

*Twilight of the Idols*  
Friedrich Nietzsche

### **Revaluation of All Values**

this book is an attempt to undermine Western civilization  
it is a "revaluation of all values" -- recognizing the truth of things we hold as true

### **Humility**

"A worm squirms when it's stepped on. That's prudent. In that way it reduces the probability of being stepped on again. In the language of morality: *humility*."

the conventional view of humility means people want to be humble  
however, for Nietzsche, it means you are too weak to stand up for yourself  
those who are humble are expressing weakness

### **Socrates/Decadence/Reason**

recognizes Plato and Socrates as "symptoms of decay"  
instruments of the Greek dissolution, as pseudo-Greek, as anti-Greek

Socrates was ugly  
the Greeks worshipped beauty and form  
then an ugly man came and messed up the whole system  
they suddenly had an ugly man who is being worshipped

decadence is indicated because Socrates moves from instincts to rationality  
a noble taste was defeated in favor of dialectic; for reason and logic  
before Socrates, dialectical manners were rejected in good societies  
thus socrates discovered a new kind of *agon* (contest)  
it is a variant into the wrestling match between young men  
now they wrestle with their minds

this pitted all their instincts against themselves  
to fight ones instincts is a sign of decadence; if life is ascending, happiness is the same as instinct  
for Socrates, intelligence was not rational by choice; it was his last resort  
he had to either be destroyed, or be absurdly rational

Socrates: reason = virtue = happiness  
Nietzsche: instinct = happiness

### **Being/Becoming/"True" World**

Philosophers have two idiosyncrasies:

- 1) they lack a historical sense
- 2) confusing what is first with what is last

philosophers are lacking a historical sense  
think they are honoring a thing if they de-historicize it  
they hate the very notion of "becoming"  
"Whatever is does not *become*; whatever becomes *is* not."

reason needs to have something that it knows; it needs to know what *is*  
reason cannot find truth in change and becoming; it can only find truth in stable things  
since philosophers cannot know what becomes, they look for reasons why they cannot  
they say there is a deceiver preventing them from perceiving what *is*: sensations  
sensations deceive philosophers from the "true" world  
reason is what causes us to falsify the testimony of the senses

however, insofar as the senses display becoming, they do not lie  
thus the "apparent" world is the only world: the "true world" is just added to it by a lie

Nietzsche posits four theses to help us understand this:

- (1) Appearance is reality: the grounds on which this world has been called apparent are grounds for its reality; thus another kind of reality is absolutely indemonstrable
- (2) The properties that are given to the "true being" of things are really the marks of nonbeing, of nothingness -- the "true world" has been constructed by contradicting the actual world; this true world is really the apparent world, insofar as it is a moral-optical illusion
- (3) it makes no sense to tell fictional stories about "another" world, so long as the instinct to slander, trivialize, and look down upon life is not powerful within us; if it is, we revenge upon ourselves on life with the phantasmagoria of another "better" life
- (4) dividing the world into a "true" and "apparent" is inspired by decadence

### **Kant**

this so called "true" world was styled by Christianity and by Kant  
Kant is a sneaky Christian to the end

Plato believed the true world could be attained, through philosophers  
the wise, devout, and virtuous live in it; they are it -- "I, Plato, am truth"  
Christianity says it is unattainable now, but will be revealed in heaven  
Kant says it is ultimately unattainable, that one can never know the true world

if the true world is unattained, it is unknown  
how can we be obligated by something we don't even know?  
the true world is an idea with no use anymore -- it is useless  
once we get rid of the Kantian idea, we get rid of the both the true and apparent world

### **Morality**

all passions have a time when they are fatal; when they drag their victim down with stupidity

Christianity fights passion by cutting it out completely  
they destroy passion to protect themselves from the disagreeable consequences of stupidity  
thus the practice of the church is an enemy to life, it tries to destroy passion

passions do not always lead to stupidity; they later spiritualize themselves

spiritualized passions:

sensuality --> love

enmity -----> enemies

self-enmity -> strength

all health/naturalism in morality is ruled by an instinct of life

some decree of life is fulfilled by a particular canon of "shall" and "shall not"

anti-natural morality turns against the instincts of life

this kind of morality is taught, honored, and preached

Christianity is sick and unhealthy

it is anti-life; you can only know of truth when you are dead

it is a condemnation of life by someone who is alive

in reality, there are no moral facts at all

moral judgments believe in realities that are unreal

morality is just an interpretation of certain phenomena; a misinterpretation

### **Taming/Breeding**

people have always wanted to "improve" human beings

this used to be called morality and religion

both *taming* and *breeding* humans have been called improvement

it is a joke to think taming an animal improves it

it weakens the beast, makes it less dangerous

through fear, pain, wounds and hunger, it becomes sickly

this is no different than taming humans; Christianity tames

Christianity says you are a sinner as soon as you are born

breeding comes from the "Law of Manu," a Hindu text

it breeds no less than four races: priestly, fighting, merchants and farmers, and servants

breeding needs to be frightening its own antithesis: the non-bred human; the chandala

(chandala is a child of a man from the servant caste and the priestly caste; an outcaste)

Christianity is the countermovement to every morality of breeding, or race, or privilege

it is the triumph of chandala values -- the gospel preached to the poor, the lowly

tames us, turns us into something we shouldn't be

Hindism is better and breeds us to be something that we should be

### **Free Will/Guilt**

free will is the most disreputable Christianity's tricks

it is designed to make humanity "responsible" to Christianity; to make it dependent on them wherever responsibilities are sought, what tends to do the seeking is the instinct of "wanting to punish and rule"

the doctrine of will was invented for the purposes of punishment; wanting to find guilt in people humans are thought to be "free" so they can be ruled/punished; so that they can become *guilty* thus every action *had* to be thought of as willed, the origin of every action *had* to be thought to lie in consciousness

### **Will to Power**

the will to power is anti-Darwinian

life isn't simply about surviving, it is about dominating

the the real struggle is for power, to exert oneself upon other things

species do not grow more perfect

the weak become the masters of the strong

this is because they are the majority, and they are more clever

intelligence is an expression of the will to power; its how the weak dominate the strong (anyone who has strength gets rid of intelligence; they do not need it)

### **Beauty**

humans think the world is piled with beauty; they forget that they created beauty

they consider anything beautiful if it casts their image back at them

thus nature itself cannot be beautiful; what is beautiful is the human

the judgment "beautiful" is the vanity of the human species

a mountain cannot be beautiful but a painting of a mountain can be

similarly, everything ugly weakens and oppresses humans

it reminds them of decline and powerlessness; it makes them lose strength

### **Artistry**

art is an expression of the will to power

we are forcing ourselves upon the world; that's what art is

it's an overabundance of will and strength that needs to express itself

for there to be art, one must be intoxicated

intoxication is not just your senses taking over, but also your desires

it leads to a feeling of increased strength and fullness

this leads us to force ourselves upon things -- to idealize

however, idealizing does not consist of taking away what is small/incidental

instead, it brings out the principle traits, so that the others disappear

Apollo is the god of the sun; Dionysus the god of wine  
Apollinian intoxication keeps the eye excited, so that it gets the power of vision  
Dionysian art excites and intensifies the whole system of emotions  
    music is Dionysian because it has to do with the whole body  
    whereas Apollinian art is sculptures and form

**Freedom** is about becoming

all anyone understands is being and not becoming, which is a problem  
freedom is something one attains in life; it is itself an achievement/accomplishment  
it requires the will to affirm and be responsible for oneself; for one to struggle against hardship  
thus not everyone is free, but has to earn their freedom

freedom is gained by affirming life, despite life's pain and suffering  
it means that "manly instincts"--those that celebrate war and winning--dominate other instincts  
does not mean the denial of instincts, but neither does it mean having to rely on them  
it is measured by the resistance that has to be overcome, and by the effort it takes, to make  
choices and be responsible for them  
thus the free human being is a warrior

**Great Human Beings/Great Ages**

*great ages/men require pathos of distance; its the feeling of distance or distinction*  
*Napoleon separated himself in this way*

great men (like great ages) are explosive in which an immense force has been piling up  
things have long been gathered up, and preserved for them; no explosion has taken place  
when the tension has grown too great, the smallest stimulus sparks a great age or human being

e.g. Napoleon during the French Revolution

Napoleon was the heir of a stronger, longer, older civilization than the one going up in smoke in  
France; thus he became a master there (and only there)

great human beings are necessary, but the age in which they appear is accidental  
they almost always become masters of their age because they are stronger, they are older, and  
things have gathered up longer for them; the age is always younger, thinner, and more immature  
than the great human being

the danger that lies in great human beings and ages is extraordinary

the great human being is an end; the great age is an end

nietzsche sees great men as the final purpose of history

    the purpose of an artist is to create art, not move it along

    thus nietzsche sees the renaissance as a record of achievements

the instinct of self-preservation is suspended in great human beings  
the overflowing pressure of forces that are flowing out forbid the genius of precaution  
he flows out, he overflows, he uses himself up, he doesn't spare himself--fatally, disastrously,  
involuntarily, just as a river breaks out of its banks involuntarily  
thus he is not destroyed because of his indifference to his own good, devotion to an idea or cause

### **Dionysus**

for the Greeks, the sexual symbol was the ultimate revered symbol  
every element of reproduction, of pregnancy and birth, awoke the highest, most festive feelings  
pain in childbirth is declared as holy; all becoming and growth requires pain  
the value of life rests in this becoming and changing

all this is signified by Dionysus, the spirit of the Greeks  
he can be understood as an overabundance of power of life; the "will to life"  
Nietzsche calls Dionysian: celebrating the will to life and its own inexhaustibility by sacrificing  
its highest types

Christianity first made something clean out of sexuality  
it threw filth on the beginning, on the prerequisite of life