INTRODUCTION TO FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE’S PHILOSOPHY OF POWER: KEY QUOTATIONS

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| ONTOLOGY | “The total character of the world, is in all eternity chaos--in the sense (of) a lack of order, arrangement, form, beauty, wisdom… Itis neither perfect nor beautiful, nor noble, nor does it wish to become any of these things; it does not by any means strive to imitate man. Let us (even) beware of saying that there are laws in nature. There are only necessities: there is nobody who commands, nobody who obeys, nobody who trespasses.” –The Gay Science   “The world viewed from inside (would) be ‘will-to-power’ and nothing else.” -Notebooks  “My idea is that every specific body strives to become master over all space and to extend its force (--its will to power:) and to thrust back all that resists its extension. But it continually encounters similar efforts on the part of other bodies and ends by coming to an arrangement with those of them that are sufficiently related to it: thus they then conspire together for power. And the process goes on.” –Notebooks  “Do not believe those who speak to you of otherworldly hopes! Poison-mixers are they, whether they know it or not. Despisers of life are they, decaying and poisoned themselves, of whom the earth is weary: so let them go.” –Thus Spoke Zarathustra |
| EPISTEMOLOGY | “There are no facts, only interpretations.” – Notebooks  “We behold all things through the human head and cannot cut off this head; while the question nonetheless remains what of the world would still be there if one had cut it off.”  –Human, All too Human  “Even great spirits have only their five fingers breadth of experience - just beyond it their thinking ceases and their endless empty space and stupidity begins.” - Daybreak  “Over immense periods of time the intellect produced nothing but errors. A few of these proved to be useful and helped to preserve the species: those who hit upon or inherited these had better luck in their struggle for themselves and their progeny. Such erroneous articles of faith... include the following: that there are things, substances, bodies; that a thing is what it appears to be; that our will is free; that what is good for me is also good in itself.”  – The Gay Science |
| AXIOLOGY | “ What is great in man is that he is a bridge and not an end: what can be loved in man is that he is an overture and a going under. I say unto you: one must still have chaos in oneself to be able to give birth to a dancing star. I say unto you: you still have chaos in yourselves.” –Thus Spoke Zarathustra  “Once the sin against God was the greatest sin; but God died, and these sinners died with him. To sin against the earth is now the most dreadful thing, and to esteem the entrails of the unknowable higher than the meaning of the earth...” –Thus Spoke Zarathustra  “Hitherto we have been permitted to seek beauty only in the morally good - a fact which sufficiently accounts for our having found so little of it and having had to seek about for imaginary beauties without backbone. There is not enough love and goodness in the world for us to be permitted to give any of it away to imaginary things.” – Human, All Too Human  “A strange thing, our kind of punishment! It does not cleanse the offender, it is no expiation: on the contrary, it defiles more than the offense itself.” – Daybreak  “Morality hinders the development of new and better customs: it makes stupid.” -Daybreak  “Democratic institutions are quarantine arrangements to combat that ancient pestilence, lust for tyranny: as such they are very useful and very boring.” – The Wanderer and his Shadow |

***Nietzsche on Politics – “The signs of corruption”:***

Consider the following signs of those states of society which are necessary from time to time and which are designated with the word "corruption." As soon as corruption sets in anywhere superstition becomes rank. and the previous common faith of a people becomes pale and powerless against it. For superstition is second-order free spirit: those who surrender to it choose certain forms and formulas that they find congenial and permit themselves some freedom of choice. Whoever is superstitious is always, compared with the religious human being, much more of a person; and a superstitious society is one in which there are many individuals and much delight in individuality...

Second, a society in which corruptions spreads is accused of exhaustion... But what is generally overlooked is that the ancient national energy and national passion that became gloriously visible in war and warlike games have now been transmuted into countless private passions and have merely become less visible. Indeed, in times of "corruption" the power and force of the national energies that are expended are probably greater than ever and the individual squanders them as lavishly as he could not have formerly when he was simply not yet rich enough. Thus it is precisely in times of "exhaustion" that tragedy runs through houses and streets, that great love and great hatred are born, and that the flame of knowledge flares up into the sky.

Third, it is usually said... that such times of corruption are gentler and that cruelty declines drastically, compared with the old, stronger age which was more given to faith. All I concede is that cruelty now becomes more refined and that its older forms henceforth offend the new taste; but the art of wounding and torturing others with words and looks reaches its supreme development...The men of corruption are witty and slanderous; they know of types of murder that require neither daggers nor assault; they know that whatever is said well is believed.

Fourth, when "morals decay" those men emerge whom one calls tyrants: they are the precursors and as it were the precocious harbingers of individuals... In these ages bribery and treason reach their peak, for the love of the newly discovered ego is much more powerful now than the love of the old, used-up "fatherland"... Individuals--being truly in-and-for-themselves-- care, as is well known, more for the moment than do their opposites, the herd men... The times of corruption are those when the apples fall from the tree: I mean the individuals, for they carry the seeds of the future and are the authors of the spiritual colonization and origin of new states and communities. Corruption is merely a nasty word for the autumn of a people.

*-from Nietzsche's The Gay Science, s. 23, Walter Kaufmann transl*