# "Pardon me, my friends, I have ventured to paint my happiness on the wall."

December 29, 2024 By Caroline and Michael

# Introduction (What Is It)

In this meeting, we continue working through Friedrich Nietzsche's dense collection of brief philosophical reflections. While unraveling the nuances behind his polemic against fame, the morality of compassion, and industry, we attempt to historicize his cultural critique and make sense of it both within his time and in a modern-day context.

# Transcript

**VIEW RECORDING - 59 mins (No highlights)** 

#### Caroline

Next week in January and then we'll decide what to read next I guess. Last time the professor gave us a lot of suggestions, and I guess he sounded like he wanted us to read Clifford Williams, and the other guy, William James or something, they're both named William, but oh my gosh, yeah, they're essays on belief I think.

But on Friday he gave me a bunch of readings, which we could go over at the end of the meeting, for hopes that Kolb will also be joining us, and I'll just send all the suggestions afterwards too.

I mean I guess we could start: what did you find interesting actually.

#### Michael

There was a lot of philology this time okay so there's lots of places where he's just history and how personal reputation will leave lasting impacts in history and critiquing the reputation to the historical figures.

#### Caroline

Well, he's just like, I feel like he's really focusing on reputation, appearances, and kind of how the major players of the world, what, are like those famous people.

He has this section on like taste, like the common or general taste, and he says that like the famous people, like politicians, or the people that decide what, I guess the common people find appealing.

#### Michael

Yes.

Yeah. And I found that really interesting. Like, he's obviously not wrong. But I guess like, with the media and all that, you know, it's really like a bunch of things are kind of at play.

And it doesn't really have to be like, you like major politicians who are like taking control of what the general like taste is, but it's fine.

Yeah.

# Michael

But he does, it's not just great people that he talks about as determining taste, right? What's he saying?

#### Caroline

I feel like he does say the great people, like, the great people or like the famous people. Like, those are the ones that like control - I guess the masses. What do other people think?

# Myles

Have you guys ever read the theory of the leisure class by Thorstein Veblyn? No. I don't encourage you to read it. It doesn't make any sense. But basically he argues the same thing that, you know, the elite in society set the standards and then, you know, that determines what people desire in terms of consuming.

Good.

#### Caroline

Yeah. I think, but does Nietzsche, like, argue that?

#### Michael

To an extent, so what he says, it's powerful and influential about any sense of shame, individuals, they announce in tyrannically.

force what is ridiculous and absurd and they put people under pressure.

#### Caroline

I think what he also says in the section that I'm thinking about when he talks about the common taste, he talks about how once they start like, once the great people start kind of like deciding or choosing for us, like choosing the common taste, it becomes like a habit.

And then once that like habit continues on through time, it becomes like the need. I found that cycle really interesting because I think it's like it could be really generalized.

Into like not just like once something becomes a habit. It also like sooner or later becomes a need.

This is making me think of What does it make me think of it kind of give me Elon vibes?

#### Michael

but exactly Just the fact that you on is right now a Dictator on X And therefore has you know the power to kind of Influence opinion But to what extent he has influence opinion.

I'm not sure since he's kind of also subject to pretty cool But this does remind me Oh, is there something you wanted to say?

No, continue. So in chapter 30, talks about coming at the famous, right?

#### Caroline

And really, he's describing different things.

#### Michael

He's talking about how famous people treat people differently fundamentally.

#### Caroline

Does it like, I feel like, does he say that? They treat other people differently or? OK, no. He does say that famous people use, I guess, other people as just like stage properties.

But I do think what he says about appearances in that chapter, like he says that the famous people people have to have like they have to like continue on with their theatrics kind of their entire life.

I feel like this could also be applied to like not just famous people like normal ordinary people like in in social and their ordinary social lives.

I think some people do think of I guess interacting in daily life like that could also be taken as you know theatrics you're keeping up appearances.

So I don't know is it very specific to famous people.

#### Michael

I mean nowadays we're all kind of forced to adopt this persona of being a famous person just because of how exposed our lozinesser for me to art.

So, we all kind of are forced into these theatrics and extend. So, like me to reading this, I thought it was a pretty universal thing that he was describing for modern man.

And there's also another chapter that, and I'm having trouble working on the English phrase. I just read this in English.

It's what we talked about, reputation, right?

We find it.

#### Michael

What others know about us, think? No. No, I can't even, we can talk about something else in the meantime, I'm trying to find the chapter.

Okay.

#### Caroline

Wait, but I guess like what others know about us.

#### Michael

It's like chapter 52.

#### Caroline

I found that really interesting. Wait, I'm going to read it since it's really short, but so it says, what we know about ourselves and remember is not as decisive to our life's happiness as it is believed to be.

One day, what others know or think they know about us assails us, and then we realize that that is more powerful.

It is easier to deal with a bad conscience than a bad reputation. And here, he doesn't talk about like, oh, famous people, like they're keeping up their reputation or they're keeping up their appearances, but he's saying like us, like what we know about ourselves.

So I found that very interesting. It's like, he's saying like, do you guys think it's true? Like, is it easier to deal with a bad conscience than a bad reputation?

#### Michael

I mean, if you are not a famous person, then no, but I mean, if you were like a monk or a recluse living in isolation, you don't care, but they're like, otherwise, like ordinary people.

I mean, we were talking about how ordinary people, right now, are very much situated in the gaze of the other, as in, they're kind of pinned by the reputations of others, and this is abnormal, this doesn't used to be the case in history.

So, I think now it is easy to make an argument for the fact that it might be harder to deal with.

#### Caroline

like nowadays, people like base, I guess, their own perceptions of themselves on like the external, like on like what other, I guess, like what you said, what other people are thinking of like yourself, or what is like the standard, the social standards, like and all that like external stuff.

# Michael

But is that like a new thing really?

#### Caroline

know, people in the 19th

#### Michael

Well, Nietzsche actually, he had a failed romance with Lou Salome, the same female whom Freud later married after he kind of got rejected, he just kind of wandered away and became a solitary hermit, and no one really cared because there was no one that he knew and he didn't have anything like a digital footprint, so I would say yes.

Okay, well that's Nietzsche, like he's kind of odd, I would say.

#### Caroline

I would say he's an outlier. Just a bit?

#### Michael

Just a bit. Well, I think it's just generally, I think it would be easier for anyone back in the day to just

It's not like it's not the case now, I think it is.

#### Caroline

Yeah, I mean, if you really wanted to, you could disappear off to an island, you know, like throw your cellular device into the ocean, kind of stuff.

But I think, like, what he says about, I guess, like, the care, the focus that we have on our reputation or appearances.

Like, he's, you know, that's like a huge deal, right? Like to everyone, right? But is he like, is he saying that, like, with

um like is he looking at it with disapproval like like is he saying like no um we should we should defy all the like the great people who are deciding like um deciding their common taste and should we like lean towards individualism and should we not care about like all the social happenings around us like is he saying that like i don't feel like he's distancing himself from it here but i think also where he does try to kind of um look down on such on on this particular view yes but but he doesn't like call for any sort of like action

right.

#### Michael

I think what he says in 56 is really kind of along the lines of these.

#### Caroline

So here he's kind of going against the grain.

#### Michael

I guess you could look at the last sentence, pardon me, my friends, I have a chance to paint my happiness on the wall.

We contrast to what he defines as the other who only constitute or create meaning through the distress of others and don't know how to create their own distress and pursue their own art and so on.

There's undertones here of him assuing this kind of concern for reputation, but not really. We could also just discuss Nietzsche biographically, was his life theatrical, or was it without concern for what later history would think of him?

#### Caroline

I think it's like, yeah, we know, do you think that, you know, he talks about like Nero and Tiberius, like, do you think he's more, he would have died more like Tiberius, or more like Nero, or Augustus?

#### Michael

Well, he, we all know how he died right, this is a one-on-one conversation right now, but 11 years of his life having his diapers changed by his sister in the attic of his sister's house because he went mad and kind of Normally after he broke time through his arms from the horse or something The horse epitome that was a very Artistic Neuronic exit but

His slow decay afterwards, I think it's more Tiberius like Of course he didn't get strangled with a pillow, but he I'm not sure what to make with it.

I mean he definitely didn't orchestrate he didn't burn himself on a fire like you know It definitely is Almost as memorable as Neronic exit But

like did he intend well obviously like you didn't want to die like that right well okay do you have anything more to say hmm me yeah about what um I have a lot to say actually I'm intending I don't think he intended it but I definitely feel like he was because um one thing that he does is files later on for this book and later on in Zarathustra is amor fati like embrace your fate if you had to live your life isn't that from the stuff it's from a lot of sources it's

#### Caroline

So, um, don't really, it's partially from the Stoics, but his formula. I recall that from, um, what's his name?

Marcus Aurelius,

#### Michael

Um, um, I can't recall the exact line, but you're right, but he takes it to an extreme degree, I think, is the difference that he had to, um, yeah, like, how so, like, like, just how, um, I mean, fundamentally, he could still argue for it being the same, but, um, embrace your fate.

he'd say yes to everything, live life, like, you would, if you would. If he had to kind of relive it over and over again, but I guess the difference being Marcus Aurelius takes stoic pride in life and he should take level in a dyneasian manner in life and that's a difference and Going back to the horse.

I think Even if you can't really orchestrate going mad I think Nietzsche definitely to some degree was okay with it It was kind of like the thing that he was mapping out for himself is this very tragic martyrdom and He followed through with it.

So is it on a way? It's like Nero's death Is this It's like fate he had it coming, right?

| Myles   |
|---|
| Mmm.  |
|   |
| Michael   |
| Well Honestly, do you mean Nero or Nietzsche? Did Nero kill himself?  |
|   |
| Caroline  |
| Yeah.   |
|   |
| Myles   |
| But really, it was like, I don't know, fate, I guess, I suppose, or where it was going. Oh, my taking fate in your own hands? |
| No, not really. Like, just the natural order of things.   |
|   |
| Caroline  |
| Nobody liked him.   |
|   |
| Myles   |
| So I feel like that was his option. I feel like, I don't know, to an extent, the same thing is going on here.                 |
| And that he was okay. Nietzsche was okay with going mad.  |

I guess so.

#### Michael

Like, was he okay with being mad? Was he okay with being mad? Yeah. There's, I guess... different shades of difference in Nero's case because his reign was practically overthrown and if he kind of sought asylum he would have risked, gotten assassinated anyways but he could have held on to his life but really it was more like a spot child throwing a tantrum and a kind of this acceptance of fate because he was just trying to make an artistic exit he was, he burned himself on a pyre but and he had a servant's kind of um emollated with him but that's for the antique these these are beside the point we're talking about Nietzsche honestly I don't think anyone can tell I think Nietzsche in the sense is more enigmatic than Narrow okay sure and I guess like

#### Caroline

move on from that point. Um, wait, so I wanted to like, I was wondering, in chapter 35, like, speaking of burning, you know, witchcraft.

Um, but in chapter 35, he talks about heresy and witchcraft. And I think like, what he's saying is that it's like, it's evil to, to kind of like, diverge from the common, like, mentality, or like, traditional tradition. Yeah. is he saying that? Because I thought like, I felt like that was kind of to what?

#### Michael

I think, Yes, to everything you said.

#### Caroline

Wait, he says to think otherwise then is customary is much less the effect of the superior intellect than of strong evil inclinations.

Like, I read that and I laughed. He's like, oh, you're not being smart. You're just, I guess, the opposite.

#### Michael

There's certainly a lot of irony in this chapter. So.

## Caroline

Anyone else have thoughts? No way.

# **Myles**

What is he saying in this chapter?

#### Caroline

He's saying that, I think the first sentence is kind of somewhere to think otherwise than his customary is much less the effect of a superior intellect than of strong evil inclinations.

So like he's saying that like you're evil if you're trying to kind of diverge or disrupt what is the typical like thought of the common people.

Like what we think normally, like what is... No, I don't think that's the case.

# Myles

Well, I mean, is an individual thinking a good thing?

#### Caroline

That's what we like to think, know, and we're so new in division.

# **Myles**

Listen, yes, that's what I was thinking, but like, huh, you can't make progress in humanity. If everyone's just doing the same thing.

Yeah, I think, yeah, that's right.

#### Caroline

Um, because I like this chapter kind of confused me. I feel like it is throughout like the part, the entire, the entirety of part one, I feel like he does mention a lot of like herd mentality and, um, I feel like herd mentality, like whenever he mentioned it had a kind of negative connotation.

But then here he's, he's kind of saying the opposite. He's like, no, like, we got to stick with the old, like stick with what is what everyone else is thinking, which I found really odd.

So I'm willing to believe that this part is, like, satirical. Reading back for the German, I think that's the implication.

Really? Yeah, I think... It shows in German?

#### Michael

It's still ambiguous, but... If you read on the genealogy of morals, how he really defines, um, well, there's an evil or evil, kind of becomes evident that evil...

So he essentially says that evil itself is just a social construct of weak people, feeling resentment or envy against the strong, and once they overthrow...

the strong or the individual or the or that was a superior intelligence, they call they associate the strong with evil and it kind of just people go along with it because while the

weak are now the strong, yeah, wait, that reminds me of what when he talks about like socialism.

#### Caroline

Yes, yes.

#### Michael

Right. I guess that was the first. What?

#### Caroline

Just finishing up discussion in this chapter, I think.

#### Michael

Really, if he had to say it was was irony, it's I think the clue is in the last line where he says yes, the reformation produced

both in the greatest abundance. He's not saying the Reformation is this period of enlightened chantanans. No, he's saying that it's a redoubling of medieval spirit, which is crude and ignorant.

And he's saying that because of this herd mentality that prevailed during the Reformation, a little more likely to call other heretics, which is so yeah.

#### Caroline

Yeah, yeah, that just makes sense.

#### Michael

And if you read it kind of... yeah.

So definitely satirical.

#### Michael

Yeah, all right.

#### Caroline

got that clear. I think the socialism chapter is 40 on the lack of noble style. Yeah, he does talk about industry in another chapter.

Right. Yeah. And like trade and nobility. Wait, I want to go back to like trade and ability first. Like he, wait, there's like this one part that may like, he says, let me see.

Oh yeah, he mentions like in the age of a more savage humanity. Everyone, everyone was a hunter and practiced the technique of hunting every day. So when he uses savage, does he mean it in like, like our terms, like savage as in like brutal or backwards.

That's sometimes.

#### Michael

Yeah, I guess so. Okay, on that note, like what is

#### Caroline

What would he say about humanity today? I feel like there's a lot going on in the modern day. I don't know if this is a recent trend or something, but I feel like everyone's saying that like, oh, humanity is on a backwards track, like we're doomed, that type of mindset.

I could give examples, but you should provide input first.

#### Michael

Well, this chapter where he's talking about occupations, usurping each other and becoming positions of leisure is enough basis for, like, to form a...

conclusion or any form of kind of statement regarding humanity now, because I thought about this deal and I can't find any differences between how really Nietzsche is, so what Nietzsche is describing society in his day and society in my day.

And maybe it's because I'm in China, but I don't know.

#### Caroline

No, but like what do you mean?

#### Michael

So he's saying, well buying and selling is the trade of the common right now, as is the art of reading and writing.

Okay. Well, I didn't see I mean, like, if I go downstairs, there's a lot of just family businesses and one-men businesses and people selling stuff like everywhere and I mean in the U.S.

as well, kind of literacy and Chinese culture is kind of forced upon students in the national education system.

So, yeah, it's still banal, it's still ubiquitous.

#### Caroline

Okay, well, what about Australia, Germany, Germany, France? Okay, we can talk about the socialist countries first, so...

#### Michael

In Germany, you can live on unemployment fees, can be unemployed, you can rent an apartment using the... social welfare funds that the government provides you and you can live off of France on delivery pizza and you don't have to sell things in certain other European countries is more the case.

It's just I guess different forms of working and really there's less of a focus or emphasis on mandatory education in Germany now.

So I guess to the extent this happened in Germany, so selling it and writing has become a thing of luxury.

You're saying selling But now it becomes a leisure hobby of the or a leisure activity of the wealthy. So I'm saying to an extent in Germany the same has happened to writing and to be silent stuff

#### Caroline

But writing as in like but you could also argue that the literacy rates are higher than our time than in his time um and that's kind of like one of the general ends like that are contrary to what he's saying.

#### Michael

But literacy in general is not, yeah he's referring to literacy here so that's troublesome I mean his dialectic isn't exactly like it's not a natural law that something is but now today has to be a leisure activity tomorrow so there's no progression behind it.

So I don't think we have to kind of abide by it that strictly, but I don't know what you guys think.

#### Caroline

Yeah, what do you guys think?

#### Michael

I don't also; Nietzsche says this all because he wants, he imagines a world in which political literature and, I guess, revolutionary activism will become the prostitution of the spirit.

Oh, that part.

#### Caroline

What is that? What is he saying there? That kind of confused me.

#### Michael

Honestly, I can't put a finger on it either because there's no analogs that he's drawing on other than maybe prostitution physically itself, because he's using primal man as an example from a savage society and there's nothing that constitutes as prostitution in savage society.

So I don't know what he's basing this up and I don't know if really, can we think of anything nowadays that we count as, or we would label prostitution of the spirit?

Like, so how does he define that prostitution? Yeah, but I guess whatever is just... base. That's funny. Honestly, I would think that, because a lot of officials in China right now are corrupt, and Xi is putting them in jail by the hundreds of thousands, it's great.

in the UICF people who randomly call numbers and get them to vote by then, wait, sorry, Kamala. sorry. That passed on.

#### Caroline

And so, like, political activism.

# Michael

We're just having extremist or polarized political views.

# **Myles**

It just means, like, sacrificing your own, you know, personal beliefs in order to gain something.

#### Caroline

doesn't.

#### Michael

So, like, disrespect or, um, annul, just like, turn away for office.

# **Myles**

Yeah.

#### Caroline

On that notion of belief, wait, um, maybe this is, so beliefs are, wait, this is, like, totally different from our shopping, um, beliefs are like what drives you to do something.

Right? Like, I believe this, which prompts an action, right? Yeah.

#### Michael

I mean, in some cases.

#### Caroline

Sure, generally, um, but then, okay, wait, how about like, okay, I'll, I'll save that for our next meeting, which we will hopefully talk about police.

Wait, sorry, I just did all that for nothing. Um, okay, anyways, moving on. I'm gonna write what I had in mind down Yeah, sure.

#### Michael

While you invited, I think like, oh, that YouTube controversy, like, um, like to open up the same. So, like, um, Mr.

Beast, right? Um, like the YouTuber, he was like, doing, what was he doing? Um, like, he was selling something, right?

Um, like this brand and it turned out to be literally just, um, I don't recall any details right lunchely lunchely um so like he was um so he was selling food and the food was um it had unethical um and of manufacturing malpractice scissors or something and he was just selling it blatantly um to his viewers and so it's kind of like selling your soul for profit or something spiritual institution.

That wasn't a very good illustration.

## **Myles**

I'm not familiar with the example but I mean it sounds like a typical you know uh sacrificing your morals for profit.

#### Caroline

Yeah I guess it's pretty typical.

#### Michael

I guess if you want to move on I think In the par on, in the chapter we just discussed, 32 of it, and in 40, he's kind of offering this contract to meet a Marxism, like, he's offering this counterpoint, or this refutation of Marxism, even, so to like briefly return to the trade and ability, because while buying and selling is really the practice of the capitalist class, and political writing and journalism is, or it was exactly what Marx and Engels were doing, and he's saying that

One day both these will become so base that while they're kind of degraded or delegated to kind of leisure activities of the welfare of the privileged, it seems to me to be almost, I

guess, anti dialectical Marxists in terms of, while Marx and Engels thought that while society would progress towards, you know, a dictatorship of the proletariat.

And yes, the abolition of buying and selling, but only through this overthrow of the capitalist class and Nietzsche just me seems to be not recognizing this worldview or this discussion.

if count the world because he thinks it's going to, I guess, come into place anyways, but it'll come into place anyways.

No, this is all kind of implied and this is all based on just my general impressions of Nietzsche's economic or dialectical worldview.

So it seems to me, this all seems to me to me, but I can't really justify it. I guess if I to justify, I talked about chapter 40 or he's talking about how, yeah, industrial culture is vulgar, right?

#### Caroline

Yeah, I feel like in chapter 40 kind of like thinks with 32 in the way that he's talking about the consequences of the industry, right?

32 like he is saying that like, Oh, like industry causes like this downward trend and I guess like in 40, he's kind of elaborating what, what will happen once like industry progresses, right?

Like he's saying that he's talking about social hierarchy, the hierarchy between the worker and then the employer and then kind of like the overturn of society.

He's saying that industry causes socialism, like in its nature, in itself.

#### Michael

Let me just read this again because I think there's more nuance to it.

#### Caroline

Any other thoughts, anyone? It says here it is simply the law of need operating. One wants to live and has to sell oneself, but one despises those who exploit this need and buy the worker

That kind of makes me think of what Miles said about going back on your beliefs, or in this case your desires because of necessity, and this necessity comes from industry, like industry is what causes, but no.

## Michael

Well, industry is exploiting the needs and really, exploitation is what's causing socialist ferment, as you said. Yeah.

#### Caroline

so the what necessarily comes with industry is this exploitation, right?

# Myles

I think this is very prevalent in a capitalistic society, because people seek profit and are willing to obtain that by sacrificing their morals.

#### Caroline

I guess so.

#### Michael

But like, is it necessary? The sacrifice or or no, yes, but no, I was talking about, um, I guess.

Exploitation. Is the exploitation necessary?

#### Caroline

Is that where you're asking? What weren't you asking?

## Michael

Wait, I don't know.

it's like what you said is exploitation necessary. it's not. But maybe it's also like the cycle that Nije was talking about, like with the common taste.

Like once, I guess the powerful people once the powerful people like start exploiting people, like I guess then it becomes like a habit and it becomes like the cycle that people can't get out of.

# **Myles**

I don't know if it's necessary but I believe that it is natural for it to occur in a free market. I think, yeah, I think that's true.

#### Michael

I just I agree but Nietzsche's point here is that to an extent he's saying that soldiers and leaders while they had a better relation to each other than workers and their capitalist exporters but saying that like the tyrants of military tyrants were just as I guess exploitative as capitalists and he's saying that the only reason why socialism exists is because on the lack of noble style the capitalists are lacking noble style so because they just happen to contentedly be in power and don't have anything kind of founded in common taste to legitimize their power therefore there are workers who want to overthrow capitalists

#### Caroline

Yeah, so it all connects, like what with the common taste, the nature of powerful people and then industry, trade, I guess so, yeah, it all flows into this chapter.

#### Michael

Interesting. Any other comments on this?

| Caroline  |
|---|
| No?   |
| Yeah, we have three minutes left, so we want to talk about chapter 56, so I do want to talk about the readings.                         |
| Caroline  |
| Wait, what is, what would you want to talk about 26? Around 56, the most interesting. Oh, really? I mean, yeah, we could talk about it. |
| I could always send the details next time, I guess.   |
|   |
| Michael   |
| Or we could just talk about the readings.   |
| Don't think we have the majority of the population here too.  |
|   |
| Caroline  |
| We never did. We had at one time. And we will. Since college apps.  |
|   |
| Michael   |
| So. Okay.   |
|   |

Because.

#### Michael

It's part of his artistic manifesto. The desire for suffering.

#### Caroline

Yeah. Yeah.

# Michael

Kind of. It's founded on this. Assumption that suffering is what really. I guess it motivates a person to individualism.

#### Caroline

Wait, that kind of makes me think about: I was like talking with this person who says something very interesting.

We were talking about philosophy and he said that he believed that like everything like life was just people not wanting to be like unhappy, like sad, depressed, like which was like a weird way of looking at life, like which reminds me of what you were talking about, like is life just like is everything we're doing just like not be miserable?

I can get behind that, but that's like a sad way of looking at life in my opinion or like it but it's I feel like it's

Like, is it necessarily wrong, or is it just flawed, that view?

#### Michael

I think it's partial, like, I don't think that's the, that's gonna be one drive present in life, but not the most fundamental one.

Sure.

## Caroline

So, okay, back to, like, what Mije is saying, um, and the feeling, feeling distressed. Like, so what is, like, sure, it's pretty writing, um, but like, you said that this, what he says here is calling for individualism?

#### Michael

Yes, not primarily so, to an extent, yes. or rather liberation from a mindset also liberation from like what type of mindset would you see me talking about here well he coins that you're right he says first of all this what is he saying okay so if i were to sum it up first of all um he's warning against relying it or he's saying to kind of make misery your own

or to make distress your own, and to not, I guess, passively depend on the stress.

#### Caroline

And that distress; I find it interesting, like, when he says distress addicts, which also reminds me of the cycle. You know, something becomes a habit, and then it kind of becomes a need, So, he's basically implying that distress is addictive.

Just an odd thing, but I don't see how that's wrong in everyday life, and also our call ends really soon.

# Conclusion

This meeting, centered around the final sections 26-56 of Book II, concluded our discussion on Friedrich Nietzsche's "The Gay Science." Nietzsche devotes multiple sections on the appearance, reputation, and behavior of famous, influential people. We discussed this in the context of social media, finding parallels with emerging cultures surrounding people today and their concentration on displaying their lives on the stage of the internet, curating certain public impressions. In applying his own criticisms and viewpoints, we discuss famous deaths like Nero's and Tiberius's alongside his own in our discourse on the theatrics of Nietzsche's life.

Building upon our previous meeting in the first half of the book, we talk about the progress of humanity. This time, we consider the track of humanity in terms of industry, discussing socialism and analyzing the historical circumstances influencing him. As witnesses directly experiencing the force of the existing systems of our own day and age, we find irony and reality in Nietzsche's writing. He leaves us wondering, what is, or who are, in control of our lives? Are the conditions that bring us progress, or bring us to our status quo, necessary and right? What can we understand about society, whilst living within the system itself?

# Attendees

Ben

Caroline

Junyi Lihi

Michael

Myles