

Whither is God?

Nietzsche's Madman and Ideology



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Abstract

In his parable of *the Madman*, Nietzsche proclaimed the Death of God and, as such, symbolized the rejection of Christianity as the prevailing moral foundation of society during this period. This paper is an attempt to trace a genealogy of Nietzsche's thought on the topic of morality and nihilism in the face of God's symbolic death. I input the insights of Carl Jung, Louis Althusser, and Slavoj Žižek with respect to ideology and its effect on the subject.

Moreover, I analyze the ways in which the object of ideology and its possession of the subject has changed the subject. This paper is a meditation on the question of ideology and its relation to individual agency. Ultimately, I wish to entertain the question of whether Nietzsche was right to question humanity's ability to cultivate their own will to truth.

*You can take away a man's god,
but only to give him others in return*

— Carl Jung, *The Undiscovered Self*, 1958

I. Introduction

In his work of philosophy Friedrich Nietzsche makes numerous attempts at diagnosing human proclivities through tracing and dissecting Truth-value systems with their relation to action, survival and fitness. While Nietzsche held derisive attitudes towards foundational truths as such, his works are also intrinsically epistemological and literary in their ability to utilize metaphor as a tool for the derivation of certain axioms which scaffold the Truth-value systems wherein lies the seemingly ineradicable ideological and religious structures which the Western world has held dear for over two millennia. The focal point, however, to Nietzsche's work, and more specifically his parable of *The Madman* in section 125 of *The Gay Science*, is religion and God as structural, moral and psychological embodiments which simultaneously delineate moral axioms and regulate psychosocial locomotion and hierarchy.

In this paper, I analyze Friedrich Nietzsche parable of *The Madman* and assess Nietzsche's attitudes toward the relationship of religion and social morality before and after the declaration of God's death. In doing so, I make the claim that in the wake of God's death and the concomitant erosion of foundational religious principles for new secularized ideological principles, the individual has undergone depotentiation by the process of ideological deification. I integrate Jungian insights on the topic of ideology and the repression of the *shadow* to demonstrate how *Nietzsche* was correct in his assumptions of society's passive nihilism. This paper also offers a variegated interpretation of ideological deification by utilizing structural and psychoanalytic accounts of ideology and the subject's relation to it. I then tie these components together with a generous discussion of contemporary social and political ideologies and the individual's capacity, or incapacity, to extricate himself from ideology.

II. The Madman's Declaration

Nietzsche's attitude toward God (the deity himself) is complex, to say the least. I say "the deity himself" to distinguish between his attitudes towards the metaphysical possibilities of a deity as opposed to his attitudes towards the herd morality and religious psychology that underpin 'God' as an idea. What we do know, however, is that Nietzsche abhorred Christianity and dedicated much of his writings to burlesquing it, which reaches a climax when in the parable, an eccentric man, standing before an audience holding a lantern aloft, asks 'Whither is God?'"¹ This is implored rhetorically as the conclusion is already reached by the madman that "*we have killed him*—you and I."² The man is regarded as mad precisely because of his irrational preoccupation with God's death, a matter of indifference to those in the marketplace to whom the declaration is made and whose return to this declaration is laughter and derision.

Nietzsche uses imagery and metaphor to illustrate the self-inflicted condition of the society he is analogizing where the traditional religious God-concept has been subverted and negated. "Who gives us the sponge to wipe away the entire horizon?"³ the madman asks. "What were we doing when we unchained this earth from its sun?"⁴ he implores. In likening the death of God to the erasure of a horizon or the suspension of the Sun from Earth, Nietzsche means to alert the reader to the sheer gravity of the lost moral and psychological value systems which for so long were attributed to the structures of religious, specifically Christian, ideology in the 19th and 20th centuries.

However, the sharpness of this parable as critique is the dubious prospect of which direction humanity would now stray in the wake of God's death, if in any direction at all.

¹ Nietzsche, Friedrich. *The Nietzsche Reader*. Edited by Keith Ansell-Pearson and Duncan Large. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell (2006), 224.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

This is found when the madman asks, “Whither is it [The Earth] moving now? Whither are we moving? Away from all suns? Are we not plunging continually?”⁵ The ‘death of God’ was a metaphoric declaration that marked the annihilation of God as Western civilization’s overarching Truth-value *prima facie* and thus the moral structural-functions of religion along with it; worse still because it was of our own doing. Humanity killed God, according to Nietzsche. It is unclear, in the parable and elsewhere, what Nietzsche believed would replace God-as-Truth. Amid his lamentations over this sepulchral knowledge, the madman inquires to his audience about what newly cultivated value systems would usurp the religious morale. The madman goes on to ask:

“How shall we comfort ourselves, the murderers of all murderers? What was holiest and mightiest of all that the world has yet owned has bled to death under our knives: who will wipe this blood off us? What water is there for us to clean ourselves? What festivals of atonement, what sacred games shall we have to invent?”⁶

It is difficult to assess the methods by which humans were responsible for annihilating God in this sense as Nietzsche failed to articulate this in his polemics. Apart from excoriating humanity (including himself) for this murder, Nietzsche insists that the greater task still awaits society. It is clear that by employing terms as ‘festivals of atonement’ or ‘sacred games’ he means to ask what new forms of moral—or, as my contention will be, ideological—values and their accompanying traditions will arise to replace God. He then suggests that perhaps this task of replacement would prove too great a task. In fact, when he asks, “Must we ourselves not become gods simply to appear worthy of it?”⁷, the madman superimposes an ambiguous question on the part of humanity. He is cleverly suggesting, that in some form or another, humanity will be required to replace the God they killed by becoming an instantiation of him to prove

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

themselves worthy of the deed. This ambiguity begs some questions. Was Nietzsche inviting humanity to create for themselves.

This death of God was essentially the subversion of traditional ideological monopoly in the form of staunch theological moral hierarchy with what can be accurately called intellectual secularization.⁸ God did not die in the literal sense, our idea of one, nonetheless had perished. A general historical perspective is necessary to ascertain the significance of religion within political and social structures during the period when this declaration was made.

III. Ideology in the Secular

Beyond Good and Evil (henceforth *BGE*), perhaps Nietzsche's most well-articulated rejection of Western morality does well to establish correlates between the moral genealogy, history and the corresponding social behavior of the time. This line of inquiry was appropriate for addressing the nexus between geocentrism, anthropocentrism and the sociopolitical implications it had prior to the subversive scientific revelation of a heliocentric universe posited by Copernicus and Galileo. Earth was placed firmly at the center of the universe and so too were its inhabitants. Social hierarchies and the order in which society must follow was a determinism *fait accompli* of ostensible astronomical orderings. This anthropocentric dogma, once widely promulgated by the Catholic Church, crystallized the existential and social traditions preceding the enlightenment of the 18th-century.⁹ According to the Church, humanity having been placed ostensibly at the center of the universe proved our dominion. Thus, divine anthropocentrism engendered meaning and purpose whilst justifying disproportionate social power. Although it was four years earlier that the declaration of the 'death of God' was made, it

⁸ Matthew Mutter; *Culture and the Death of God*. *Common Knowledge* 1 September 2015; 21 (3): 512–513. Pg. 512

⁹ Maria Pia Paganelli; We Are Not the Center of the Universe: The Role of Astronomy in the Moral Defense of Commerce in Adam Smith. *History of Political Economy* 1 September 2017; 49 (3): 451–468. Pg. 457

didn't seem that Nietzsche possessed robust solutions to the problem of religion and its relational behaviors until *BGE*. Nietzsche contends that faith and knowledge or, more specifically, instinct and reason acted in two discreet and still influential ways. One way in which these were manifested is as the inextricable elements, which far before the ascendance of Christianity, served as the *a priori* mechanism for moral valuation and, then, as a direct consequence, the framework for moral constraint.¹⁰ Early on, Nietzsche finds discomfort in the modes of valuation which, according to him, remained an anthropological constant and found firm ground during the height of Greek rational thought; namely the Socratic equation: *reason = virtue = happiness*. That Greek rationalism and Christianity are themselves armed with differing axiomatic valuations is irrelevant for what Nietzsche took aim at were the very structures of moral valuation with which Greek rationality and, later on, Christianity would find their justification.

In the parable, a satisfactory answer is not given precisely as to how humanity had killed God. The origin of ideological belief is assessed in *BGE* as well when Nietzsche prompts any 'followers of history' to trace the evolution of scientific philosophy to that of the most pervasive processes of knowledge and understanding.¹¹ Nietzsche illustrates general ideological cultivation as a progression of hypotheses, fictions, valuations, and necessarily a will to believe. Emphasis ought to be placed on the aspect of ideological cultivation which surrounds the will to believe. Both Slavoj Žižek and Louis Althusser, in their respective accounts of ideology asserted the necessity of believe in ideological interpellation, that is, the molding of the subject by means of symbolic reification of fantasy and 'the real' in Žižek's account or systems of material-structural class domination in Althusser's. Althusser's structural account begins from a conception of an ideological edifice laden within society's social and political structures and institutions,

¹⁰ Nietzsche, Friedrich *Beyond Good and Evil*. London: Penguin Books (1886), 113-114.

¹¹ Ibid. Pg. 115

what he aptly called Ideological State Apparatuses or ISAs. These apparatuses ranged from parochial, to political and associative to scholastic; through all of which, in their own independent way, dominant class ideology and the relations of production were crystallized and reproduced. Žižek's reading of ideology borrows largely from Lacan and Hegel and discusses ideology and subjectivity through the lens symbolic reality. It is important to note that Nietzsche would have likely opposed their accounts as both thinkers viewed ideology as irrevocable and mutually dependent on the subject. Nietzsche's tracing of ideological articulation, in large part having to do with true belief, is perhaps best summarized by Žižek's dissection of obedience when he says, "certainly we must search for rational reasons which can substantiate our belief, our obedience to the religious command, but the crucial religious experience is that these reasons reveal themselves to those who already believe"¹² and Althusser in equal measure when he asserts that the structure of ideology ensures "the absolute guarantee that everything is really so" that "if the subjection of the subjects to the Subject is well respected, everything will go well for the subjects: they will 'receive their reward'."¹³ The capitalized Subject is the symbolic representation of the material account of ideology which Althusser denotes as the site of ideologization, what Žižek, in his psychoanalytic account refers to as the 'Big Other'.

Religious traditions were, by nature, belonging to this genus of thought progression. After which, the social principles of empiricism and enlightenment thinking were afforded such privilege to the greatest extent. Empiricism, that is the contemporary understanding of the scientific method along with its concomitant methods for observation and systematization of knowledge in addition to enlightenment values which valorized secular humanistic values such as liberty, freedom, and free critical thought

¹² Žižek, Slavoj. *The Sublime Object of Ideology*. London: Verso (1989), 35.

¹³ Althusser, Louis. *On the Reproduction of Capitalism*. London: Verso (1970), 197.

proved very quickly that political organization by divine right was illegitimate, and that widespread, consistent moral contemplation without reference to God was not merely possible but a more plausible endeavor than religious dependency and theological authority. Nietzsche did not explicitly anticipate this subversion in the parable; Nietzsche asked instead, “are we not straying as through an infinite nothing?”¹⁴ This nothingness is a clear reference to Nietzsche’s anxiety that after God’s death, or the death of Truth in the Christian moral tradition, Western society would inevitably stoop into an abyss of nihilism whereby no exact Truth-value system could be given privilege; instead, all values would become devalued by virtue of relativist competition. What is important to note is that as contemptible as Nietzsche found Christian morality, he understood the corporeal benefits of an organized value system based on moral competency. Moreover, in *Twilight of the Idols*, Nietzsche forebodes the dangers of such exorbitant devaluation, “When one gives up the Christian faith, one pulls the right to Christian morality out from under one's feet...”¹⁵

IV. A Paradigm of Nihilism

The implications of God’s death could be confronted in one of two ways. The absence of a dominant Truth-value system could be tackled head-on as one would do if one were a ‘free spirit’. A ‘free spirit’, for Nietzsche, is an individual who feels awake at the dawn of God’s death. This type of individual is one who actively imposes their own will to Truth and therefore takes up the gauntlet of their own judgement and power. One who rejects the standard moral valuations and instead cultivates for themselves subjective morals and reason. The ‘free spirit’ is often a recluse, one who frequently seeks a citadel far removed from the crowd. He seeks reprieve from the socially conferred Truth-values of the herd and recklessly subjects himself to the wild caprices of truth and morality, deforms it, and

¹⁴ Ibid, Nietzsche 2006, 224.

¹⁵ Nietzsche, Friedrich. *Twilight of the Idols*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP (2000), 58.

then conquers it.¹⁶ The best indication of the construction of the *ubermensch* was in Nietzsche's towering work, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. Nietzsche reiterates on multiple occasions that the quality of individuality which constitutes the *ubermensch* was to any member of 'the herd', an act of punishment. To be a free thinker, exiled to uninhibited intellectual innovation and heresy was highly unfavorable.¹⁷ Far, fast, forgotten, and thrust loudly into a night without consequence that ends in the realization of more than you were ready for.

Those in the herd prefer much more to react to meaninglessness in the wake of God's death with a fashionable passivity. The cause Nietzsche described is known as passive nihilism. In other words, a nihilism characterized by the receding of the spirit; an implicit rejection of foundational societal moral or political principles without the subsequent productive or creative capacity to establish principles that were novel and substantive. I argue that this passivity complements the destructive psychological potential that Swiss psychoanalyst Carl Jung, described as *the shadow*. Jung contended that modern man was in danger of disregarding his own psychological potential for evil, as it were, his *shadow* and instead reflected it unto his neighbor. Jung saw the sociopolitical implications of this deference as potentially fostering animosities between alternate ideological postures when he says, "It has even become a political and social duty to apostrophize the capitalism of the one and the communism of the other as the devil, so as to fascinate the outward eye and prevent it from looking at the individual life within".¹⁸

It is worth elaborating on just how the Nietzschean concept of Passive nihilism and the Jungian concept of the *shadow* are complementary. Nietzsche probed deeply into the individual depotentiation and ideological proliferation under which lay the passive

¹⁶ Ibid, Nietzsche 1886, 71.

¹⁷ Ibid, Nietzsche 2006, 222

¹⁸ Jung, Carl Gustav. *The Undiscovered Self*. New York: Signet Psychology (1958), 64.

nihilism that God's death had ushered in. Similarly, Jung believed that the individual's unconscious, irrational repression of the part of the ego, with all its potential for acrimony and malevolence, was still further darkened by a misguided commitment to the seemingly salvific qualities of the political ideologies of the day. I believe they worked in conjunction with one another to predicate the deification of ideologies and then the ideological antagonisms that precipitated the ideological wars fought during the 20th century. To my mind, the very depotentialization of the individual in her process of ideological possession was the unbridled response of society after the erosion of their traditional foci of moral valuation, that is, the Christian religion. Where Nietzsche's musings prove to be especially prescient is in the moments where the madman anticipates the 'infinite straying' and 'sacred games' that man's passive nihilism would've rise to. Suffice to say, these questions posed by the madman were the preliminary investigations into the symbolic and political realities that would possess humankind with the creation and adoption of these many social and political ideologies.

V. An Infinite Nothing

In the immediate wake of God's death, Western civilization indeed reacted in the latter form, with passive nihilism. The implications of God's inestimable death on contemporary society were the burgeoning of ideologies in the Western world during the 20th-century, whose misguided solution to killing God was merely to supplant him with secular conceptions *of him*. Nietzsche correctly predicted, that "given the way of men, there may still be caves for thousands of years in which his shadow will be shown."¹⁹ The most influential ideologies to rise following Nietzsche's prophetic declarations and untimely death in 1900, were Bolshevism, social egalitarianism, fascism, and neoliberal capitalism. These are all social and political ideologies whose spectres preceded and whose sordid manifestations followed Nietzsche's works. Yet, the permeating influences

¹⁹ Ibid Nietzsche 2006, 219.

they have had on society today occurred during the 20th-century. Many agree that these social and political ideologies constituted a new vanguard of values and beliefs. As Jonathan Reé reminds us, atheism is the new rule; one doubtlessly imbued with the militant certainty of empiricism, literacy, and materialist factuality.²⁰ But has God, as an embodied determination vanished? I say he has not. For instance, when describing the fundamental nature of the Bolshevik movement beginning in 1917, Bertrand Russell exclaims that it is not merely a political doctrine but also teems with similar flavors as that of a religion which possesses a set of elaborate dogmatisms and moral rigidities.²¹ One finds it increasingly difficult to unmoor the genealogical identities of the ideological and theological *modus operandi* as being at once instinctively religious and psychologically obligatory. Indeed, for Žižek, the fundamental level of ideology was this very fantasy which valorizes our social reality. When he replaces the notion of the “illusion masking the real state of things” with the “(unconscious) fantasy structuring our social reality itself”²² he is referring the ideological form of fantasy whereby individuals will “continue to walk as straight as we can in one direction” and where “we follow even the most dubious opinions once our mind has made up....”²³ Essentially, Žižek delineate the psychological process by which our beliefs/fantasies are bound to an unconscious practice of ideological deification, indeed where that deification is born in the fantasy itself.

Furthermore, in his book *The Road to Unfreedom*, historian Timothy Snyder employs the words of Vladimir Putin citing Russian political philosopher Ivan Ilyin, “A certain ideology dominated in the Soviet Union, and regardless of our feelings about it, it was based on some clear, in fact quasi-religious, values. The Moral Code of the builder of

²⁰ Reé, Jonathan *Varieties of unbelief*, Index on Censorship, 31:1, 2002, 192-198. Pg. 193

²¹ Russell, Bertrand. *Bolshevism: Practice and Theory*. New York: Arno (1972), 9.

²² Ibid Žižek, 30.

²³ Ibid, 92.

Communism, if you read it, is just a pathetic copy of the Bible.”²⁴ In his analysis of the erosion of individual life, Jung believed, as Snyder’s does, that the leaders of the mass state would inevitably become deified. He believed that the mass man would cling to the power of the state, all but “delivering himself up to it psychically as well as morally”²⁵ and asserting the reality that the “State, like the Church, demands enthusiasm, self-sacrifice and love.”²⁶ When Lenin or Putin wished to make an injunction, they did so by close reference to their ideological progenitors. They deified themselves by evincing the ideologically deified. Bertrand Russell asserts that a true Communist is he who undertakes a set of ideological beliefs, which true or untrue, guide their utterances and actions.

Much of the social and political textures of the 20th-century were due entirely to ideological conflicts that are suggestive in the parable. If fascism, Nazism, and communism dominated large parts of Europe and Russia during this period, capitalism and egalitarianism as diametrically opposed embodiments of liberalism mobilized huge segments of the Western world then and does even more so now. It must not be forgotten that Truth-value systems act as the antecedent to psychosocial locomotion. The adoption of value systems is nearly always implicit and occurring at all times. With regard to the dominant social and political structures, as it were, Althusser’s ideological apparatuses that were relatively independent and differentiated and within which ideology becomes reified, it is under these circumstances where individuals are already-always interpellated as subjects continuously practicing the “rituals of ideological recognition.”²⁷ Žižek takes the concept of interpellation a step further. He argues that the fundamental essence of

²⁴ Snyder, Timothy. *The Road to Unfreedom: Russia, Europe, America*. New York: Crown Publishing Group (2018), 59.

²⁵ Ibid Jung, 26.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid Althusser, 189.

ideology is the subject's oblivious relation to ideology as constituting the very essence of the social reality or rather “‘ideological’ is a social reality whose very existence implies the non-knowledge of its participant to its essence.”²⁸ As Arendt once declared, authority's “hallmark is unquestioning recognition by those who are asked to obey; neither coercion nor persuasion is needed.”²⁹ The respective structural and psychoanalytic accounts, though opposed,³⁰ account for individual depotentialization with respect to interpellation, and even suggest its necessity.

That which we value motivate our thoughts; it takes place between the corridor of illusion and rational action wherein is a space that the tacit herd happily lay. We have grown so adulating of these ideologies. We desire the moral primacy and direction that they provide as we would a religious deity. Our inculcation in ideologies and the value systems they entail do not require us to accept their axioms as true, only that we accept them as necessary, at which point, as Žižek points out, they will reveal themselves to us as truth. Nietzsche condemned what this ideological embrace meant for humanity. He was acutely aware of the reluctance of the individual to derive, by his own intellectual capacities, genuine determinations of Truth and value after God's death.³¹ Certainly, this awareness generated the skepticism seen in the parable when the madman question's the marketplace about the future of their moral landscape.

According to Jung, the idea of the Christian epoch was held to blame for modernism's areligious organization. The architecture of Christianity had schematized

²⁸ Ibid Žižek, 15-16

²⁹ Arendt, Hannah. *On Violence*. Boston: Mariner Books (1970), 45.

³⁰ It should be noted how significant the distinction between the structural accounts of ideology on one hand, and psychoanalytic Lacanian theory of ideology, espoused by Žižek are to one another. To discuss the manifold intricacies of these competing accounts is, however, beyond the scope of the paper. Despite this, the two theoretical frameworks often come to similar conclusions about the interpellation of the subject.

³¹ Jenkins, Scott D. "Nietzsche's Questions Concerning the Will to Truth." *Journal of the History of Philosophy*, vol. 50, no. 2, 2012, pp. 265-289. Pg. 269.

our sociopolitical ideologies which themselves became defied. The Christian Logos had shifted to a secular one. Jung writes:

Words like “society” and “State” are so concretized that they are almost personified. In the opinion of the man in the street, the “State,” far more than any king in history, is the inexhaustible giver of all good; the “State” is invoked, made responsible, grumbled at....Society is elevated to the rank of a supreme ethical principle; indeed, it is credited with positively creative capacities.³²

What Jung is describing here by using specific words such as “society” and “state” as it relates to the concretization of these structural concepts as ideological markers are Lacanian signifiers. This can be thought of as a visual or discursive sign which marks the relation of this sign’s representations to a subject. According to Žižek, it is signifiers such as those used by Jung in his descriptions of personified language, which ties the subject to the signifier and initiates the process of subjectivation. The “crucial step”, says Žižek, “in the analysis of an ideological edifice is thus to detect, behind the dazzling splendour of the element which holds it together (‘God’, ‘Country’ ‘Party’, ‘Class’...), this self-referential, tautological, performative operation.³³ The madman is astute in his proximation. In addition to observing the murder of God as a concept, he also anticipated that due to the ways of men, the ideological edifice and its moral foundations and self-referential operations would merely be replaced with new ones.

It is the case that neoliberal capitalism and liberalism via consumerism and egalitarianism as modes of social production create and recreate themselves, aggrandizing themselves each time by their mere existence. By this I am referring to the reification of an index of liberal theories of political, social and economic rights as well as the ethos of equality emblematic of contemporary liberal democracy. Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari referred to this as desire-production.³⁴ This, to me, exists most

³² Ibid Jung, 75.

³³ Ibid Žižek, 109.

³⁴ While I have used Deleuze and Guattari appropriately in this context, it should be known that there may be contention with this use as both thinkers were post-structuralists who were themselves skeptical about ideology as such.

perniciously in today's society where hyper-consumerism and the economization of all existing social spheres placed next to an ethos of equality and social-political rights have established a flow of desire, then bolstered its production by codifying it; an exponential and self-repeating process.³⁵ Capitalism and egalitarianism produce this desire but do so in two different ways. Egalitarian norms, for instance, can be imposed as a fundamental moral principle. It demands the position of an absolutist norm under which individual conduct and institutional arrangement ought to conform.³⁶

Desire-production is more useful in delineating the specter of contemporary capitalist bloat. Capitalism grows and is maintained simply by the proliferation of production and consumption in the tangible sense and desire-production in the psychosocial sense where the more we consume, is the more we want to consume. Growth essentially catalyzes and instils in our machine minds more growth without awareness or imminent fear of plateau. The consequences of both ideologies are manifested in the externalities of environmental damage, populism, tribalism, and ideopolitical divisiveness, in addition to the presence of the *précarité* (the precarious worker or individual) under neoliberal capitalism.³⁷ On the one hand, the egalitarian notion instantiates a plane of moral value as an irrevocable moral authority and neoliberal capitalism on the other, like the production of unconscious, perennial repletion of material value without which we could hardly imagine or want to imagine our lives.

VI. Conclusion

The latter parts of the parable feature the madman reflecting on his premature declaration. He insists that the message his is promulgating, of the imminence of god's death and the

³⁵ Deleuze, Gilles and Guatarri, Felix. *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. London: Penguin Books (1972), 140.

³⁶ Arneson, Richard, "Egalitarianism", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2013 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.),

³⁷ Foster, Hal. *Bad New Days*. London: Verso (2015), 100.

implications it would have for the moral landscape, have fell on deaf ears. “My time is not yet. This tremendous event is still on its way, still wandering; it has not yet reached the ears of men.”³⁸ In one sense Nietzsche admonishes humanity for failing to heed his warnings for it implies at once an ignorance of our role in God’s death, and a resistance to rectify it by establishing substantial moral ballasts in his place. Hence, “the deed [creation of individuated value systems] is still more distant from them than the most distant stars—and yet they have done it to themselves.”³⁹

As critics of individual depotentialization, it is likely that both Nietzsche and Jung would rail against structural explanations for interpellation as well as Lacanian psychoanalytic accounts *qua* Žižek. Indeed, both expositions of ideology are punctuated by a *necessity* of subjective interpellation. One that “always-already is”⁴⁰ and one that “in its basic dimension...is a fantasy-construction which serves as a support for our ‘reality’ itself: an ‘illusion’ which structures our effective, real social relation.”⁴¹ Both men are essentially arguing that the prospect that one may escape from the throes of ideological possession is a null one. I doubt Nietzsche was fearful of either Althusser’s or Žižek’s interpretations of ideologization but rather understood more broadly how susceptible mankind have always been and still are to making Gods of all but themselves. An understanding, that it is clear, Jung had himself and expressed as much.

To my mind, this demonstrates not only the pervasive incognizance toward our passive nihilism but our unwillingness to embrace a more substantial and individualized method of Truth valuation and moral ascendancy. On this point, you find the convergence of Nietzsche and Jung both of whom derided what was effectively the depotentialization of the individual under deified ideology that would inevitably subsume it and society en

³⁸ Ibid Nietzsche 2006, 224

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid Althusser, 192.

⁴¹ Ibid Žižek, 45.

masse. Alas, the madman has still come far too early. From the birth of rational virtue and theological absolutism to the mosaic of sociopolitical and socioeconomic ideologies that have shaken the Earth and command still our unremitting attention and subconscious participation, it seems that all we have learned from history is that we have not learned from history. I do not think the world was prepared for the death of God, nor do I believe they are in preparation even now. They are pitted too deeply into their false piety and pseudo-individualism and have done nothing to remedy the death of God but to recreate him innumerable times. Ultimately, it seems, the religious semblance is among the most naked of human cries. Yet, so long as humanity treats morality as a thing not to be possessed but as something that possesses us, we will continue to be ruled by our ideas; there will be no free spirits. As for me? My life is a real life, not some theological exercise, some enlightenment trip that has nothing to do with living.

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