UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

POLITICAL SCIENCE 485H1F/2027H1F

TOPICS IN POLITICAL THEORY: NIETZSCHE’S BEYOND GOOD AND EVIL

FALL SESSION 2023

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Our principal text this semester will be Nietzsche’s Beyond Good and Evil: Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future, the most widely read of his mature works and arguably the most perfect. The first of the series of works following Thus Spake Zarathustra, it aims to draw the reader back to that indigestible mass, but as its style could not be more different, so too it boasts a distinct aim. In Ecce Homo Nietzsche declared that with the completion of Zarathustra the yes-saying part of his task had been solved: “the turn had come for the No-saying, No-doing part...the revaluation of all values so far, the great war.” He went on to describe BG&E as “in all essentials a critique of modernity, not excluding the modern sciences, the modern arts, and even modern politics – along with pointers to a contrary type that is as little modern as possible– a noble, Yes-saying type.” In our reading we will try to do justice to this dual movement of the book. We will draw heavily on Laurence Lampert’s commentary Nietzsche’s Task, on his controversial pro-Nietzschean polemic Leo Strauss and Nietzsche, and on Strauss’s own “A Note on the Plan of Nietzsche’s Beyond Good and Evil” – Strauss’s only work devoted to a work of Nietzsche’s. We will also read Michael Gillespie’s recent Nietzsche’s Final Teaching, thus availing ourselves of a third outlook on Nietzsche differing from the other two. Students will also be expected to acquaint themselves with at least one other major work of Nietzsche’s and with three other works of secondary literature.

A warning: class sessions will be grueling and will run for the entire allotted span, with two breaks to give us all some breathers.

Recommended Translations (available at the textbook store).


______. Beyond Good and Evil. Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future. Translated by Walter Kaufmann. New York: Vintage Books, 1966. There are more recent translations, but in my opinion this remains the best one.

Assigned Secondary Reading, on reserve at Robarts Library
Gillespie, Michael Allen. *Nietzsche’s Final Teaching*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017. B3317 .G5155 2017X. The most recent and presumably the final statement of one of North America’s leading scholars of Nietzsche. Like the Löwith volume below, discusses the big issues announced in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (e.g. the superman and the eternal recurrence) that hover over *BGE*.

**ELECTRONIC RESOURCE**


**Further Secondary Readings (available, usually in multiple copies, at our various libraries).**


Heidegger, Martin. *Nietzsche*. Translated and with an analysis by David Farrell Krell. San Francisco: Harper Collins Paperback, 1991. 4 vols. B3317 .H413 If you can understand it, a sweeping interpretation by Nietzsche's greatest successor and critic, which rests on the (highly debatable) premise that Nietzsche’s definitive writings were his late unfinished ones.


**ELECTRONIC RESOURCE**


Metzger, Jeffrey, ed. *Nietzsche, Nihilism, and the Philosophy of the Future*. London: Continuum, 2009. B3318 .N54 N55. **ELECTRONIC RESOURCE** Metzger was an alumnus of this course and wrote an excellent dissertation (and subsequently a book) on Nietzsche’s *Genealogy of Morals*. The listed volume (to which he contributes an essay as well as editing) treats a major theme in *BGE* as throughout Nietzsche’s work.


Strauss, Leo. Strauss’s course on *BGE* taught at St. John’s College in 1971-72 is available on line at the Leo Strauss Center at the University of Chicago, as is a course at Chicago from 1967 partly devoted to it. These courses are accompanied by excellent introductions by Mark Blitz and Richard Velkley, respectively. [https://leostrausscenter.uchicago.edu/course/ nietzsche-beyond-good-and-evil-1971-72-st-john%E2%80%99s-college-annapolis](https://leostrausscenter.uchicago.edu/course/nietzsche-beyond-good-and-evil-1971-72-st-john%E2%80%99s-college-annapolis)


**Course Assignments and Marking Scheme**

**POL 485H1F (the undergraduate course).** One essay of 1375 words due Friday, October 13, one of 2750 words due Monday, November 27, a take-home exam to be distributed the afternoon of Friday, December 1, due by 2 PM on Monday, December 4. The first essay will be worth 20% of the final mark, the second one will be worth 40%, the take-home exam will be worth 25%, and attendance and participation will count 15%.

**POL 2027H1F (the graduate course).** One essay of 2000 words due Friday, October 13, one of 5500 words due Monday, December 15; a take-home exam to be distributed the afternoon of Friday, December 1, due at 2 PM on Monday, December 4. The first essay will be worth 20% of
the final mark, the second one will be worth 40%, and the take-home exam will be worth 40%.

In each of your essays you will be expected to cite at least six secondary sources (i.e., books or articles, at least three of which, however, must be books). You’re graduate students, remember? (Or, even more pitiful, undergraduates trying to pass for graduate students.)

In each of your essays you must remain within the prescribed word limit; the surplus words will go unread.

PLEASE SUBMIT YOUR ESSAYS ELECTRONICALLY THROUGH THE QUERCUS WEBSITE, THEREBY SPARING CANADA’S FORESTS.

N.B. In the graduate course as in the undergraduate one, no extensions will be granted on written work except for good cause. In keeping with Nietzsche’s theory of punishment, however, according to which every crime has its price and punishment was originally nothing more than an exaction of that price (cf. On the Genealogy of Morals, Second Essay), extensions will be readily available to those willing to purchase them. The price will be 3 points, plus 2 additional points per day beginning with the first, off your mark for that assignment. (If you are one day late you will lose 5 points; two days late, 7; etc.). This proviso does not apply to the take-home exam, which will not be accepted if late.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY ISSUES (READ THESE PARAGRAPHS SIX OR SEVEN TIMES)

The University of Toronto treats cases of academic misconduct very seriously. Academic integrity is a fundamental value of learning and scholarship at the UofT. Participating honestly, respectfully, responsibly, and fairly in this academic community ensures that your UofT degree is valued and respected as a true signifier of your individual academic achievement.

The University of Toronto’s Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters outlines the behaviours that constitute academic misconduct, the processes for addressing academic offences, and the penalties that may be imposed. You are expected to be familiar with the contents of this document. Potential offences include, but are not limited to:

In papers and assignments:

- Using someone else’s ideas or words without appropriate acknowledgement.
- Submitting your own work in more than one course without the permission of the instructor.
- Making up sources or facts.
• Obtaining or providing unauthorized assistance on any assignment (this includes working in groups on assignments that are supposed to be individual work).

On tests and exams:
• Using or possessing any unauthorized aid, including a cell phone.
• Looking at someone else’s answers.
• Letting someone else look at your answers.
• Misrepresenting your identity.
• Submitting an altered test for re-grading.

Misrepresentation:
• Falsifying or altering any documentation required by the University, including (but not limited to) doctor’s notes.
• Falsifying institutional documents or grades.

On generative artificial intelligence:
• The use of generative artificial intelligence tools or apps for assignments in this course, including tools like ChatGPT and other AI writing or coding assistants, is prohibited.
• The knowing use of generative artificial intelligence tools, including ChatGPT and other AI writing and coding assistants, for the completion of, or to support the completion of, an examination, term test, assignment, or any other form of academic assessment, may be considered an academic offense in this course.
• Representing as one’s own an idea, or expression of an idea, that was AI-generated may be considered an academic offense in this course.
• Students may not copy or paraphrase from any generative artificial intelligence applications, including ChatGPT and other AI writing and coding assistants, for the purpose of completing assignments in this course.
• The use of generative artificial intelligence tools and apps is strictly prohibited in all course assignments unless explicitly stated otherwise by the instructor in this course. This includes ChatGPT and other AI writing and coding assistants. Use of generative AI in this course may be considered use of an unauthorized aid, which
is a form of cheating.
• This course policy is designed to promote your learning and intellectual development and to help you reach course learning outcomes.

MR ORWIN'S OFFICE HOURS
Wednesdays, from 7 PM to 8 PM, at Carr Hall 309; Thursdays, from 3:30 PM to 5:30 PM, at SS 3055.

SYLLABUS OF READINGS

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 12
   On the Advantage and Disadvantage of History for Life

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 19
   BGE: Preface; On the Prejudices of the Philosophers

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 26
   BGE: The Free Spirit

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 3
   BGE: What is Religious

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 10
   BGE: Epigrams and Interludes

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 17
   BGE: Natural History of Morals

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 24
   BGE: We Scholars

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 31
   BGE: Our Virtues

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 7
READING WEEK: NO SEMINAR

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 14

*BGE: Peoples and Fatherlands*

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 21

*BGE: What is Noble; From High Mountains*

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 28

Catching up

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 5

Catching up