

An openhearted philosophy

Know Yourself

TINNEKE BEECKMAN

The starting point for each of the pieces in this book is a philosophical question. They are not chosen at random but arise out of a desire for self-knowledge. With each question the author found that, after brief reflection, her first spontaneous answer proved inadequate. What she initially thought she knew turned out to be no longer valid.

At those moments of doubt she sought advice in an extract from a text by a thinker or writer. Each excerpt contained an insight, an idea, something that helped her to answer the question. Often it came from a book or article she had read years before. The text had left her in peace all that time – until it started to speak to her again.

The favourite authors of Beeckman's youth therefore occupy an important place in the book: Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Hegel. The same goes for several novelists, such as Proust and Woolf, whose novels affected her more profoundly than she realized at the time. This book is therefore an ode to thinkers and writers, and it shows how Beeckman's ideas about subjects great and small, doubts great and small, have changed.

Although each chapter can be read independently of the rest, the book is conceived in such a way that, without being a self-help book, it offers plenty of inspiration for getting to know yourself better.



AUTHOR



Belgian philosopher, lecturer and columnist **Tinneke Beeckman** (b. 1976) studied moral sciences and philosophy at the Vrije Universiteit in Brussels and the Université Libre de Bruxelles. In 2003 she gained her doctorate with a thesis about Sigmund Freud and Friedrich Nietzsche. She has published works on figures including Freud, Nietzsche, Machiavelli, and Heidegger, and above all on Spinoza, with the acclaimed 'Door Spinoza's lens' (Through Spinoza's Lens, 2012), 'Macht en onmacht. Een verkenning van de hedendaagse aanslag op de Verlichting' (Power and Powerlessness. An exploration of the contemporary attack on the Enlightenment, 2015) and Machiavelli's Lef (Machiavelli's Daring. Philosophy for Free People, 2020). She is a columnist and political commentator for De Standaard, De Tijd, De Morgen and NRC Handelsblad, and the writer of a series on philosophical questions for Knack Magazine.

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