

text. The quotation begins this way: “at the bottom of all these noble races the beast of prey, the splendid blond beast, prowling about avidly in search of spoil and victory; this hidden core needs to erupt from time to time, the animal has to get out again and go back to the wilderness ...”

Now let us complete the sentence as Nietzsche wrote it: “the Roman, Arabian, Germanic, Japanese nobility, the Homeric heroes, the Scandinavian Vikings—they all shared this need.”⁸⁹

So Nietzsche clearly is using the lion analogically and comparing its predatory power to the predatory power that humans of many different racial types have manifested. Nietzsche here lists six different racial and ethnic groups, and the Germans are not special in that list. So while Nietzsche does endorse a strongly biological basis for cultures, he does not endorse racism of the sort that says any one race is biologically necessarily superior to any other.

This is a clear difference with the Nazis. The Nazis were racist and thought of the Germanic racial type as superior to all others the world over. Nietzsche disagreed.

This leads us directly to a second major point of difference.

29. On contemporary Germans: the world's hope or contemptible?

While the Nazis put the German-Aryan racial type first, Nietzsche is almost never complimentary about his fellow Germans. In Nietzsche's view, Germany has slipped into flabbiness and whininess. Germany once was something to be awed and feared, but Germany in the nineteenth century has become a nation of religious revivalism, socialism, and movements towards democracy and equality.

Whatever special endowments the Germans once possessed they have lost. Nietzsche makes this clear when speak-

⁸⁹ GM 1:11.

ing about the Germany of the nineteenth-century: “between the old Germanic tribes and us Germans there exists hardly a conceptual relationship, let alone one of blood.”⁹⁰ So rather than being proud of their ancient history and accomplishments, Nietzsche believes Germans of his day should feel ashamed by comparison.

At the same time, German intellectual and cultural life is prominent the world over—and Nietzsche deplors that fact. Contemporary Germany is a center of softness and slow decay, so Nietzsche believes that Germany’s weaknesses are infecting the rest of the world. As he puts it in *The Will to Power*, “Aryan influence has corrupted all the world.”⁹¹

So rather than celebrating contemporary Germany and its power, as the Nazis would do, Nietzsche is disgusted by contemporary Germany.

This leads us to a third major point of difference.

30. On anti-Semitism: valid or disgusting?

The most repulsive sign of Germany’s decline, Nietzsche writes—and this may be initially surprising—is its hatred of the Jews, its virulent and almost-irrational anti-Semitism.

Nietzsche, we know, has said some harsh things about the Jews—but again, that is a set of issues that is easily misinterpreted, so we must be careful.



In connection with all of the negative things Nietzsche has said about the Jews, we must also note the following.

Nietzsche speaks of “the anti-Jewish stupidity” of the Germans.⁹² He speaks of those psychologically disturbed indi-

⁹⁰ GM 1:11.

⁹¹ WP 142; 145.

⁹² BGE 251.