

A Note on *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*

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Nietzsche's *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* is the opposite of the central focus of the first Philosophy Portal course and anthology, Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Whereas Hegel's *Phenomenology* labours under a universal logic so that ordinary consciousness may start to mediate its own becoming to the standpoint of philosophical knowing; Nietzsche's *Zarathustra* plays over us with a singular logic of spirit's knowing so that we may see for ourselves the quality of the result that Hegel may have had in mind when he spoke of "absolute knowing."

Nietzsche's *Zarathustra* is first and foremost *the spirit of a child*, not the child of immediacy but *the child that is the result of mediation*, whose immediacy confronts us with an altogether *alien form of consciousness*.¹ What is absolutely essential is that we do not interpret this gift as meaning that we should mimic or imitate him. As the great rapper Marshall Mathers once said, "I try to stimulate / but kids emulate / and mimic every move you make / 'Slim, you great!'" In that light, *Zarathustra* may be great, but he is not mirroring to us a greatness that embodies the universal logic of an "All," but rather the logic that screams *find your singularity and embody it as one of the "thousand" unexplored islands of life that have yet to exist*.

In this way, *Zarathustra's* singularity shines for us so that we may find our own shine, dance our own dance, sing our own song, play our own play. *Zarathustra's* singularity shines, not so that we could pick from one of the thousands

¹ Here to explicitly refer to the first Philosophy Portal anthology: *Enter the Alien* (2022).

of models or masks from human history that may have represented a necessary logical value for their time, but rather so that we can embody the logical value of this earth, having offered to history a model and a mask that could have only existed because we engaged the contradictions of our life, because we embodied the tensions of our real, because we said yes to world-building.

Thus Spoke Zarathustra should be read and re-read from this subjective source: the source of openness to one's own contradictions, the source in need of motivation for one's tensions, and the source which cannot see the possibility of yes in the face of faceless negativity. *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* should be read and re-read when one needs reminding of these stakes: that contradiction does not come to a null result (but rather comes to love), that tension is not the enemy of motivation (but its closest ally), and that yea-saying is not the thoughtless affirmation which sees beauty in every moment or potentiality, but rather the spirit which is always-already a beautiful movement. What you are about to read, I believe, is the result of such a spiritual movement. *Eppur si muove.*