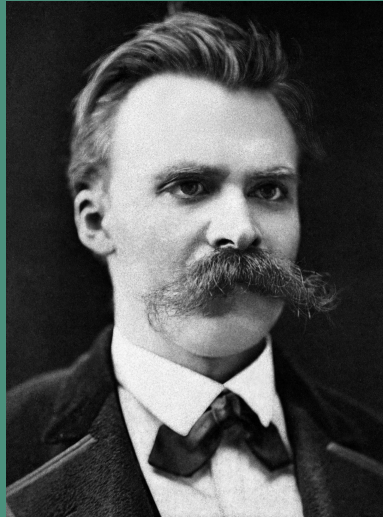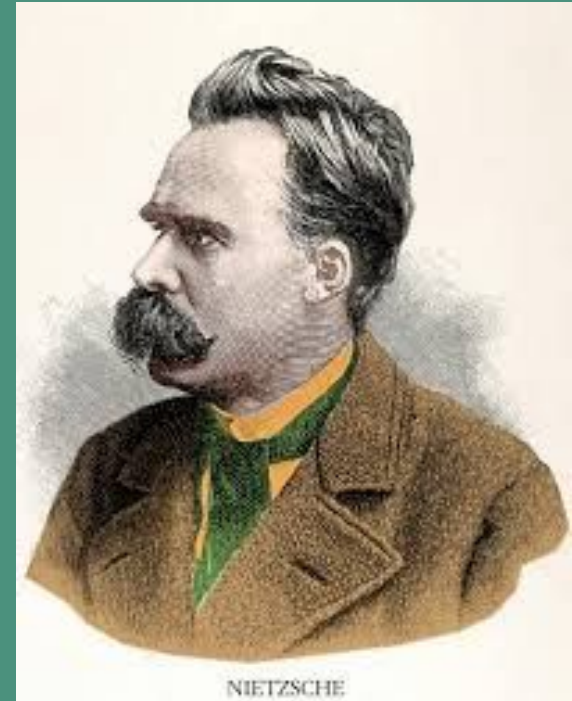# Nietzsche & His Take on Morality

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Who is Friedrich Nietzsche

- A German classical scholar and philosopher (1844-1900), Nietzsche is known as one of the most influential thinkers of the modern time, known for being a big critic of the Christian ideal and their view on morality as an absolute between good and evil
- "For Nietzsche, morality is not just hypocritical or ineffectual; it is positively contemptible, a degenerate way of thinking that any self-respecting human being will want to abandon"(p.29)

NIETZSCHE

Übermensch : A Higher Man

Übermensch is a person who creates their own values without God or absolute morality. (p 31, 33)

Nietzsche's concept of the Ubermensch represents his ideal for what humanity could become in a world where traditional moral structures - especially Christian ones - no longer hold authority. Rather than follow rules based on divine command, the Ubermensch creates his own values and embraces life fully, even the less desirable parts of life. He does not seek comfort in religious promises or conformity but instead finds meaning through self-mastery and the strength of his will. For Nietzsche, this figure is necessary – someone who can replace the role once held by God by showing us how to live with purpose in a disenchanted world.

Übermensch Today

A Übermensch is…

- Someone who creates their own values
- Affirms life, including suffering and mortality
- Acts from inner strength, not guilt or conformity
- Rejects herd mentality
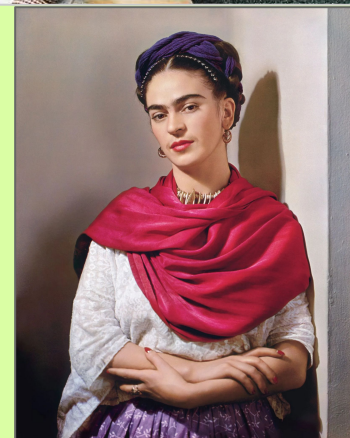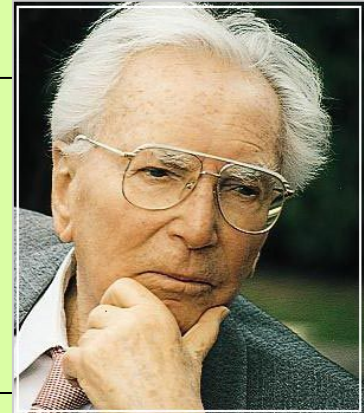- Lives as though their own life is **worth repeating**

James Baldwin – Refused to conform to racial or sexual expectations; used his writing to shape powerful, personal truths in a hostile society.

Marie Curie – Broke scientific and societal barriers through sheer determination and brilliance; lived a life of self-directed purpose and resilience.

Frida Kahlo– Transformed her pain into iconic, boundary-breaking art; embraced suffering and identity without compromise.

Viktor Frankl – Holocaust survivor who created his own philosophy of meaning (logotherapy) grounded in choice, dignity, and inner strength.

In today's world of influence and conformity, it's hard to tell who truly lives by self-created values. The concept of the Ubermensch is really just asking oneself if you can rise above other and live as our freest self
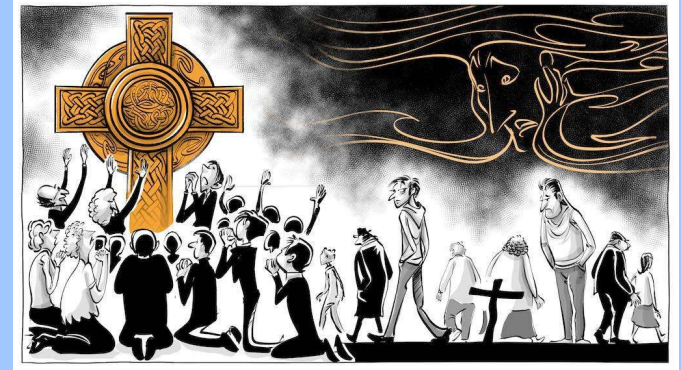
Modern Übermensch

- Who can be seen as one?
  - Politicians? CEOs? Influencers? Activists?
- Are they really embodying the Übermensch?
  - Do they "carve" their own paths?
    - Maybe through leadership
    - But are these really "deviant?"
  - How much "freedom" do they have?
    - Can set the grounds for their leading vision
    - Yet these "visions" have influences
  - Other concerns/contradictions?

"God is dead"

- What did nietzsche mean when he said this?
  - He doesn't actually mean that god is dead
- Why is he saying this then?
  - And what exactly does god mean in this context?
    - The idea of god? The things that god stands for?
      - What about it?
  - However this statement also applies to non-christians and more specifically atheists

Value of the Übermensch

"The value of egoism depends on the physiological value of him who possesses it: it can be very valuable, it can be worthless and contemptible" – (Nietzsche, 1895, 1889, 1968: 97).

Interests vs. Desires:

- As Nietzsche describes it, the Übermensch is someone who strives for their own values with confidence, and disregards common morality.
- This can describe dangerous criminals just as much as it does leaders and pioneers.
- How do we distinguish between those who are "valuable", and those who are "worthless and contemptible"?
- The proposed solution is to promote pursuing your own interests, but not necessarily your desires.
- Acting in "self-interest" is to choose actions which promote betterment and well-being, as opposed to indulging in desires and wants.
- Therefore, Übermensch should strive to act in self-interest rather than self-indulgence.

Questions?