

Protocol on On a Genealogy of Morals, Nietzsche

April 7, 1988
for Dr. John Carvalho

So it came to pass that the barbarians from the north swept down, upon thundering steeds, blades flashing, and subjugated the more civilized, and hence weaker cultures of the south, establishing themselves as the rulers of the land. These great, uncultured men were proud warriors, and thus said: "We are the noble, the proud, the strong. We act when we feel like acting. We are powerful."

And they were "good".

Yea, verily, they made themselves to be good, and exclaimed: "But you, weaklings, are not strong, nor proud, nor virile, nor pompous, nor do you possess great wealth and splendid palaces in Hollywood or Palm Beach, nor do you feast on oysters. Thou art trash, for you are different from us, who are good, and this is why you live in a little shack outside a coal mine in southern Kentucky, and there shalt thou stay, for thou stinketh pretty bad."

--Holy flying submarines, Batman! They weren't serious, were they?

--(nodding gravely) Yes, Robin. The active mind always postulates itself as "good".

--But how could they think that?

--Well, Robin, some people have twisted minds. They liked themselves, felt good about themselves, and so they figured that they must be good. So everybody else must be not-good, or bad. The poor, the hungry, the huddled masses were their prey. But they never bothered to get to know us. They distanced themselves, made us inconsequential. Some of us can be pretty nice, you know. But we'll show them. They not only took the law into their own hands, they made the law: these were lawless folk like the ones who killed my parents. I hate them. They think they are free from justice. But I will bring them to justice!

And there were these certain priests, of the land of Judea, who multiplied and were fruitful upon the land. And they said unto the huddled masses: "Hark, ye that believeth, for if you give to us the kingdom of the Earth, we shall secure for you the kingdom of heaven." And the people believed. And the priests said unto themselves: "Too long have we been shat upon. We will rise, and the huddled masses, upon whom you have also shat, shall rise also, and lift us into our glory. For it is you who are bad, who perpetrate evil in the world. And if you're evil, then we, we must be good, because we are not you."

And verily the slaves were revolting (I'll say!) against their masters, and good and evil were transvalued. For not only were the huddled masses seduced to this vision, but even the masters themselves. And verily, that is how the masters died: of Godemia, cancer of the morals.

--Golly, Batman! Then we've already won!

--Not quite, Robin. There is still madness within us.

For these priests said "We shall be as lambs before God, and as meek as lambs. But there are those who would prey upon these lambs, birds of prey. They are evil: you shall hate them with all your heart; they bring upon us great suffering: we shall bring them eternal suffering." And it was made good.

And they said: "We are the not proud, but rather meek, not strong, but rather weak, do not fight, but rather speak, are not Roman, but a bit more Greek, not brutal, but rather sleek, and we also turn a pretty good rhyme. This we call good, all that is not them."

And the priests said: "Blessed are they that...."

--Holy Cheap Radio Shack Tape Players, Batman! The cassette's been destroyed! Now we'll never know the ending!

--No, Robin, I believe it's only a matter of time. We'll get more and more control of people, weed out the problem cases, and have a crimeless society. Turn on the T.V. and I'll show you.

And in the news today, Mr. Will Robinson, upon his landing in JFK Spaceport, was arrested for tax evasion. Asked why he had neglected to file his income tax reports for 27 consecutive years, he simply replied "Gee, I was having so much fun with Dr. Smith and Robot, that I just plain forgot!"

He is now awaiting trial in an undisclosed state penitentiary. Lawyers predict that he will be found guilty of both forgetfulness and tax evasion, which entails a minimum penalty of at least 6 months in prison, and having to write "I will not forget my taxes." 500 times a day for two years after his release.

--You see, Robin, even now the forces of Justice and Civilization are working to provide us with a more dependable world. Imagine what would happen if everybody started having too much fun and began forgetting things! No, we must teach a strong memory, even though it's a lesson that hurts. There are many ways of doing things, but it is always more satisfying if it hurts.

--So that's why we go around dressed in long underwear beating the shit out of bad guys, so that they'll remember not to do bad things anymore?

--Exactly.

I flicked the button on the remote, and Batman and Robin vanished, thankfully, from the screen.

"Batman disgusts me," I said. "First he shows himself to be the paradigm of a reactive force, and then he shows a complete ignorance of what's really going on!"

"What are you babbling about now?" my girlfriend inquired.

"As a reactive force, he is always reacting to circumstances. A mugger killed his parents, and he never forgets. It drives him into the streets with a single-minded urge for revenge, a revenge that can never be fully sated, a need to strike back at those who have harmed him. And he never lets go. He can never learn to be anything new, never grow beyond what he has become, because this memory is always there, obscuring and blocking any new idea that might try to get in. He is hate incarnate! Just like God, who keeps a list of your sins. And Santa Claus too!"

"You're crazy."

"And if he'd done more than just a surface reading of Nietzsche, he'd..."

"I hate Nietzsche."

"...He'd have understood that what he says is a macroscopic metaphor for the Will to Power. He got the way it works down, but didn't understand at what level it works. Nietzsche wasn't talking about..."

"I hate what Nietzsche did to you. He really fucked you up."

"He didn't fu...! Never mind. Anyway, he wasn't talking about individual minds, he was talking about what goes on inside the mind, active and reactive forces, interacting, some commanding and some obeying. But he doesn't realize that the active forces need the reactive forces, so as to have something to act upon, and vice versa."

"I've heard this before, you know."

"Sorry, I forgot. Imagine the mind as Congress. There are all sorts of different forces at work, legal, illegal, overt and covert, all of which act, react, interact, forming new alliances, harnessed under a Speaker, but not always doing what he/she wants. But through torture, we can impose a memory that restricts our choices, makes us more reliable and calculable, and hence easier to control."

"Well, you're not easy to control."

"Thanks. So by forgetting our past, or most of it, we make way for our future, opening up the possibility of creative adjustments in our worldview."

"Well, that's just lovely dear. I'm going to bed."

"Good idea. I will too."

"No, you take the sofa."

"Oh."