

Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-03162-3 - Nietzsche and Buddhist Philosophy
Antoine Panaïoti
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

NIETZSCHE AND BUDDHIST PHILOSOPHY

Nietzsche once proclaimed himself the “Buddha of Europe,” and throughout his life Buddhism held enormous interest for him. While he followed Buddhist thinking in demolishing what he regarded as the two-headed delusion of Being and Self, he saw himself as advocating a response to the ensuing nihilist crisis that was diametrically opposed to that of his Indian counterpart. In this book Antoine Panaïoti explores the deep and complex relations between Nietzsche’s views and Buddhist philosophy. He discusses the psychological models and theories which underlie their supposedly opposing ethics of “great health,” and explodes the apparent dichotomy between Nietzsche’s Dionysian life-affirmation and Buddhist life-negation, arguing for a novel, hybrid response to the challenge of formulating a tenable post-nihilist ethics. His book will interest students and scholars of Nietzsche’s philosophy, Buddhist thought, and the metaphysical, existential, and ethical issues that emerge with the demise of theism.

ANTOINE PANAIÏOTI is Lecturer in Philosophy at McGill University and the University of Montreal, and a post-doctoral fellow at the Center of Research in Ethics, University of Montreal.

Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-03162-3 - Nietzsche and Buddhist Philosophy
Antoine Panaïoti
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-03162-3 - Nietzsche and Buddhist Philosophy
Antoine Panaïoti
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

NIETZSCHE AND BUDDHIST PHILOSOPHY

ANTOINE PANAIŌTI



Cambridge University Press
 978-1-107-03162-3 - Nietzsche and Buddhist Philosophy
 Antoine Panaïoti
 Frontmatter
[More information](#)

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
 Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town,
 Singapore, São Paulo, Delhi, Mexico City

Cambridge University Press
 The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 8RU, UK

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

www.cambridge.org
 Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781107031623

© Antoine Panaïoti 2013

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception
 and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements,
 no reproduction of any part may take place without the written
 permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2013

Printed in the United Kingdom at the University Press, Cambridge

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication data

Panaïoti, Antoine, 1984– author.

Nietzsche and Buddhist philosophy / Antoine Panaïoti.

pages cm

1. Nietzsche, Friedrich Wilhelm, 1844–1900. 2. Buddhist philosophy. I. Title
 B3318.B83P36 2012
 181'.043–dc23
 2012019062

ISBN 978-1-107-03162-3 Hardback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or
 accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to
 in this publication, and does not guarantee that any content on such
 websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-03162-3 - Nietzsche and Buddhist Philosophy
Antoine Panaïoti
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

À Lhasa et Alexandre, mes enfants, mes amours

Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-03162-3 - Nietzsche and Buddhist Philosophy
Antoine Panaïoti
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

Contents

<i>Acknowledgments</i>	<i>page</i> viii
<i>Note on translations, texts, and sources</i>	x
<i>Abbreviations</i>	xii
Introduction	I
PART I Nihilism and Buddhism	15
1 Nietzsche as Buddha	17
2 Nietzsche as Anti-Buddha	55
PART II Suffering	89
3 <i>Amor fati</i> and the affirmation of suffering	91
4 <i>Nirvāṇa</i> and the cessation of suffering	132
PART III Compassion	171
5 Overcoming compassion	173
6 Cultivating compassion	193
Conclusion: Toward a new response to the challenge of nihilism	212
<i>Bibliography</i>	230
<i>Index</i>	240

Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-03162-3 - Nietzsche and Buddhist Philosophy
Antoine Panaïoti
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

Acknowledgments

It would not have been possible for me to write this book without the help, encouragement, and guidance of Eivind Kahrs and Raymond Geuss, my two doctoral supervisors at the University of Cambridge, and Christine Tappolet, my postdoctoral supervisor at the Centre de recherche en éthique de l'Université de Montréal. Special thanks, also, to Margaret Cone, who read Pāli with me throughout my four years in the UK and with whom I engaged in several stimulating debates on Buddhist thought. I also have Vincenzo Vergiani to thank for giving me the opportunity to teach Sanskrit and Indian Intellectual History during my final year in Cambridge and to hold a seminar on Madhyamaka philosophy over the Lent, Easter, and Michaelmas terms of 2009. Teaching in the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies helped me clarify many of my ideas on Buddhism, in particular. I also wish to thank Rupert Gethin and Martin Ruehl, my two doctoral examiners, for their constructive criticism of my dissertation and their ongoing support for the project of writing a monograph on the basis of my doctoral research.

The ideas set forth in this book took shape over a period of ten years. Countless people played a role in this process, as teachers, students, friends, adversaries, and family. I can mention but a few. At McGill University, I would particularly like to thank Alia Al-Saji, Katherine Young, Emily Carson, Lara Braitstien, Thubten Jinpa, Sanjay Kumar, Philippe Turenne, and Hasana Sharp. Many thanks, also, to Jonardon Ganeri and Jim Benson, my MPhil examiners, for their precious feedback on my thesis on Nāgārjuna's philosophy. At the Centre de recherche en éthique de l'Université de Montréal, I more recently received invaluable help from my colleagues, especially Sara Villa, Morgane Paris, Ryoa Chung, and Nathalie Maillard. I also wish to thank Hilary Gaskin of Cambridge University Press and my two anonymous external readers for their helpful feedback on the initial typescript of this work. Over the last decade, I have also benefited greatly from thought-provoking conversations and debates

Acknowledgments

ix

with a number of close friends, especially Lily Soucy, Oliver Moore, Nikolas Metaxas, Pierre-Antoine Tibéri, Fabrizio Biondi-Morra, Anna Elsner, Richard Armstrong, Pierre-Luc Déziel, and Sofia Bachouchi. Nikolas Metaxas is in fact responsible for first provoking me to think about the issues dealt with in this book. In a sense, the conception of the book took place on a cold winter night of February 2005 in a Montreal café where Nick and I locked horns over the opposition between Nietzschean life-affirmation and (presumed) Buddhist life-negation.

Ultimately, my family deserves the most thanks. I wish to express my gratitude to my parents, Hélène Panaïoti and Glen Williams, and my brother, Thomas Williams, for their unswerving support at every step on my tortuous path. Many thanks, also, to my grandparents, Constantin and Thérèse Panaïoti. My grandfather deserves much credit for teaching me how to reason from the age of five – and forcing me to do so before I even began studying in earnest (which took a while). My grandmother, with her insatiable *joie de vivre* through thick and thin, has likewise been a true inspiration since childhood. All my love and deepest gratitude, finally, to my two extraordinary children, Lhasa and Alexandre Panaïoti, and to their beautiful, outstanding mother, Lily Soucy. I owe everything valuable I have ever accomplished so far to Lily. And without Lhasa and Alexandre, this book would never have seen the light of day.

Cambridge University Press
 978-1-107-03162-3 - Nietzsche and Buddhist Philosophy
 Antoine Panaïoti
 Frontmatter
[More information](#)

Note on translations, texts, and sources

All translations from French, German, Sanskrit, and Pāli texts in this book are my own. I have used standard abbreviations, listed below, to refer to most of the canonical Western and Indian texts cited. In the case of Indian texts, I have relied on critical editions of texts and/or editions of these texts that Indologists widely accept as authoritative. All citations from Schopenhauer's works are from the 1988 edition of A. Hübscher's critical edition of his works, *Sämtliche Werke* (Mannheim: F. A. Brockhaus). All citations from Nietzsche's letters are from G. Colli and M. Montinari's 1980 critical edition of his correspondence, *Nietzsche Briefwechsel* (Berlin: W. de Gruyter). All citations from Nietzsche's works, finally, are from G. Colli and M. Montinari's 1977 critical edition of his texts, *Nietzsche Werke* (Berlin: W. de Gruyter).

Given that I make liberal use of Nietzsche's notes and unpublished fragments, I should make my methodology clear concerning my use of such sources. The use (and abuse) of the fragments, after all, is something of a contentious issue in Nietzsche scholarship. My approach to the *NL* may be characterized as a type of middle way between Heidegger's emphasis on *WM* as the seat of Nietzsche's true philosophy, on the one hand, and the complete rejection of Nietzsche's unpublished material, on the other, e.g. J. Young's condemnation of "posthumous Nietzsche," in *The Death of God and the Meaning of Life* (London: Routledge, 2003), pp. 97–106.

Several of Nietzsche's fragments were grouped together by Nietzsche's sister, Elisabeth, and published under the title *Der Wille zur Macht* in 1901. Heidegger believed Nietzsche's published works were really a mere preamble to the work he was preparing and that Nietzsche's true contribution to philosophy can be found in *WM* alone, his "chief philosophical work." See M. Heidegger, *Nietzsche*, 4 vols. (Pfullingen: Neske, 1961), vol. 1, p. 12. Diametrically opposed to this extreme position is the view that *WM*, or any collection of Nietzsche's unpublished fragments for that matter, is little more than a "trash-bin of thoughts, doodles, day-dreams

Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-03162-3 - Nietzsche and Buddhist Philosophy
Antoine Panaïoti
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

Note on translations, texts, and sources

xi

and (usually failed) thought experiments.” See Young, *The Death of God*, p. 98; cf. B. Magnus, *Nietzsche’s Existential Imperative* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990) and M. Clark, *Nietzsche on Truth and Philosophy* (Cambridge University Press, 1990) for more moderate versions of this view.

The plain, unexciting truth is that the fragments are neither gold nor rubbish. Most of them simply provide insights into what it is that Nietzsche was thinking when he was writing certain texts, and several of them are little more than prior versions of aphorisms that effectively appeared in his published works. I see no real risk in giving due consideration to what can be found in Nietzsche’s notepads. The simple reason for this (contra Young) is that there is no bifurcation between Nietzsche qua wild, ranting, irrationalist note-taker and Nietzsche qua collected, scrupulous published author. This book makes use of the fragments, then, as a reliable (though by no means privileged) source for Nietzsche’s thought.

Abbreviations

<i>A</i>	<i>Der Antichrist</i> , Friedrich Nietzsche
<i>AK</i>	<i>Abhidharmakośa</i> , Vasubandhu
<i>AKBh</i>	<i>Abhidharmakośabhāṣya</i> , Vasubandhu
<i>AN</i>	<i>Aṅguttaranikāya</i>
<i>BA</i>	<i>Bodhicāryāvatāra</i> , Śāntideva
<i>BAP</i>	<i>Bodhicāryāvatārapañjikā</i> , Prajñākaramati
<i>BĀU</i>	<i>Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad</i>
<i>ChU</i>	<i>Chāndogyopaniṣad</i>
<i>DBhS</i>	<i>Daśabhūmikasūtra</i>
<i>Dhp</i>	<i>Dhammapadā</i>
<i>DN</i>	<i>Dīghanikāya</i>
<i>DW</i>	<i>Die dionysische Weltanschauung</i> , Friedrich Nietzsche
<i>E</i>	<i>Ethica</i> , Baruch Spinoza
<i>EH</i>	<i>Ecce Homo</i> , Friedrich Nietzsche
<i>FM</i>	<i>Über das Fundament der Moral</i> , Arthur Schopenhauer
<i>FmW</i>	<i>Über die Freiheit des menschlichen Willens</i> , Arthur Schopenhauer
<i>FW</i>	<i>Die fröhliche Wissenschaft</i> , Friedrich Nietzsche
<i>GD</i>	<i>Götzen-Dämmerung</i> , Friedrich Nietzsche
<i>GM</i>	<i>Zur Genealogie der Moral</i> , Friedrich Nietzsche
<i>GT</i>	<i>Die Geburt der Tragödie</i> , Friedrich Nietzsche
<i>JGB</i>	<i>Jenseits von Gut und Böse</i> , Friedrich Nietzsche
<i>KrV</i>	<i>Kritik der reinen Vernunft</i> , Immanuel Kant
<i>KU</i>	<i>Kenopaniṣad</i>
<i>M</i>	<i>Morgenröthe</i> , Friedrich Nietzsche
<i>MA</i>	<i>Madhyamakāvatāra</i> , Candrakīrti
<i>MM</i>	<i>Menschliches, Allzumenschliches</i> , Friedrich Nietzsche
<i>MMK</i>	<i>Mūlamadhyamakakārikā</i> , Nāgārjuna
<i>MN</i>	<i>Majjhimanikāya</i>
<i>MP</i>	<i>Milindapañha</i>

Abbreviations

xiii

MSA	<i>Mahāyānasūtrālamkāra</i> , Asaṅga
MV	<i>Madhyamakavṛtti</i> , Candrakīrti
NB	<i>Nietzsche Briefwechsel</i>
NL	<i>Nachgelassene Fragmente</i> , Friedrich Nietzsche
NW	<i>Nietzsche contra Wagner</i> , Friedrich Nietzsche
Pm	<i>Paramatthamañjusā</i> , Dhammapāla
PP	<i>Parerga und Parapolimena</i> , Arthur Schopenhauer
Pp	<i>Prasannapadā</i> , Candrakīrti
PtZG	<i>Die Philosophie im tragischen Zeitalter der Griechen</i> , Friedrich Nietzsche
S	<i>Zu Schopenhauer</i> , Friedrich Nietzsche
SF	<i>Über das Sehen und die Farben</i> , Arthur Schopenhauer
SN	<i>Saṃyuttanikāya</i>
Sn	<i>Suttanipāta</i>
ThGA	<i>Therātherīgathāṭṭhakathā</i> , Dhammapāla
THN	<i>Treatise of Human Nature</i> , David Hume
TV	<i>Trīṃśikāvijñapti</i> , Vasubandhu
UB	<i>Unzeitgemässe Betrachtungen</i> , Friedrich Nietzsche
V	<i>Vinaya</i>
VP	<i>Die vorplatonischen Philosophen</i> , Friedrich Nietzsche
Vsm	<i>Visuddhimagga</i> , Buddhaghosa
VV	<i>Vigrahavyāvartanī</i> , Nāgārjuna
WL	<i>Über Wahrheit und Lüge im aussermoralischen Sinne</i> , Friedrich Nietzsche
WM	<i>Der Wille zur Macht</i> , Friedrich Nietzsche (ed. E. Forster-Nietzsche and P. Gast)
WN	<i>Über den Willen in der Natur</i> , Arthur Schopenhauer
WSG	<i>Über die vierfache Wurzel des Satzes vom zureichenden Grunde</i> , Arthur Schopenhauer
WWV	<i>Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung</i> , Arthur Schopenhauer
YŠK	<i>Yuktiṣaṣṭikākārikā</i> , Nāgārjuna