

Rereading Virtue In Zarathustra's Of The Virtue That Makes Small And Of The Chairs Of Virtue

Jan Gresil S. Kahambing*

ABSTRACT

From the 'rhetorical-oratorical' backdrop of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* which denotes a prescriptive calling, this paper re-reads the aphorisms that concern the virtues. The book will serve as the main text of the study, aptly because it is regarded as one of Nietzsche's more mature writings. The paper particularly aims to hermeneutically expose the two aphorisms, namely: *Of the Virtue that Makes Small* in Book III, and *Of the Chairs of Virtue* in Book I. It thus confines the study into a particular focus apart from *Of Joys and Passions* which mainly discusses the 'nature' of virtue. Later, the aphorism *The Child with the Mirror*, which can be found in Book II, will be re-read too as a rejoinder between the two aphorisms of Books I and III. A specific vantage point in this study connotes that there is a seminal thread that connects books III, I, and II – precisely in this order – on the account of what virtue means.

Keywords: *Zarathustra, virtue, Nietzsche, hermeneutics, rhetorical-oratorical method*

Introduction

R. J. Hollingdale, the translator of the *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* edition (henceforth, Z) that this study uses as its main text, speaks of the underlying *excess* that assails the reader into thinking of the book as having a major *fault*. And that is what this re-reading wants to maintain as much as possible. In other words, this paper does not intend to oversimplify Nietzsche in a sense that would capture his thoughts both in the contextual understanding of the text and the authorial intention that is presupposed in a hermeneutical (Gadamerian)

reading. To reduce the 'rhetorical-oratorical' exclamatory mode of expression, which brings to mind 'the eruption of words, metaphors, figures and word-play suggests an eruption of feeling (Nietzsche, 1969)' in the text, to a personal perceptual writing that can be presupposed in the method of hermeneutics would be to betray the very excess that Nietzsche originally expresses himself in the text.

From the superabundance of emotive expressions that such a textual backdrop illustrates, there is a wide spectrum of realities that Nietzsche wants to convey. Nietzsche writes, for instance, in his unpublished notes:

As soon as you feel yourself *against me* you have ceased to understand my position and consequently my arguments! You have to be the victim of the *same passion!* I want to awaken the greatest mistrust of myself: I speak only of things I have *experienced* and do not offer only events in the head. One must want to experience the great problems with one's body and one's soul. I have at all times written my writings with my whole heart and soul: I do not know what purely intellectual problems are. You know these things as thoughts, but your thoughts are not your experiences, they are an echo and after-effect of your experiences: as when your room trembles when a carriage goes past. I, however, am sitting in the carriage, and often I am the carriage itself (Nietzsche, 1969, Introduction, 2).

The study then takes over from this manner of speaking about one's experiences. The 'carriage' that Nietzsche presents as

*Corresponding Author: Jan Gresil S. Kahambing
Leyte Normal University, Tacloban City
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4258-0563>

All articles published in the Journal of Education and Society are property of Leyte Normal University, and is protected by copyright laws. Copyright ©2018. All rights reserved.

himself becomes the invitation – or a calling – for something that evokes action. From a wide array of provocations, a specific point, rather than an over-all thematic conceptualization in the form of ‘thoughts,’ can be brought to fore. In ancient times, the coinage of the term *arête* also suggests a call to action – and the term, later on, served as a mainstay of a comprehensive understanding of virtue.

This paper thus aims to reread two of Zarathustra’s aphorisms that concern the virtues. More particularly, the paper aims to hermeneutically expose the two aphorisms, namely, *Of the Virtue that Makes Small* and *Of the Chairs of Virtue*. Although the aphorism *Of Joys and Passions* speaks of the *nature* of virtue (Z, I, 5), the focal point resides in the particular nuances of virtue that are portrayed in the two mentioned aphorisms. In *Of Joys and Passions*, Zarathustra speaks of passions as the root of virtues: “Once you had passions and called them evil. But now you have only your virtues: they grew from out your passions (Z, I, 5).” The tone is generic and it understands virtue as a commonality that resides in the human turmoil of mixed *affects* which, in Zarathustra’s words, is caressed and even called by name. One can then follow from this aphorism to proceed with the other two, as it proclaims: “And behold! Now you have its name in common with the people and have become of the people and the herd with your virtue! (Z, I, 5).”

This paper starts first with Book III, on *Of the Virtue that Makes Small*, where after being back on firm land, Zarathustra was again assailed by the feeling of nausea for humanity. Then it goes back to an aphorism on Book I, on *Of the Chairs of Virtue*, where Zarathustra addresses his band of disciples about ‘negative virtue’ or ‘the virtue which consists in *not doing wrong* and which has as its reward ‘peace of soul’ (Z, Introduction, 7). Later, the first aphorism in book II, on *The Child with the Mirror*, where Zarathustra is dramatic and mostly invokes an action, is reread as a rejoinder for the two previous aphorisms. In

this specific order, one can surmise a vantage point that sees virtue in a new light.

Significance of the Study

This study is significant in three aspects. First, it provides a focus on Nietzsche’s understanding of virtue on the aphorisms mentioned. Second, it implicitly provides a critique of an armchair-focused pedagogy and an educational system that produces disciplines of blind obedience. And third, it casts light on the *via negativa* mode of viewing virtue as a vital topic of contemporary values education in the light of Nietzsche’s reading.

Review of Related Literature and Studies

A number of studies that follow a rereading on the account of Nietzsche and his works essentially reveal the lack of particular focus on the aphorisms explicated in this study. Roberts (1995), for instance, does a rereading of Nietzsche but in generic terms of ‘growth, movement, and agency.’ There are other rereadings of Nietzsche’s works as well but not on the particular aphorisms mentioned. Ostas in her ‘Rereading Nietzsche in Theory’ (2005) focuses on a particular book on Nietzsche but with a special emphasis on early works such as *The Birth of Tragedy*. Morrisson (2014), additionally, does a rereading of Nietzsche’s works but is also focused on *On the Genealogy of Morals*.

Concerning a rereading of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Snaza (2014) thinks that it is an important opus for reimagining humanities today, particularly in the relation between politics and language. In this light, Beiner (2018, p. 14) says in his ‘Rereading Nietzsche and Heidegger in an Age of Resurgent Fascism’ that ‘we are urged to put lots of energy into despising what perhaps doesn’t meet Nietzsche’s standards of grandeur yet almost certainly deserves more respect than it receives from him or those swayed by his rhetoric.’ As such, rereadings of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* were done in an ‘existential vein’

*Corresponding Author: Jan Gresil S. Kahambing
Leyte Normal University, Tacloban City
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4258-0563>

All articles published in the Journal of Education and Society are property of Leyte Normal University, and is protected by copyright laws. Copyright ©2018. All rights reserved.

(Magnus, 1978), or presenting it within the license of Nietzsche's perspectivism (cf. Conant, 2005, 2006; Kahambing, 2017; Olson, 2001; Soysal, 2007), or Nietzsche studies on the *Übermensch* (Superman) in an eternal vow (Kahambing, 2014) or in Scandinavia (Sabo, 2000). A manner of rereading is also done by Nietzsche, as exposed by Zuckert (1985), but the exposition sees Nietzsche's reading as a form of critique or through casting suspicions, as for example in his reading of Plato.

Some of the recent readings emphasize Zarathustra in literary responses such as music and art (Ziolkowski, 2012). This is done more particularly by Cauchi (2009) who focused on the Promethean pretensions and Romantic dialectics in Nietzsche's Zarathustra. Stegmaier & Anderson (2009) made some notes of Zarathustra's ambivalence in terms of doctrine. The sense of ambivalence in Zarathustra is also expounded by Owen (2013) in connection to Weber and Foucault. In the accounting of values, Oliver (2016) in part reads Zarathustra in relation to the 'Feminine.' What these readings tell us reflects much Del Caro in his uncanny 'Zarathustra is Dead, Long Live Zarathustra!' (2011) who said that "Zarathustra is an open book, one of the most open books of all time, for all its riddles and hermetic qualities" (p. 93).

Methodology

As the introduction unambiguously projects, the study does a hermeneutical exposition of the two aphorisms in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, namely: *Of the Virtue that Makes Small* in Book III, and *Of the Chairs of Virtue* in Book I, including *The Child with the Mirror* in Book II. The method, however, does a rearrangement of the aphorisms and does not follow a linear reading i.e. Books I-III. It should also be noted that even if this method does not conform to a linear progression, it neither shifts nor resembles recent spectrality studies on literature (Blanco & Peeren, 2013), and, for example, its relation to Nietzsche in Trent's *Nietzsche's Ghost* (1994), or Maleuvre's 'Gide,

Nietzsche, and the Ghost of Philosophy' (2000).

Rereading in this study means to *retain* as much as possible the 'rhetorical-oratorical' backdrop of the text, often conveyed with emotive expressions and often warrants misunderstanding, as Nietzsche does. As such, the sentences, phraseology, and syntax do not strictly adhere to the formalities of academic writing. As said in the introduction, the rereading method of this study does not intend to simplify Nietzsche, much less explain the aphorism in plain prose.

As a limitation, the study is confined only to the aphorisms, albeit it can serve as a seminal work for a thematic analysis on the two texts with a different focal contextualization. It relies on R.J. Hollingdale's translation rather than on Walter Kaufmann's and other new translations such that of Judith Norman and Aaron Ridley. This is because the author deems Hollingdale's translation as more receptive to the emotive expressions of the text.

Results and Discussion

Of the Virtue that Makes Small (Z, III, 5)

'Behold a river that flows back to its source through many meanderings (Nietzsche, 1969, p. 187)!' Zarathustra, after his restless wanderings, was more eager to see what has happened to men. And thus he saw a row of new houses in marvel and asked what it means to have them small as if they were houses for dolls. A silly child, he says, must have put them out of the toy-box, and so he wanted another child to put it back again. "Everything has become smaller (Z, p. 187)." And Zarathustra will have to stoop just to check the small houses, which incidentally made him miss his cave in his mountains. But Zarathustra never meant the houses only, nor only the small men, but to the virtue that made them small all throughout the days when he has been gone.

"I go among this people and keep my eyes open: they do not forgive me that I am not

*Corresponding Author: Jan Gresil S. Kahambing
Leyte Normal University, Tacloban City
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4258-0563>

All articles published in the Journal of Education and Society are property of Leyte Normal University, and is protected by copyright laws. Copyright ©2018. All rights reserved.

envious of their virtues.” Virtues – is it not that these men are persuasive enough, being sweet-talkers and all? Their virtues seem to insist on Zarathustra as if they have some force that collectivizes them together and thus wants him to be affected also by their contagion.

But Zarathustra does not understand their *small virtues*, and even these small people themselves. They force him to be with them, prickling and pecking on him as if to hide something that they are afraid of, something they consider fragile among themselves. They would like to lure and commend him to small virtue. Their manners of commendations are annoying, always causing vexations and blustering among them. Their words are always hoarse and meaningless – all talk but without thinking. It would seem that for Zarathustra, they are like hens in a farmyard that chuckle and backbite and swarm over a topic that is too clichéd. The small people annoyingly project their precious small virtues. An inserting point here is that ‘small’ could also mean particles and thus many or much. Their virtues then connect to the idea of particularization, for reducing a huge building into a series of small houses, for powdering a rock into small grains of sand – for it would seem to Zarathustra that these people have become grains of sand. And what does this gloomy cloud offer to them? It is not rain; it isn’t rain that will drive their sands away with stormy waters; it is not rain that will come to rail their lusts and vices; it is not rain who will warn their pick-pockets; it isn’t rain but lightning!

Their virtues are all too many, part of this and that, all *huiusmodi* phrases, as Meno who was deeply perplexed whenever Socrates asks him what virtue really is. The small men were too timid and kind to one another, with their small talks which make them happy in a small duration of time – tick-tock – and they point to nothing but empty words. They praise, but only to be praised back and thus give but only want to be given more. These small people who have nothing but words and no action, who by some have only their *will* but remains to be *willing*, they are *limping*; this does not help

them move on and grow as this makes for a hindrance that reduces them to become smaller and smaller. These people haven’t moved on from history yet; they are declining and are always looking back with a stiff neck while they walk forward. It is rare for them to have genuine actors; most are bad ones who could not even make up for who they really are because their actions don’t show consistency. Their eyes tell lies and their feet as well; their words and deeds are inconsistent. That attitude itself is a sign of little manliness, which is supposed to be acting on one’s word – which is supposed to draw out the woman from the passionate vexations of a girl. Further, Zarathustra found their worst hypocrisy: “that even those who command affect the virtues of those who obey.” No initiative is found in these small men; one still needs to act first before the idiots go along – ‘I serve, you serve, we serve.’ They magnetize themselves all together but no one acts until one has to, as if they can’t stand up on their own – such little manliness. But they knew well how to speak modestly, in wheedling tones all honey is their speech. Why so? Because they want to gratify by being gratified back, they want to insist for one to submit, to make one be ashamed of himself for them who dictate who one should be and thus lets one forget one’s true identity – it is this very virtue that makes one small. These virtues make them smaller and smaller because only from small happiness do they live. And so what are their virtues?—**Cowardice, Submission, and Mediocrity**

But what do these three really mean? They are all clever virtues, to begin with, and so they hide in words so as not to provoke their true transparent intentions – not to harm and be harmed so they do good almost as *un-autonomously* as everyone. They have a monotonous accent that never raises up their true voice – all words are hoarse to be heard. What why do they make them small exactly? In avoiding activity, in avoiding laborious work, in avoiding virtue and in being contented with gossip and talk, they lost the opportunity to grow. With their cleverness they avoid pain, they avoid sweat, they avoid bruises and

*Corresponding Author: Jan Gresil S. Kahambing
Leyte Normal University, Tacloban City
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4258-0563>

wholesome activity – they avoid virtue by their “virtues.” But these clever virtues has clever fingers that do not know how to fold themselves into fists – they cannot fight reality and thus resort to temerity and cowardice! How will one know how to live in the open harmonious meaning of life if one keeps on living as ‘hedgehogs’ at night, always defensive of one’s spines and always rolling out underground? They’ve lost their opportunity to climb life, and for the sake of their rolling around, they already dug a pit for themselves. Because they can’t accept that life is difficult, that it is always in chaos and always hoping to find the dancing star in them, they find themselves secure in the middle line – oh that meanest golden mean that virtue was! Can one call meekness virtue if one allows oneself to be bullied? Can one call amiability virtue if one doesn’t fight one’s fight? Can one call humility and docility and timidity and bashfulness virtue if all that one gets is dog food! Yes, they call dogs man’s best friend because friends for them are like allies and petty accomplices who never question or rebel against them. They call it dogs that are tamed and trained not to bite their masters. But Zarathustra bites them even if they made of him a cockerel apart from his eagle. But further, they wanted to make every one of them as domestic animals! There is no manliness, just animalistic characters as chickens and pigs waiting for themselves to be slaughtered! ‘I please you, you please me; no cock-fighting between all animal slaves; you have no right to do so’ – that is their motto for a pleasant life. But how can man become a superman if one has become an animal instead? How can he fly if he comfortably ties himself to the ground? How can he overcome if there is no overcoming among themselves?

Slaves – these small men who have no identity at all are nothing but effects which can never further cause another; they are getting smaller and smaller; slaves of themselves and their pride. But what is it that they protect and not allow to be angry with them? Who is their boss who can easily reduce their dignity into lice that crawl and stupidly submit to? It is their

god. It is their godly pride that conjures their identity formation. They would not fight each other because each one reveals another’s weakness and folly. Instead, they praise one another to be transparent in the background, continuously praising and building their own identity formations. It is their bossy pride that is too precious, ever to be worshipped in their clasped hands, their vain image that never knows sweat or risk! ‘We have a god!’ so they cry, but it is also a small god with their small virtues. These small men know nothing of honor and frankness. These small men lost the sense of creativity, of thinking out-of-the-box, out of their house for dolls! These small men kick out those who disobey their virtue, their inner bosses who do not want to grow where they imprison themselves in their daily comforts and systematized habits. These small men are like the tarantulas who are the preachers of equity, but equity which makes them unanimously small! Nietzsche parallelized this to the people in his time who has high regard for socialism, the doctrines of Marx and Engels, who like a sand timer, convert the masses of people to be in equal footings – equal small men! But they are not the ears for Zarathustra’s words: he is godless. And anyone who renounces all submissions and let oneself rise above false contentment and slavishness is an equal of Zarathustra. Zarathustra never settles with mediocrity or false security – he cooks every chance in his pot and only when it is quite cooked does he welcome it as his food. To reaffirm life is to take risks, to take every chance to make yourself your own food to live. He never settles for less, as if less is for nibblers and those who remain to be nibblers. He never talks ‘It is given’ but ‘it is taken,’ for life is not to accept that one is ontologically less, but to transcend from it as to overcome it. And if one has not done anything from it, if one will only bury one’s talents to the ground, it will be taken more and more. For those who have not toiled the earth, they sat in vain with nothing. The task then is to overcome that nothingness, that nihilism in the guise of the virtue that makes small. “Oh that you would put from you all *half* willing, and decide upon lethargy as you do

*Corresponding Author: Jan Gresil S. Kahambing
Leyte Normal University, Tacloban City
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4258-0563>

All articles published in the Journal of Education and Society are property of Leyte Normal University, and is protected by copyright laws. Copyright ©2018. All rights reserved.

upon action!” (Nietzsche, 1969, p. 191) And so further one must do what he wills, as long as it may be first a *can-will!* “Always love your neighbor as yourselves – but first be such as love themselves – such as love with great love, such as love with great contempt! Thus speaks Zarathustra the Godless.” But their hour is coming to an end and they have nothing to lose except their acts of smallness – poor roots who never risked to grow in hard rocks and thus poor soil also for it became useless. Alas, because of too much restlessness of themselves and not knowing fully what they truly are, they have become weary. Their weariness is absolute, for the fall of their Babel is the greatest of all falls. They wanted to further blaze into nothingness than to be watered to life again. With much aridness and emptiness, they will soon burn at the proper time of extreme heat – oh great noontide!

Thus spoke the Godless Zarathustra.

Of the Chairs of Virtue (Z, I, 2)

While speaking of the virtue that makes small, we have here a contradiction of virtue itself, a restful virtue that finds its niche in a chair. But this other kind of virtue also finds similarity in the mediocre, slavish, and leveling attitude of the small men. It is contradictory then for virtue to be accorded with sleep and Zarathustra finds this contradiction in the wise man with his chair – his chair of virtue. “Sleeping is no mean art: you need to stay awake all day to do it,” says the wise man (Nietzsche, 1969, p. 56). Nietzsche goes on with the discourse of sleep, which further elaborates on the ‘chairs’ of discourse itself – of mere descriptions. For one may not assume a king’s power to let the army stop and rest at noon for a siesta – it is their perfect vulnerability to enemies. All the times of the day, as the wise chairs of authority would suggest, would be to toil and seek virtue, so that night will come to rest peacefully. But does it really want to rest, as though the fig tree would blossom not on the dreamy fashion of night? Likewise, if philosophy would have established the very solution, its restlessness would be

mitigated by a false rest. “But insofar as philosophy has understood the idea of thinking itself through its separation from the world of appearances, Nietzsche can say that the whole of Metaphysics, of philosophy since Plato, has been a dream... The problem is rather that today’s philosophy is a dream in which one can no longer believe, a dream that forces us to wake up” (Haase, 2008, p. 7). There is thus a dichotomy when actually there should be not, for the resource to the Primal unity of the Apollonian dreams and the Dionysian celebration (Nietzsche, 1927) becomes imperative again. Whether to wake up or not, that is not the case, for “He, the lord of virtues, does not like to be summoned” (Nietzsche, 1969, p. 57), rather “he comes to me on soft soles, the dearest of thieves, and steals my thoughts from me: I stand as silent as this chair. But I do not stand for long: already I am lying down” (Z, p. 57). Behold! The name of the lord of virtues is sleep!

To sleep well is to harmonize honor, but even to the “crooked authorities”? Does it not imply to neglect the evil lurking in the laws? “But one sleeps badly without a good name and a small treasure” (Z, p. 57) – this is the pride of the chair, of authority. Thinking that reputation is all there is, one rests on doing nothing for the sake of scarring nothing of one’s ‘dignity’ – or self-made appearance? The wise men in their chairs of virtue preach the overcoming of ten truths (gossips?) a day and ten waves of laughter. Such ‘wise’ words are meant to tire oneself to perfect sleep, but it actually is an invitation for a perfect slumber! “Peace with God and with your neighbor: thus good sleep will have it. And peace too with your neighbor’s devil. Otherwise, he will haunt you at night” (Z, p. 57). For “sleep is itself a worker, a partner of the daily toil... sleep works of itself, but it works on existing material; it creates nothing; it is skilled in combining and exemplifying” (Sertillanges, 1987, p. 85). But is it not thus that sleep is also a poison in itself? It hoards in the appearances one created in the day and thus works on it by night. But this sleep too is contagious (Z, p. 58). Zarathustra understands very well the inactive ‘wiseness’ –

*Corresponding Author: Jan Gresil S. Kahambing
Leyte Normal University, Tacloban City
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4258-0563>

All articles published in the Journal of Education and Society are property of Leyte Normal University, and is protected by copyright laws. Copyright ©2018. All rights reserved.

the ivory tower disposition – of all the men who sit in their chairs and yet preaches virtue: incidentally, isn't this the same 'all talk, no deed' mentality of the small men? This proves a good critique of the degenerate educational 'practitioners' in academia as sleep's modern-day writing slaves and paper zombies: "To all of these lauded wise men of the academic chairs, wisdom meant sleep without dreams: they knew no better meaning of life" (Z, p. 58). Ah, the life on a chair – it has all the following words inscribed on it: 'Those who cannot do, teach.'

But is the chair a dead-end? When at the point of the chaotic world which demands an active pessimism, "a violent force of destruction, a refusal of this world precisely because it is stubbornly resistant to their realization" (Reginster, 2006, p. 29), another call supersedes us, his voice too loud for all wildernesses:

O Man! Attend!

What does deep midnight's voice contend?

'I slept my sleep,

'And now awake at dreaming's end:

'This world is deep,

'Deeper than day can comprehend,

'Deep is its woe,

'Joy- deeper than heart's agony:

'Woe says: Fade! Go!

'But all joy wants eternity,

'Wants deep, deep, deep eternity'

Sing for this then, oh Higher men, to overcome the weakness of modern man. Let this be the lullaby for sleep, for only in these words can one stimulate a beautiful nightmare, gentle, soothsaying, and yet disturbing. Let it juxtapose the sleeping virtues on a device for waking up. For when all one knows is how to sleep emptily, how can one call forth the world – how can one toil the deep earth?

Never mind the Ego – the ego is a sleepyhead! Zarathustra is a singer, and he will wake this hubris up in its pacified dreams. Zarathustra will attend as he has no time for sleep; he only knows how to sing a lullaby of

waking up. "Blessed are these drowsy men: for they shall soon drop off."

Thus spoke the wakeful Zarathustra.

The Child with the Mirror (Z, II, 1)

Speaking and speaking with noble words but the recipient's ears are not for Zarathustra is like talking to the small men. They have their own prejudices and imageries; they cannot dispel their gods in them, thinking they're self-sufficient. "This, indeed, is the most difficult thing: to close the open hand out of love and to preserve one's modesty as a giver" (Nietzsche, 1969, p. 107). It is thus the hardest when one cannot give to someone one's abundance; it is painful (Z, p. 107). Yet it is further painful for one to give but even one's gift itself rejects one's generosity and returns back by itself. Years of pain had given Zarathustra impatience; it is now time to give again.

But oh then that a child came to him with a mirror in his hand and says, "Look at yourself in the mirror!" (Nietzsche, 1969) And in it was the devil! "My doctrine is in danger, weeds want to be called wheat! My enemies have grown powerful and have distorted the meaning of my doctrine so that my dearest ones are ashamed of the gifts I give them" (Nietzsche, 1969, p. 107). Nietzsche too was weary of the bad reputation that gave up on him. But his conviction motivated him to work beyond himself, of his bad image, to seek his friends again (Z, p. 107). He did not fight the devil in the mirror; else he will become the devil himself (Nietzsche, BGE, 1997). Instead, he reversed the gaze of the abyss (Nietzsche, 1997) and in its reversal demands an authentic *ressentiment* (Nietzsche, GM, 1996, p. 22), "the necessary orientation outwards rather than inwards to the self."

Behold, Zarathustra sprang up not gasping as to seek help, but to "like a seer and a singer whom the spirit has moved (Z, p. 107)." "My impatient love overflows in torrents down towards morning and evening.

*Corresponding Author: Jan Gresil S. Kahambing
Leyte Normal University, Tacloban City
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4258-0563>

All articles published in the Journal of Education and Society are property of Leyte Normal University, and is protected by copyright laws. Copyright ©2018. All rights reserved.

My soul streams into the valleys out of silent mountains and storms of grief. I have belonged to solitude too long: thus I have forgotten how to be silent. (Z, p. 108).” When the world has never changed much because of its addiction to stillness and sleep, that ever boastful claim to remain in ivory towers because of rigorous and strictly empirical sciences – he wanted to give it bliss again like a storm wind. For him, the small men and wise men are like old-tongues. But the earth needed a creator, wild wisdom, a restlessness of love that is overflowing – a flash of lightning that wants to cast hail showers into the depths. This lightning is the superman!

But this wisdom never rests on negligence and avoidance of reality. The baby wisdom seeks the realization of the earth, an understanding of its meaning; even its cruel meaning. He would rather act thus than be silent; he wanted to speak of it, to friends and enemies (Z, p. 108). The lioness wisdom will transform now; it will now metamorph to a child! At rush, Zarathustra seeks the acceptance of his friends’ hearts, to let the rocky wilderness and deserted locus of the camel transform towards a grassland of gentle love. “Now she runs madly through the cruel desert and seeks for the soft grassland”, for upon it “she would like to bed her dearest one (Z, p. 108).”

Thus spoke the transfigured Zarathustra.

Recapitulation

A specific point can be gleaned from the arrangement of aphorisms provided: an understanding of virtue that is focused on the meaning between the lines from the *excessive* mode of expression in the text. In Book III, there is a crucial question: ‘why are the houses small?’ Are they small because the men are small so they built small houses? Or are the houses small that the men also became small? The domain of the personal-political dichotomy can be surmised here. Does virtue reside in the structure or in the individual? The crucial point of the aphorism is that virtue is structural and it shapes the individual more than it shapes the structure. Virtue is, therefore,

a collective emanation from a political standpoint – it forms the values of the community, which for the aphorism *Of Joys and Passions* refers to the virtues of the *herd*. Within the herd, one has no right to question and engage in confrontations. Within the herd, one must not overcome but one must stick to the ‘values’ of the community. But these values are thematic nonsense crafted to level the individual in uniformity – even Zarathustra *stoops* at the houses. The values, which appear to be virtues, are themes formed by mere words appearing as deeds – in this manner, themes during celebrations are presented in sophistry but without habituation, as if the act of doing the theme is a one-time show, that is, only for the occasion. The term ‘small’ meant the falseness of humility, mediocrity, the role of victimization, meekness, and avoidance of truth-telling (or, to use Foucault’s term, *Parrhesia*). Following from this, the aphorism in Book I exposes the negativity of virtue: the call to action makes the caller exempted. The chair of virtue makes one wise since wisdom in this aphorism means being virtuous with doing nothing. Wise is he who does not do anything to stain one’s reputation. Wise is he who enjoys overworking for the day – with the illusive sidelines of appearing to know 10 chatter truths and 10 fake waves of laughter – to enjoy the endpoint of sleep. Sleep assumes the finality of the virtue that virtue serves sleep as its master. In this sense, one does anything *to sleep* and *for sleep*. Zarathustra in this sense becomes the lightning that he preaches – he heralds the lightning that is the *Superman* (the overcoming of man). In Book II, one only needs to let virtue look itself in the mirror. And what better metaphor can present this mirror if not the child, which for Zarathustra is the image of creativity and life-affirmation? The child *with* the mirror calls for virtue to scrutinize itself. Perhaps only in this converging point of the child with the mirror and the men of virtues can they realize that the houses and the chairs are making them ‘humble’ and ‘wise’ but in the derogatory senses of the term.

*Corresponding Author: Jan Gresil S. Kahambing
Leyte Normal University, Tacloban City
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4258-0563>

All articles published in the *Journal of Education and Society* are property of Leyte Normal University, and is protected by copyright laws. Copyright ©2018. All rights reserved.

References

- Beiner, R. (2018). *Re-reading Nietzsche and Heidegger in an age of resurgent Fascism*. Text of the 2016-2017 Desmond Morton Research Excellence Award Public Lecture delivered at the University of Toronto Mississauga on January 30th, 2018.
- Blanco, M. & Peeren, E. (2013). Introduction. In M. Blanco, & E. Peeren, (Eds.), *The Spectralities Reader: Ghosts and Haunting in Contemporary Cultural Theory* (pp. 1-27). London: Bloomsbury.
- Cauchi, F. (2009). Nietzsche's Zarathustra: Promethean pretensions and Romantic dialectics. *Romanticism*, 15(3), 254-264.
- Conant, J. (2005). The Dialectic of Perspectivism I. *Sats – Nordic Journal of Philosophy*, 6(2), 5-50.
- Conant, J. (2006). The Dialectic of Perspectivism II. *Sats – Nordic Journal of Philosophy* 7(1), 6-57.
- Del Caro, A. (2011). Zarathustra Is Dead, Long Live Zarathustra!. *Journal of Nietzsche Studies*, 41(1), 83-93.
- Haase, U. (2008). *Starting with Nietzsche*. London: Continuum International Publishing Group.
- Kahambing, J. G. (2014). Man of the future: The superman in the eternal vow. *The Thomasian Philosopher*, 30(1), 190-216.
- Kahambing, J. G. (2017). The future of Nietzsche's perspectivism as political consensus. *Recoletos Multidisciplinary Research Journal*, 5(2). <https://doi.org/10.32871/rmrj1705.02.05>
- Magnus, B. (1978). *Nietzsche's existential imperative* (Studies in Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy). Indiana University Press.
- Maleuvre, D. (2000). Gide, Nietzsche, and the ghost of philosophy. *Mosaic: An Interdisciplinary Critical Journal*, 33(1), 77-94.
- Maleuvre, D. (2000). Gide, Nietzsche, and the ghost of philosophy. *Mosaic: An Interdisciplinary Critical Journal*, 33(1), 77-94.
- Morrisson, I. (2014). Ascetic slaves: Rereading Nietzsche's *On the Genealogy of Morals*. *Journal of Nietzsche Studies*, 45(3), 230-257. doi: 10.1353/nie.2014.0041
- Nietzsche, F. (1927). *The Birth of Tragedy*. (C. P. Fadiman, Trans.) New York: Modern Library.
- Nietzsche, F. (1969). *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. (R. Hollingdale, Trans.) England: Penguin Books.
- Nietzsche, F. (1996). *On the Genealogy of Morals*. (D. Smith, Trans.) New York: Oxford University Press.
- Nietzsche, F. (1997). *Beyond Good and Evil*. (H. Zimmern, Trans.) New York: Dover.
- Oliver, K. (2016). *Womanizing Nietzsche: Philosophy's Relation to the "feminine"*. Routledge.
- Olson, N. (2001). Perspectivism and truth in Nietzsche's philosophy: A critical look at the apparent contradiction. Retrieved from <http://www.stolaf.edu/depts/philosophy/reed/2001/perspectivism.html>
- Ostas, M. (2005). Rereading Nietzsche in theory: Aesthetics and the movement of genealogy in the early work. *International Studies in Philosophy*, 37(1), 65-80.
- Owen, D. (2013). *Maturity and modernity: Nietzsche, Weber, Foucault and the ambivalence of reason*. Routledge.
- Reginster, B. (2006). *The Affirmation of Life*. Cambridge, England: Harvard University Press.
- Roberts, M. (1995). Rereading Marx and Nietzsche. *Rethinking Marxism: A Journal of Economics, Culture & Society*, 8(1), 100-111.
- Sabo, A.G. (2000). *The Übermensch comes to Scandinavia: Rereading Hamsun and Dinesen in the light of Nietzsche's philosophy* (Doctoral Dissertation). University of Washington).

- Sertillanges, A. (1987). *The intellectual life*. (M. Ryan, Trans.) Washington: Catholic University of America Press.
- Soysal, S. (2007). *Nietzsche's perspectivist epistemology: Epistemological implications of will to power* (Doctoral thesis). Middle East Technical University, Cankaya/Ankara, Turkey.
- Snaza, N. (2014). The human animal *Nach Nietzsche*: Re-reading Zarathustra's interspecies community. *Angelaki: Journal of the Theoretical Humanities*, 18(4), 81-100.
- Stegmaier, W., & Anderson, L. M. (2009). After Montinari: On Nietzsche Philology. *Journal of Nietzsche Studies*, 5-19.
- Trent, L. (1994). *Nietzsche's Ghost*. Cyborg Productions.
- Ziolkowski, T. (2012). Zarathustra's Reincarnations: Literary Responses to Nietzsche's Work. *Modern Language Review*, 107(1), 211-229.
- Zuckert, C. (1985). Nietzsche's rereading of Plato. *Political Theory*, 13(2), 213-238.