

## **Nietzsche**

question: what is history today?

Nietzsche wrote "on the advantage/disadvantage of history" in 1874 (German unification is 1871)  
after 1990, Fukuyama also called history into question

"end of history"

both n. and Fukuyama critique Hegel

n's approach to history quite different to Alexander Kluge's...

but still it is very important to contemporary Euro culture (esp. film)

## **Nietzsche-- Untimely Meditations**

meditation on the extent to which

we can cope with the burden of knowledge...

specifically historical knowledge...

and still manage to be our own men.

End: appeal to embrace Greek culture

Greek over Roman, since Greek is culture of "new and improved nature, without inside and  
outside,

without dissimulation and convention,

culture as the accord of life, thought,

appearing, and willing" (64)

Second meditation is attack on institution of history and an attack on "decorative culture"

History is necessary, but what if it is abused?

In his age, there was a surfeit of history... one that current cultural critics also find today (history  
channel, databanks...)

Students in his age were getting buried in history.

They were 'blinded by it'

41/ history blinds the young with its “much too bright, much too sudden, much too changeable light.”

History should affirm life, but academics have turned it into the objective uncovering of facts...

facts that are left as they are found, that are contemplated without being assimilated into present being.

History has become deadly in the way it is practised.

But we need it.

how to get out of this dilemma?

**Q: How does N think history should be written?**

in first section, he addresses this...

14/ life-giving

he also contrasts memento mori with memento vivere

**Q: What are the three types of history?**

monumental--

15/ high points of history are linked

antiquarian--

19/ reverence

21/ preserves life... but can it generate it? (no.)

critical--

21/ antidote to monu and anti

critical gives man “a way to shatter and dissolve something to enable him to live”

\*\*\*comparing all three--

question: what are the problems with monumental history?:

- 17/ disregards causes
- 17/ promotes imitation, deceives with analogies
- 18/ let the dead bury the living
- 20/ history serves life, it becomes an instrument

question: what are the problems with antiquarian history?

- 20/ limited field of vision
- 20/ no differences in value
- \*20/ good quote at bottom
- 21/ paralyzes the man of action

quisquilia-- thing of no value, shard

question: what are the problems with critical history?

- 22/ attempt to give oneself a past from which one would like to be descended

So, this investment in history is part of modern man.

**Q: where does it end up... on his body?**

inside, in stomach, belly  
modern man is inward  
this knowledge is indigestible  
... but we fill up for high status

**Q: what happens to the outside of our bodies, our selves?**

we become barbaric... bc we focus so much on inside

problem: all we do is stimulate memory...

we need to balance this... **with what?**

25/ need unity of artistic style

see \*

Germans lost style in quest for natural comfort

for an example, consider the homely birkenstock shoe

[http://www.birkenstock.com/styles/136901/manager=ProdDisplay&prodType=20o46o76&category=20o40&user\\_id=0&store\\_id=0&page=1&cat=adv](http://www.birkenstock.com/styles/136901/manager=ProdDisplay&prodType=20o46o76&category=20o40&user_id=0&store_id=0&page=1&cat=adv)

**Q: what's wrong with having an inward focus?**

inner being too weak to have external effect...

it has no form

Germans only feel with abstraction,

as Grillparzer demonstrates

Grillparzer (1791-1872), Austrian dramatist. His work combines German classicism and exuberant lyricism.

So, Nietzsche wants to get away from this... what does he want?

higher unity... German unity, really

to remake the soul

to break the division between inside and outside with a hammer

\*27/ good quote

**Q: again, what is holding back this unity?**

our investment in 'history.'

we use this investment to bolster self-identity as epigone

epigone-- A second-rate imitator or follower, especially of an artist or a philosopher.

**Q: frederica's students at the art college also wanted to break with historical tradition.**

**byatt draws a lot from nietzsche here.**

**what does nietzsche say about tension between history and art?**

28/ art flees if you spread the historical awning over your deeds

29/ calls history a mask, a costume, a frock

calls us a race of eunuchs

30/ against actors, roles, superficiality

**Q: what, for nietzsche, is the difference between hi(story) and events?**

N. doesn't want more stories

doesn't want 'once upon a time,' doesn't want to sigh, "if only"

He wants art and religion to replace convention and masquerade (29)

**Q: wait a minute, N wants religion? how?**

So, another problem with historians is that they are too objective.

**Q: Explain this... what is opposite of objective?**

objective is castrated, eternal feminine;

it is neuter

one problem with this objectivity is that it ruins aesthetic experience

\*31/ good quote

**Q: do objective historians project the past onto the present, or is it the other way around?**

it's the other way around.

they judge the past based on present sensibilities

The problem with objectivity-as-such is that it dulls aesthetic impulse.

He's not completely against objectivity...

for instance, he sees the power of photography...

but he wants to see it balanced with art

\*36/ tranquility of artist's eye

most objective historians are dull, they aren't invested in the subject they're studying

N. wants to transform history into a work of art...

Gesamtkunstwerk

... so that it may preserve and rouse our instincts

N. wants to reawaken the sense of surprise, he wants to resist the 'historical tolerance' that characterized his age.

When we see Vinterberg's Celebration, we'll get this again

**Q: how does this relate back to Babel tower? or to Kluge?**

**Q: what is N's stance towards the masses?**

he didn't care about them. he wanted to unfetter greatness, genius in individual

appeal for 'life' against 'history'

N rebels against second-hand thought

**Q: so then what structure does she see or acknowledge?**

Now let's look at the two trials,

first, briefly, at jude's... then frederica's

Jude emerges as a "holy fool" or a kind of idiot savant... we'll see this again later in Celebration

Let's look at Professor Marie-France Smith's account of Jude's book:

543-44, 545 (two sections)

The Nietzsche comes through very strong in Gander's account

551/ two sections

### **structure in frederica's trial**

**Q: her body is a structure, moving across legal codes.**

**how does she describe herself?**

518/ thin

529/ others are respectable bodies, not her

she's reacting against placement, frederica's placement within the family

519/ she's constrained

520/ tractable

520/ she stands contra the household

**Q: how does Frederica's education affect her self-regard?**

520-21/ read this section. she sees herself as a fiction.

## **Ontology in Nietzsche and Byatt**

Frederica hates writing "I"

Q: why is this so difficult for her?

383/ read this passage

Let's take a look at a few passages from Nietzsche

N55/ one must know who one is

N20/ reason believes in the will as an absolute cause; it believes in the "I,"... and projects its belief in the I-substance onto all things

**Q: when does frederica insist upon herself as separate?**

433/ when she's caught between the two twins

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