

Philosophy 181b

**Friedrich Nietzsche**

Spring 2002

Mathias Risse  
11.30-12.20  
CT Hall 302  
Office Hour Wed 3.30-4.30  
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Monday, Wednesday

In this class, we will discuss a fair number of Nietzsche's books and of the central themes that occupied him throughout his life. We will read (all or most of) the *Birth of Tragedy*, the *Gay Science*, *Zarathustra*, *Beyond Good and Evil*, the *Genealogy of Morality*, the *Antichrist*, the *Twilight of Idols*, and *Ecce Homo*. We will cover topics such as Nietzsche's philosophy of art, his relationship with Schopenhauer and Kant, his fatalism, his views on history, his criticism of metaphysics and truth, his views on God and Christianity, the will to power, and his critique of morality. We will put disproportionate emphasis on Nietzsche early and late works, a bit at the expense of neglecting his middle works. While we will discuss all of those topics just mentioned, we will take a particularly strong interest in Nietzsche's views on morality (as opposed to, for instance, his views on aesthetics and metaphysics). Even though this class has a 100-level number, it comes with a heavy reading load, both as far as Nietzsche's text themselves are concerned and also as far as the contemporary secondary literature is concerned. The class is therefore rather on the labor-intensive side. Since the lectures are meant to accompany rather than summarize the readings, you should take the class only if you have time to do the readings. However, if you are willing to do the work, this class will provide you with a very thorough introduction to Nietzsche's writings and their contemporary discussion. We will not be much concerned with intellectual history in this class and thus not spend much time on tracing the reception of Nietzsche's works, nor on providing thick contextual readings of Nietzsche's writings. Note that the class will be skeptical with regard to the postmodern appropriation of Nietzsche.

*Requirements*

One previous class in philosophy is recommended but not required. There will be one midterm paper (6-8 pages), one final paper (6-8 pages), and a final exam. A selection of essay topics will be distributed in advance for each essay assignment. In addition, a selection of exam questions will be distributed in advance a proper subset of which will appear in the exam itself. The midterm paper will count for 25%, the final paper for 35%, the final exam for 25%, and attendance/participation in section will count for 15% of the final grade.

## *Required Reading*

Available for purchase at Book Haven:

Walter Kaufmann (ed.), *Basic Writings of Nietzsche*. Modern Library: New York (1992)

Walter Kaufmann (ed.), *The Portable Nietzsche*. Penguin: New York (1954)

Walter Kaufmann (ed.), *Nietzsche: The Gay Science*. Vintage Book: New York (1974)

Maudemarie Clark and Alan Swensen (eds.), *Nietzsche: The Genealogy of Morality*. Hackett: Indianapolis (1998)

John Richardson and Brian Leiter (eds.), *Nietzsche*, Oxford: Oxford University Press (Oxford Readings in Philosophy); 2001

There is also a reader, available for purchase at Tyco. *The reader is also required!!!*

## ***Schedule***

Mon, Jan 14 Introduction

*Recommended: Richardson, "Introduction", in RL*

## **Ecce Homo**

Wed, Jan 16 Nietzsche's 1888 autobiography

*EH, Preface, Why I am So Wise, Why I am So Smart; Nehamas, "How one Becomes What One Is", in RL*

Fri, Jan 18 Nietzsche's 1888 autobiography

*EH, rest (while only skimming through the discussion of Nietzsche's individual books); Leiter, "The Paradox of Self-Creation and Fatalism", in RL*

## **The Birth of Tragedy and Other Early Writings**

Wed, Jan 23 Nietzsche, Schopenhauer, and Kant

*BT, Attempt at Self-Criticism, Preface to Wagner, Section 1-7*

Mon, Jan 28 The Birth of Tragedy

*BT, Section 8-17; de Man, "Genesis and Genealogy", in Reader*

Wed, Jan 30 The Birth of Tragedy

*BT, Section 17-25; Schacht, "Making Life Worth Living: Nietzsche on Art in 'The Birth of Tragedy'", in RL; Clark, "Deconstructing 'The Birth of Tragedy'", in Reader*

Mon, Feb 4 Nietzsche's Early Views on Truth

*Excerpts from Nietzsche's essay "On Truth in the Extra-Moral Sense"; de Man, "Rhetoric of Tropes", in reader; Recommended: Clark, "Language and Truth: Nietzsche's Early Denial of Truth", in Reader*

### **The Untimely Meditations**

Wed, Feb 6 The Second Untimely Meditation, "On the Use and Disadvantage of History for Life" *Second Untimely Meditation, in Reader; Gemes, "Postmodernism's Use and Abuse of Nietzsche", in Reader*

### **The Gay Science**

Mon, Feb 11 Gay Science, Prelude, Books I and II

*GS, Prelude, Books I and II, Magnus, "Nietzsche's Philosophy: an Overview"*, in Reader

Wed, Feb 13 Gay Science, Book III

*GS, Book III, Schacht, excerpts from "Metaphysical Errors", in Reader*

Mon, Feb 18 Gay Science, Book IV

*GS, Books IV; Nehamas, "The Eternal Recurrence", in RL*

Wed, Feb 20 Gay Science, Book V

### **Thus Spoke Zarathustra**

Mon, Feb 25 Zarathustra, Book I

Wed, Feb 27 Zarathustra, Book II

### **SUGGESTIONS FOR MIDTERM PAPERS TO BE HANDED OUT**

Mon, Mar 4 Zarathustra, Book III

Wed, Mar 6 Zarathustra, Book IV

### **The Genealogy of Morality**

Mon, Mar 25 The Genealogy of Morality: What is Genealogy?

*GM, preface and first treatise; Geuss, "Nietzsche and Genealogy;" Foucault, "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History," both in RL*

Wed, Mar 27 The First Treatise: *Ressentiment*  
*Reginster, "Nietzsche on Ressentiment and Valuation"; Bittner,*  
*"Ressentiment," both in Reader*

**MIDTERM PAPERS ARE DUE ON MARCH 28**

Mon, Apr 1 The Second Treatise: Guilt and the Bad Conscience  
*GM, second treatise; Risse, "The Second Treatise in 'On the Genealogy of*  
*Morality': Nietzsche on The Origin of the Bad Conscience", in Reader*

Wed, Apr 3: Third Treatise: the Ascetic Ideal  
*GM, third treatise*

Mon, Apr 8: The Third Treatise: Perspectivism  
*Clark, "The Development of Nietzsche's Later Positions on Truth", in RL*

**Beyond Good and Evil**

Wed, Apr 10 BGE, Books 1-3; the Will to Power  
*BGE, 1-3; Clark, "Nietzsche's Doctrines of the Will to Power";*  
*Richardson, "Nietzsche's Power Ontology", both in LR*

Mon, Apr 15 BGE, Books 4-6  
*BGE, 4-6; Poellner, "Perspectival Truth", in RL*

**SUGGESTIONS FOR FINAL PAPERS TO BE HANDED OUT**

Wed, Apr 17 BGE, Books 7-9  
*BGE, rest*

Mon, Apr 22 Nietzsche and Morality  
*Foot, "Nietzsche: The Revaluation of Values"; Leiter, "Nietzsche and the*  
*Morality Critics", both in LR*

Wed, Apr 24 Final Lecture: Nietzsche's Twilight  
*Read as much of the Twilight of Idols as you can*

**FINAL PAPERS DUE ON MAY 6, 4 PM**

**EXAM MAY 8, 2-5 PM, 263 STREET HALL**