



Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche, Adrian Del Caro, trans. *The Joyful Science / Idylls from Messina / Unpublished Fragments from the Period of The Joyful Science (Spring 1881–Summer 1882): Volume 6 (The Complete Works of Friedrich Nietzsche)*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2023. x + 772 pp. \$28.00, paper, ISBN 978-1-5036-3232-5.



Reviewed by Justin Remhof (Old Dominion University)

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Commissioned by Penelope K. Hardy (University of Wisconsin-La Crosse)

Stanford University Press has undertaken the project of providing the first English translation of all of Nietzsche's writings, including his unpublished fragments, with annotation, afterwords concerning the individual texts, and indexes, in nineteen volumes. The book under review here is volume 6. It covers *The Joyful Science*, *Idylls from Messina*, and unpublished fragments written from spring 1881 to summer 1882. Giorio Colli provides a short afterword, Adrian del Caro offers a significant afterword, and del Caro supplies extensive, significantly substantive translator notes. As I see things, this volume is essential for understanding Nietzsche's thought.

The Joyful Science, published in 1882, is one of Nietzsche's most incredible works. The text is primarily concerned with positive themes such as a new kind of wisdom, life affirmation, self-transformation, and naturalizing the world and humanity after the loss of belief in God. It is also the work where Nietzsche introduces the eternal recurrence, and, in the notes from the period, where

Nietzsche begins to think deeply about themes that would penetrate *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*.

Del Caro does a superb job with the entire volume. His translation of *The Joyful Science* reads beautifully, for example, and he provides knowledgeable notes that lay out translation choices, help explain Nietzsche's many subtle references, and connect philosophical themes and positions from the material to Nietzsche's other works. In the afterword, del Caro provides commentary on how Nietzsche came to publish *The Joyful Science*, discusses prominent themes of the work in detail, and provides commentary on the newly translated notebook passages from 1881 to 1882.

Concerning themes of the work, del Caro first discusses some of Nietzsche's poems. He even argues for the importance of the poems for understanding Nietzsche's thought, which is unorthodox and interesting. He provides a similar analysis for Nietzsche's songs published at the end of *The Joyful Science*. Overall, del Caro holds that the first four books of *The Joyful Science* hang together

quite well, but that book 5, which Nietzsche added in 1886, does not quite fit right with the first four books. Commentators interested in how to organize the meaning of particular texts in relation to Nietzsche's thought should take notice.

Del Caro then goes through each book of *The Joyful Science*, commenting on how Nietzsche's philosophical commitments emerge by focusing on a few key aphorisms. Topics discussed include Nietzsche on evil, love, fate, consciousness, Epicurus, science, art, nobility, women, God, knowledge, morality, and the artistic construction of reality. His discussion of the notebook fragments addresses topics such as phenomenology, genealogy, natural selection, and reclaiming the earth for humanity. Del Caro also does a nice job of showing how the eternal recurrence starts to develop in Nietzsche's notes from the period. Overall, the afterword does well balancing solid exposition with original interpretation.

This new translation of Nietzsche's work is fantastic. It is essential for anyone interested in Nietzsche's thought, from beginners to experts.

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