

# Analyzing the summary to friedrich nietzsche's book twilight of the idols

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## **Review of Text Summary: Twilight of the Idols, Pages 486-501 by Molly Frank**

The author of the summary covered the entirety of the assigned text. There were no major sections of the text that were omitted. However, there were some explanations and examples offered by Nietzsche that would have granted greater clarity to the summary had they been included.

For example, while discussing the first of the “ Four Great Errors”, Nietzsche gives multiple examples of what he sees as humans confusing cause and effect. The author of the summary includes the first example where Nietzsche asserts that it isn’t that virtuous men that act happily but that it is happy men that act virtuously. For the purposes of what Nietzsche is trying to prove, namely that Christian morality is not only false but also detrimental to humanity, it would be beneficial to add the example following the virtue-happiness example. This second example contrasts what Nietzsche says against what the church says. Christian morality claims that “ generations are destroyed by license and luxury” (493) while Nietzsche reversing that saying “ when a people approach destruction...then license and luxury follow from this” (493). Adding this example would better illustrate Nietzsche’s argument that Christian morality, and not the passions, is truly detrimental to humanity.

The author did convey the main conclusion of the text and the reasons offered to support it. There were, however, parts of the summary that could be considered slightly disorganized. Specifically, the second paragraph of the summary restates the first paragraph and is somewhat redundant. However,

after comparing the organization of the summary to the organization of the original text, I fault Nietzsche's writing style for this redundancy. When writing a summary, one wishes to maintain, more or less, the same flow of ideas as the original text while removing rhetorical flourishes and superfluous details. Some philosophers restate the same point in multiple different ways. The unintended consequence when summarizing such philosophers is that the summary risks itself becoming repetitive. To be clear, repetitiveness was only an issue at the very beginning of the summary, otherwise the summary effectively removes superfluous details and non-essential commentary.

In the paragraph following the third error the summary author states that "Nietzsche offers a psychological explanation" without telling the reader what the psychological explanation is of specifically. For someone that hasn't read the original piece, it is confusing whether the psychological explanation applies only to the third error or to all the errors discussed by Nietzsche up to that point.

I did not find any portion of the text which were glaringly misrepresented. For the most part, the summary author gave a fair and concise summary of what Nietzsche was concluding and his reasoning for such conclusions.

Overall, this summary was very well done. The suggestions and criticisms I have put forth are relatively minor issues. After reviewing the summary, I believe that a reader with no prior knowledge of the text would get a fair, complete, and concise understanding of this passage from Nietzsche.