings and secondary literature (e.g. Leiter). If you elect this option, you must submit a 1-2 pp. proposal for your paper by Tuesday June 2. The paper will be due at the final exam.

III. Schedule of Classes

Week 1

Tu 3/31 Introduction
Recommended: Leiter, *Nietzsche on Morality*, chs. 1-2

Th 4/2 *Ecce Homo*

Week 2

Tu 4/7 *Schopenhauer as Educator*, secs. I-V

Th 4/9 *Schopenhauer as Educator*, secs. VI-VIII

Week 3

Tu 4/14 *The Gay Science*, Prelude, bks. I-II

Th 4/16 *The Gay Science*, bks. III-IV

Week 4

Tu 4/21 *The Gay Science*, bk. V

Th 4/23 MIDTERM EXAM

Week 5

Tu 4/28 *Beyond Good and Evil*, bks. I-III
Recommended: Leiter, *Nietzsche on Morality*, ch. 3

Th 4/30 *Beyond Good and Evil*, bk. IV-VI

Week 6

Tu 5/5 *Beyond Good and Evil*, bks. VII-IX
Recommended: Leiter, *Nietzsche on Morality*, ch. 4

Th 5/7 *Beyond Good and Evil*

Week 7

Tu 5/12 *On the Genealogy of Morals I* PAPER DUE
Recommended: Leiter, *Nietzsche on Morality*, chs. 5-6

Th 5/14 *On the Genealogy of Morals II*
Recommended: Leiter, *Nietzsche on Morality*, ch. 7

Week 8

Tu 5/19 *On the Genealogy of Morals III*
Recommended: Leiter, *Nietzsche on Morality*, ch. 8

Th 5/21 *On the Genealogy of Morals III*

Week 9

Tu 5/26 *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Part I

Th 5/28 *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Part II-III

Week 10

Tu 6/2 *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Part IV

Th 6/4 Summing up