



Philosophy in a Meaningless Life

A System of Nihilism, Consciousness and Reality

James Tartaglia

"A superb and original work. Tartaglia addresses head-on the question of the meaning of life — which he calls 'the keystone of philosophy' — and gives an uncompromising nihilist answer to it. But rather than turning to gloom and despair, he shows how nihilism is, in a certain sense, neither good nor bad; and that it can be used to address some central traditional questions of philosophy: about consciousness, time and universals. Elegantly written and very readable, this is a unique work of philosophy that deserves a wide readership." *Tim Crane, Knightbridge Professor of Philosophy, University of Cambridge, UK*

"Tartaglia's fascinating book on nihilism argues that if life as a whole lacks meaning, then so does fretting about it. Like a philosophical Franz Klammer, Tartaglia slaloms adroitly round delusions that flag our downhill path from absence to annihilation. On the way he has engaging things to say, among much else, about absurdity, the nature of mind, the tedium of childhood, and the notion that human life might have been created by aliens as reality TV entertainment." *Glen Newey, Professor of Practical Philosophy, University of Leiden, The Netherlands*

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Philosophy in a Meaningless Life provides an account of the nature of philosophy which is rooted in the question of the meaning of life. It makes a powerful and vivid case for believing that this question is neither obscure nor obsolete, but reflects a quintessentially human concern to which other traditional philosophical problems can be readily related; allowing them to be reconnected with natural interest, and providing a diagnosis of the typical lines of opposition across philosophy's debates.

James Tartaglia looks at the various ways philosophers have tried to avoid the conclusion that life is meaningless, and in the process have distanced philosophy from the concept of transcendence. Rejecting all of this, Tartaglia embraces nihilism ('*we are here with nothing to do*'), and uses transcendence both to provide a new solution to the problem of consciousness, and to explain away perplexities about time and universals. He concludes that with more self-awareness, philosophy can attain higher status within a culture increasingly in need of it.

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