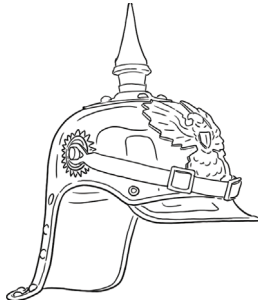


WORLDVIEW GUIDE

BEYOND GOOD AND EVIL



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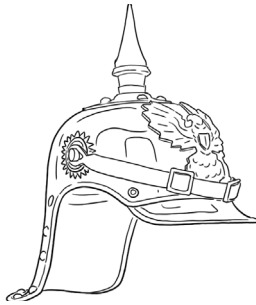
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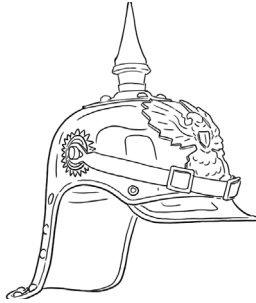
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INTRODUCTION

“All superior men who were irresistibly drawn to throw off the yoke of any kind of morality and to frame new laws had, if they were not actually mad, no alternative but to make themselves or pretend to be mad.” —*The Dawn*¹

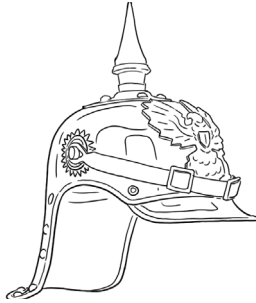
Friedrich Nietzsche stands as a stark specter in the history of philosophy. His writings have been blamed for historical troubles as divergent as national socialism and the holocaust as well as the critical theories which have arisen in popular social and political thought over the last few decades. Contemporary figures like Donald Trump’s Personality as well as movements like far-left progressivism are considered Nietzschean by many commentators who wheel out his name, less for comprehension and more often for the effect.

1. “Daybreak,” in *Nietzsche: ‘On the Genealogy of Morality’ and Other Writings*, 2nd edition, Cambridge Texts in the History of Public Thought (Cambridge: CUP, 2006), 145.

The trouble with trying to identify any particularly unique fruit to Nietzsche's philosophy is that it is truly everywhere. Nietzsche's grounding notion of God's death and subsequent celebration of the will to power are not found merely in one place—they are found everywhere. His message is not the property of the right or the left: rather, he frames a society that is desperate to be free of God's reign. The reason you can find his influence everywhere is simply that his project, the end of good and evil as categories attached to anything like theological conviction or human nature, has wormed its way into everything. His program is the program of secularism, and his secularism is currently running roughshod throughout Western culture.

Friedrich Nietzsche's ferocity and his downfall were his desperation to be consistent, for humanity to be consistent. And it is here where he can be incalculably helpful in discerning and critiquing our particularly secular cultural moment. His writing projects where secular man must go, and he insists they head there now. But it is his consistency that exposes secularism's own inconsistency. He insists society be liberated from nature and God and all morality, but Nietzsche died locked away in the madness this "liberation" brought him to.

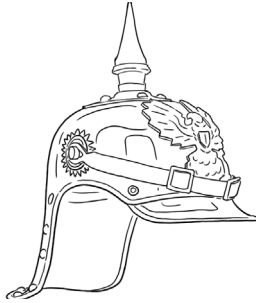
Nietzsche is infuriatingly difficult to comprehend as he sets to tearing down every scaffold left from the old world. *Beyond Good and Evil* represents Nietzsche in his maturity, being written later in life. It is also some of his clearest



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Friedrich Nietzsche was born in October of 1844 in the small town of Rocken in the German province of Prussia. He was the son and grandson of Lutheran pastors. His father, Carl Ludwig Nietzsche, died when Friedrich was only 5 years old after falling ill with a brain sickness. This illness has led to endless speculation as to whether Friedrich's own late-life madness was inherited from his father. He attended boarding school and was considered an excellent student.

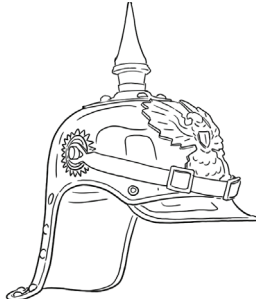
Friedrich was raised in a devoutly religious home. In his own writings he recounts a Christianity that emphasized personal holiness, religious experience, and lots of music. It was this Christianity that he would later reject as being a terrible impediment to man's fullest development. With a heritage steeped in pietism, he articulated a philosophy which was an attempt to strip Europe of the remaining tatters of the Christian religion. But the music remained.



STRUCTURE AND AUDIENCE

Nietzsche's work consists in a series of aphorisms which contribute to the difficulty in reading this work, particularly for those who've never read him. It is, however, a stylistic choice that matches well with the philosophy he sets out to expound. The work is largely directed at the last vestiges of Christian morality and metaphysics held by Europeans, particularly its philosophers and academics who claim to be atheists and free-thinkers. He views the death of God as an enormous opportunity for the further evolution of the individual and thus, the advancement of humanity generally.

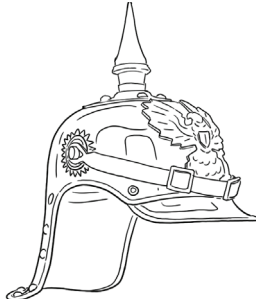
The enemies of this advancement are represented pre-eminently by those philosophers and ethicists who insist on propping up the herd morality which should've died with the Enlightenment's murder of God. The Enlightenment experiment was a philosophical movement that turned away from the Christendom and humanist ideal of



WORLDVIEW ANALYSIS

What about God?

Much has been made of Nietzsche's famous declaration, "God is dead." The announcement appears twice in his writings: Both *The Gay Science* and *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* use the announcement as a formal part of their assessments of the world and European society. But the idea is pervasive and foundational in all Nietzsche's work. *Beyond Good and Evil* is a postmortem exhortation for humanity, and supremely the individual, in a universe where we have attained to life after God, or for that matter any gods at all. What makes Nietzsche's works in general and *Beyond Good and Evil* particularly unique is that this decisive unbelief does not give way to any sort of cynical nihilism; rather it is a call for man to move *beyond* any theology, metaphysics, or ethics dependent on the existence or revelation of God and to simply make meaning. Whereas much atheistic thinking gives way to despair or a simple



21 SIGNIFICANT QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. Was Nietzsche a Nazi?

There is a popular idea that Nietzsche's philosophy was at the roots of Germany's national socialism and the holocaust. The history is more complex. After Nietzsche's death, his sister Elisabeth published the work *The Will to Power*. It has been proven that she manufactured several portions of the work in order to make it more friendly to national socialist ideas and anti-Semitism. These were her own political leanings, and these additions were inconsistent with much of Nietzsche's own work elsewhere. He spoke highly of Jewish culture in several of his later works and the whole body of his work opposed collectivism and national identity in the strongest possible terms since both were means of enslaving the individual.