

HOMOSEXUALITY IN FRIEDRICK NIETZSCHE'S MORAL RELATIVISM.

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1. Introduction

In the past, humans have invented for themselves languages, customs, forms of writing, etiquettes, diets, family structure, and medicine. In fact people living in different milieus have invented for themselves “forms of life.” It is not any different today as we traverse from one end of the globe to the other. We see people whose culture and moral positions differ not even from that of those geographically distant from them, but their close neighbours. In some cases it may even be a complete opposite of what is experienced in close tribal neighbours who share a common ancestral origin. And when their history is traced, what they consider moral today was deemed immoral or amoral in the past. It seems that the only constant thing in life is change, because society is still in constant flux. As each day passes, as one civilization topple another, new forms of life emerge and we are challenged or forced to acknowledge, and in most cases tolerate them in order to maintain peace and harmony, else we might fall back to the state of nature where life is solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short.

Considering our common humanity, can we successfully account for this wide and sometimes irreconcilable diversity in acts and thoughts? Is it not the case that in man there is a universal paradigm of acting which all humans at all times should strive to achieves? In the spirit of

brotherhood or ‘patriotism for the human race,’ are those who have attained knowledge of this paradigm not supposed to ensure that they bring others to gnosis, if a paradigm truly exists?

This essay is aimed at assessing the issue of moral relativism from the lenses of the nineteenth century philosopher Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche (1844-1900). Since Sigmund Freud asserted the self actualization of man as expression of his/her sexuality,¹ and the rise of relativism (an ideology that accompanied the Enlightenment), the world has had to deal with a number of problems pertaining to moral evaluation of diverse sexual orientations. We shall apply Nietzsche’s concept of morality on one of the most pressing issues in the twentieth century: Homosexuality. How has homosexuality fared since this sexuality type was recognized, and the position of the Catholic Church on it will be the concern of the latter part of this essay.

2. Nietzsche on Morality.

The major preoccupation of Nietzsche throughout his philosophical life was on re-evaluation of morality. He is usually ascribed the title of “herald of moral nihilism”, but Nietzsche could not be a critic of all “morality” for two reasons. First, he explicitly embraces the idea of a “higher morality” which would inform the lives of “higher men.” Second, he calls all men to a re-evaluation of existing values in a manner that appears, itself, to involve appeal to broadly “moral” standards of some sort.² In his work *Beyond Good and Evil*, he calls every reasonable man with the “free spirit”³ to re-evaluate the underlying principles of conventional moral norms. Nietzsche rather attacks Christians whom he describes as promoters of “herd animal morality.”⁴

¹ Cf. Paul Gilbert, “Sigmund Freud,” *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, 2nd edition. Ed. Donald M. Borchert, 1967. p. 300

² Brian Leiter, *Nietzsche on Morality*, (London: Routledge, 2002), p. 74

³ Cf. Nietzsche Friedrich, *Beyond Good and Evil*, Transl. by Helen Zimmern. (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1923), No. 24-27

⁴ Cf. Richard, Schacht, *Nietzsche* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1985), p. 417

This for him is the cause of moral decadence in Europe which ultimately leads the Christian moralist to nihilism. For Nietzsche,

*“Nihilism as a psychological state will have to be reached, first, when we have sought a “meaning” in all events that is not there: so the seeker eventually becomes discouraged. Nihilism, then, is the recognition of the long waste of strength, the agony of the “in vain,” insecurity, the lack of any opportunity to recover and to regain composure--being ashamed in front of one, as if one had deceived oneself all too long.”*⁵

From Aristotle has come to us the tradition of virtue ethics, that man must act according to an appropriate manner, a disposition which he must have acquired by habit. The other prominent tradition we have is that proposed by Kant popularly called Categorical Imperative. Here it is put forward that reason is the sole source of moral motivations, bearing the fundamental principles of morality from which rational agents legislate for themselves right and wrong, good and bad, and acting accordingly based on duty. Nietzsche catalogs a number of the dogmatisms inherent in philosophy, such as the separation of ideas into binary opposites like truth and falsehood; right and wrong; good and bad. In his philosophical reflections, his major interest is to give insights not into truth but into the minds of the different philosophers.⁶

For Nietzsche, attractive as all conventional moral principles proposed by philosophers and religious bodies are, there are hidden basis upon which they are propounded than a so-called universal objective foundation. A Philosopher is quite personal with what they consider as morality and *“in particular his [the philosopher] morals bear decided and decisive witness to who he is– which means, in what order of rank the innermost drives of his nature stand with respect to each other.”*⁷ Morality is thus the natural psychological and physiological demands

⁵ Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, No. 12

⁶ Cf. Brian Leiter and Sinhababu, Neil, *Nietzsche and Morality*. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2007), p. 83-84

⁷ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, No. 6

upon a species for self-preservation.⁸ It is in keeping to this demand, that the species is truly actualized.

Behind the preservation of life lies a stronger power or determinant of what morals will be for that species: The “Will to Power”. The will to power is the fundamental drive in the universe. Behind truth, thought, and morality lie drives, passions, instincts, desires, goals, ambition, feelings that we try to mask behind a veneer of calm objectivity. What we call truth, for instance, is just the expression of our will to power, whereas we consciously or unconsciously declare these our particular perspectives about reality to be objectively and universally true.⁹ Ultimately, all reality is best understood in terms of competing wills. Thus the will to power is the will to truth. ‘What is true’ is what the drive proclaim as true, and what the mind accepts as true.

Nietzsche maintains that as there are people in the world, so are there moralities; as there are situations, so are there moralities; as there are epochs, so are there moralities. Morality is a mere tool, a sign language of the affect.¹⁰ Morality is merely a communal agreement of a group of people with a common interest who are favoured by conforming to a set of moral rules, at a particular time, place and situation. What is

“essential “in heaven and on earth” is that there be obedience in one direction for a long time. In the long term, this always brings and has brought about something that makes life on earth worth living – for instance: virtue, art, music, dance, reason, intellect – something that transfigures, something refined, fantastic, and divine.”

Morality is, not a set of essential principles guiding man, but an instrument of co-existence between persons of similar or common interest in a particular place for a period of time. There is nothing static about moral precepts because the world is dynamic. The theory of a categorical

⁸ Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Antichrist*, No. 11

⁹ Cf. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, No. 13

¹⁰ Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, No. 397

imperative which resides in the reason is false, like every other moral theory. When however, we push our luck further by holding it as fundamental principles of society, we see that society begins to decay and disintegrate. This is because as the human is actualizing his will to power, he appropriates higher laws that fit his goal of a “higher type of man”, necessitating the appropriation of new morals (conducts) that will suit his new status. If we as a society now make the former laws foundational, we are shortchanging the man who is striving for the status of “Super man, Overman or *Übermensch*.”¹¹ This act of sticking to an unchanging set of moral rules is as a result of resentments, since we cannot attain the status of a “higher type man”. He says:

*“life itself is essentially a process of appropriating, injuring, overpowering the alien and the weaker, oppressing, being harsh, imposing your own form, incorporating, and at least, the very least, exploiting, ... It will have to be the embodiment of will to power, it will want to grow, spread, grab, win dominance, – not out of any morality or immorality, but because it is alive, and because life is precisely will to power.”*¹²

The conventional notion of morality is, from a biological standpoint, highly suspicious. Morality has developed hitherto at the expense of rulers and their specific instincts, the well-constituted and beautiful natures, those who are in any sense independent and privileged. Morality is therefore an opposition movement against the efforts of nature to achieve a higher type. It seems to uphold the weak to the decay of the strong. It is what Nietzsche calls “Slave Morality” in opposition to those who are better than them.¹³

The claim that there is a universal code for morality is a product of slave morality perpetuated by the Church. The Church prescribes a pessimistic outlook of the whole condition of humanity

¹¹ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, No. 3

¹² Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, No. 259

¹³ Cf. Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, No. 400

leading to a slavish attitude towards life.¹⁴ The slave's gaze resents the virtues of the powerful. Qualities that serve to ease existence for suffering people are pulled out and flooded with light-pity, the obliging, helpful hand, meekness, the warm heart, patience, industriousness, humility, and friendliness- receive full honors since these are the most useful qualities and practically the only way of holding up under the pressure of existence, under the competing supremacy of the gifted. Slave morality is essentially a morality of utility. Here we have the point of origin for that famous opposition between "good" and "evil." According to slave morality, "evil" inspires fear; but according to the master morality, it is "good" that inspires and wants to inspire fear.¹⁵

But this should not be the case. We must understand that what one man upholds as virtuous is for another a vice. Not that there is any moral value tied to it, but because their will to power differ. No absolute moral code can account for all the actions of man. In resentment of those who support this view, Nietzsche says:

*"...clumsy, conscience-stricken herd animals.....do wants to know..... that what is right for someone absolutely cannot be right for someone else; that the requirement that there be a single morality for everyone is harmful precisely to the higher men; in short, that there is an order of rank between people, and between moralities as well."*¹⁶

Moral conducts are subject to the interpretations which we give them, and these interpretations are formed by our will to power. There are no moral or immoral actions, only moral and immoral interpretation of actions exist.¹⁷

This enormous claim of Nietzsche is nothing more than relativism in all spheres of life: metaphysical, religious, epistemological and moral. Nietzsche's moral position can be highlighted as thus:

¹⁴ Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, No. 258

¹⁵ Cf. Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, No. 10

¹⁶ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, No. 228

¹⁷ Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, No.180.

1. There is something called morality.
2. Morality does not lie on principles outside the drives of man i.e it springs from the instincts of man, his “will to power.” There is no place for reason in morality.
3. Morality does not spring from one man, but from a group, race, tribe etc.
4. Moral principles change as man climbs the ladder of his achievements.
5. Morality is a tool for the actualization of the “higher type man” or “*Übermensch*”.
6. The universality approach to morality is wrong. It is proposed for weaklings and misfits with the sole aimed of stifling actualization of the “higher type man.”
7. The universality approach to morality is undertaken by the strong, rulers, and the privileged in order to dominate and conquer.
8. Moral values lie not in the action, nor the intention of the agent, but on its utility for self actualization. It is not directed towards conscience formation, but lies merely in the consciousness of the agent, such that whenever the consciousness of the agent becomes aware of a higher goal, the rules change, and the mind imbibes a new set of rules, without bothering the conscience.

3. Homosexuality, Ancient and Modern Conceptions

The word homosexuality is a nineteenth century coinage used to ascribe sexual orientation in humans, consistent with an attraction to the same sex. It seems to have been invented by the Hungarian Karoly Maria Kertbeny in 1869 and has become more widespread after it was taken up by the medical community. Until that point in time, society did not distinguish the people, but the acts.¹⁸ According to Herek,

¹⁸ Cf. Florence Tamagne, *The History of Homosexuality in Europe* (New York: Algora Publishing, 2006), p. 2.

*“it [Homosexuality] encompasses a variety of phenomena related to a same-sex sexual orientation. Although definition of the term often focuses mainly on sexual acts and attractions between persons of the same biological sex, homosexuality also refers to patterns of same sex romantic and emotional bonding, identities and communities based on same-sex desires and relationships, and the shared cultures created by those communities.”*¹⁹

In all history, no society has aroused the same enthusiasm as ancient Greece. There is ample evidence, however, that by the beginning of the Classical Era ca. 480BC Homer’s archaic heroes Achilles and Patroclus had become exemplars of male lovers. Greek lyric poets sing of male love from almost the earliest fragments down to the end of Classical Times.²⁰ Though it has often been assumed that the love of males was a fashion confined to a small intellectual elite during the age of Plato, in fact it was pervasive throughout all levels of Greek society and held a honored place in Greek culture for more than a thousand years, that is, from before ca. 600BC to about 400AD. In Greek perspective, male attachments are presented in an honorific light, though there were always some skeptics. But for many biographers, for a man not to have had a male lover seems to have bespoken a lack of character or a deficiency in sensibility. Homosexuality was adorned as a rare gift, and privilege of elite.

When in the Fourth Century BC, the Romans overthrew the Greeks as world power, they encountered Greek homosexuality. What seemed morally acceptable for the Greeks turned out to be apathy for the Romans. In Greece, to be the beloved protégé of a respected ruler was an honor, but in Rome, it was an embarrassment and an occasion for vulgar humor. Unlike Greek literatures, pottery, painting and sculptures that glorified homosexuality, the Romans acknowledged its presence but preferred to be silent about it. Homosexual relations were perceived primarily as a form of dominance, an extension of the will to power. We see this in

¹⁹ Gregory, M. Herek, *Homosexuality* Department of Psychology, (California: University of California), p. 1.

²⁰ Louis Crompton, *Homosexuality and Civilization*.(London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2003), p. 2.

early Roman comedy, where same-sex intrigues are not between men and freeborn youths but exclusively between masters and slaves.²¹ For the Romans, homosexual relations were not in themselves good or bad. As long as a man played the penetrative role, it was socially acceptable and considered natural for him to have same-sex relations without a perceived loss of his masculinity or social standing, but to submit to penetration was to be feminized and humiliated. Such an experience, if it became public knowledge, invited reproaches and ridicule from a man's enemies.

Jewish customs was vehemently against pervert sexual practices one of which is homosexuality. The Jews were warned (by the Law giver) that homosexuality, an act common among the Canaanites who ruled Palestine before the Israelite conquest, was a despoil form of expressing one's sexuality and that the Jews. Like their predecessors, if they indulged in it, they would be dispossessed of their inheritance. One of the books of the Torah reads: "*You (the man) will not have intercourse with a man as with a woman. This is a hateful thing... If you make it unclean, will it not vomit you out as it vomited out the nations there before you.*"²²

Jesus, the founder of the Christian religion seemed to be silent over this issue of homosexuality irrespective of its prevalence in the Greco-Roman world in which he lived and ministered. Speculation from some historians is that Jesus might have been attracted to men, a claim which rests on Saint John's reference (four times repeated) to the disciple "whom Jesus loved."²³ However, when we present the true picture of Jesus as a faithful disciple of the Jewish law, all these claims fall apart. Paul, the great Pharisee and Christian missionary helps present the

²¹ Lilja Saara, Homosexuality in Republican and Augustan Rome. Helsinki: *The Finnish Society of Sciences and Letters*, (1983), p. 31

²² Lev. 18: 22-28 (New Jerusalem Bible)

²³ Louis Crompton, *Homosexuality and Civilization* (London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2003) p. 111.

Christian perspective to perverse sexuality. He was pungent in describing the awkwardness of homosexual acts and the punishment that will befall perpetrators. He writes:

*“that is why God abandoned them to the degrading passion, why their women have exchanged natural intercourse for unnatural practices; and the men, in a similar fashion, too, giving up natural relations with women, are consumed with passion for each other, men doing shameful things with men and receiving in themselves due reward for their perversion.”*²⁴

Throughout the Medieval period, homosexuality was generally condemned and thought to be the moral behind the story of Sodom and Gomorrah. In 1532, King Charles promulgated the imperial code *Constitutio Criminalis Carolina* which ordained death penalty by burning for anyone committing impurity with a beast, or a man with a man, or a woman with a woman.²⁵ In 1610, a leading local official confessed, under torture, to homosexual acts with more than twenty men ranging from magistrates to gamekeepers. Eleven were tried; four were burned and the rest banished. Executions of homosexuals continued until 1662 when the wave of prosecutions decreased as religious enthusiasm declined.²⁶ By the age of Enlightenment, even though the *Carolina* code was still in application and homosexuals were still under threat of prosecution, lesbianism began to take on a public face, as many lesbians came out of their hiding places. They were dealt with like streetwalkers, debauched actresses, or unruly courtesans and charged with minor offenses. Women of the lower classes were briefly jailed. As centuries passed, the sentences were milder and during the period of Montaigne and Voltaire, sentence for homosexuality and lesbianism was equated with prostitution.²⁷

²⁴ Rom. 1 : 26-27 (New Jerusalem Bible).

²⁵ “The Myth of Lesbian Impunity: Capital Laws from 1270 to 1791.” *In Historical Perspectives on Homosexuality*. Pp. 11–25. (Journal of Homosexuality, 1981).

²⁶ Louis Crompton, *Homosexuality and Civilization*, p. 326.

²⁷ Cf. Louis Crompton, *Homosexuality and Civilization*. p. 500-512.

The twentieth century experienced an eruption of the homosexual tale especially after the First World War when freedom became the main topic of discussion. Subversion and revolution laws gave rise to the establishment of many homosexual foundations in England, France and Germany. Even though there were cults of homosexuality, bold talk of the homosexual associations, flamboyance of the “gay” cities, and the trend of homosexuality in literature, it did not erase the reality of anti-homosexual repression which is a carry-over of Church and State hegemony.

Homosexuality remained a crime in England and Germany in the 1920s and 1930s, but in France, it enjoyed acceptance due to the French Revolution. Even if there was more tolerance in some sectors of society, being homosexual always brought shame and social exclusion. Similarly, sapphism was not considered a crime in the three countries concerned: lesbians were therefore not united with male homosexuals, and did not share their concerns. However, the forces of reaction were present throughout the period. They were based on the traditional institutions, the State, the Church, the press, and on the public’s latent homophobia.²⁸

3.1. Root of Homosexual Tendencies

In the New York Medical Record of 1881, a mysterious Dr. H— described what he believed to be a new disorder, which he named “gynomania.” He outlined the case of a man who had become addicted to masturbation and cross-dressing at an early age. After dissociating from these habits until he had married and had children, the patient returned with new fury to his transvestite preferences. Dr. H— begged his medical brethren for assistance in treating this strange disorder. Edward Spitzka (1852–1914), a prominent New York neurologist, promptly

²⁸ Florence Tamagne, *The History of Homosexuality in Europe* (New York: Algora Publishing, 2006). p. 305.

responded to him that it was an illness they had encountered in Europe and considered incurable.²⁹ Thus homosexuality was considered a disease, may be a psychopathic disorder that resisted any cure. Nonetheless, with advancement in medicine, sociology and anthropology, we now have a wider picture of the homosexual impulses. The “naturalness” of homosexual orientation has been linked to three key interacting factors.

1. **Genetic Factors:** Studies in animals have shown that there are genes responsible for regulating courtship. This raises the question of whether neural (brain) circuits specified by transcription factors or other gene regulatory mechanism could be responsible for human homosexuality. However, while it is true that humans show some instinctual behavior like other animals especially during courtship, it is highly unlikely that a single neural network will be responsible for determining the largely complex human sexual orientation.

2. **Hormonal Factor:** This factor is tied to the genetic factor because genes express themselves in proteins (enzymes, hormones, inhibitors, interferons etc). Human sexuality is controlled by hormones: Estrogen in women and Androgen in men.

Studies in embryology shows that all early embryo start out as female. At some point in early gestation, if the chromosomes destine the fetus to be male, the embryo is altered by the genetically programmed addition of androgens. These androgens, especially testosterone, instruct the embryo to develop male characteristics. In their absence, the embryo continues to develop into a female. If the baby carries "XY" chromosomes and is destined to become a male, testosterone needs to activate the newly forming hypothalamus. This is the first known critical phase of "defeminization," when something

²⁹ Vernon, A. Rosarion, *Homosexuality and Science*. (Oxford: ABC-CLIO, 2002), p. 39.

can go awry, upsetting the master plan. If a mother is stressed during the early stages of pregnancy, she releases an adrenaline related hormone into her shared bloodstream with her unborn baby. This hormone, called androstendione, is structurally similar to testosterone, the male hormone. Both are androgens, but testosterone is more than twenty times as potent as androstendione. Because this stress hormone seems to mimic testosterone, there is the delay or blockage of the effectiveness of testosterone, even if it is plentiful. This causes a disturbance in the "defeminization" of the hypothalamus. Children born with this hormonal imbalance have a high tendency of becoming homosexuals in future. More recent research also has it that the brains of homosexuals show similarities to those of heterosexual women, meaning that they were not "defeminized" at their embryonic stage. This contributes to the factors that may account for their attraction to men rather than women.³⁰

3. **Psycho-Social Factors:** Some developmental psychologists are of the opinion that homosexuality is neither inherited nor the result of some glandular disturbance or the scrambling of genes or chromosomes. Homosexuals are made, not born 'that way.' For them, homosexuality is a learned response to early painful experiences and that it can be unlearned. For those homosexuals who are unhappy with their life and find effective therapy, it is curable.³¹ Children who are rejected, detached or have not grown with their fathers, and so form a strong bond with their mothers, develop consciously or unconsciously an insecure sexual identity. Childhood sexual abuse is well attested to demonstrate a correlation to the incidence of homosexuality among those affected by it.

A large national survey of almost 35,000 Americans showed that more than three times

³⁰ Swaab D. F, et al., "Sexual differentiation of the human hypothalamus", *Adv Exp Med Biology*, 2002; 511:75-100.

³¹ "The Causes of Homosexuality" *Conservapedia*, http://www.conservapedia.com/Causes_of_Homosexuality (23 January, 2014).

as many men and women who had been sexually abused as children became homosexuals, versus that of heterosexuals.³² Also, boys who were bullied in lower schools by their peers may develop a low self esteem, and at their adulthood carry this trait to the extent of seeking out protection from men, a security that will require intimacy between the two.

Studies into the homosexual factors are still ongoing, so these factors listed above are but some of the contributing factor to the homosexual orientation. We cannot place our hands on any one factor, because all three factors may be at play in a particular individual, neither are we sure of the veracity of any of these claims as only statistical correlations are ascertained. An ontological causal chain is yet to be established between any one of these factors and the homosexual tendency.

4. Nietzsche and Sexuality

Sexuality holds a place at the heart of human societies, and the history of sexuality is quite a new field of study. It stands at the crossroads of several disciplines — history, sociology, ethnology, anthropology, medicine — and so this history is still finding its way, oscillating between embarrassed silence and overemphasis. Discussions of sexuality have usually been sheepish or provocative, seldom neutral and objective. In fact, sexuality is not fixed and certain, that is independent of any context. Quite to the contrary, its position within a society reveals the relations of forces, the founding myths, the underlying tensions, and the insurmountable taboos.³³

³² Laumann, Gagnon, Michael, and Michaels, *The social organization of homosexuality*, (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1994), p. 344.

³³ Tamagne, Florence. *The History of Homosexuality in Europe*, p. 3.

The concept of sexuality is not only determined by culture, but also by class and gender. Thus, the traditional (so-called “middle-class”) representation of sexuality is the monogamist heterosexual family. It may be associated with economic considerations (the woman does not work), ideological considerations (the woman does not have independent sexuality, she must embody the image of the “eternal” female and conform to her “womanly role”), and political considerations (the family is a factor of stability within society). So in history, we have had to deal with human sexuality in a quite dynamic fashion. Today it is moral, tomorrow it is tolerable, and the next it is acceptable, only to be revisited because another group finds a particular sexual act distasteful.

Nietzsche is sometimes referred to as one who had a homosexual orientation which influenced his relativistic propensities. How true this claim is does not concern of this paper, but whether his philosophy can justify the reasonableness of the homosexual act, and the homosexual quest for equality and acceptance in the society is our quest. His views on moral relativism is in accord with the request of homosexual groups for acknowledgement and acceptance. His position of non-objectivity of truth is a reminder to the larger group of power holders that what they term as normal heterosexual relations if not objective, but what is acceptable for the heterosexual group. The homosexual groups are different, and should be free to practice what is necessary for their self actualization. Just as heterosexuality is an instinct, a desire, a goal for satisfaction and flourishing, so is homosexuality a tool for those who have it as their basic instinct.

Historical background presented on societal attitude towards homosexuality reveals that in the Greeks and Romans, it was accepted or tolerated respectively. The Romans can be said have had a somewhat indifferent outlook towards it. It was not until the Christianization of the Roman

Empire by Constantine that same-sex union transmogrified into a moral issue. According to Nietzsche, morality of Christians is a morality of weaklings,

*“a menagerie; its presupposition is that iron bars can be more profitable than freedom, even for the prisoners; its other presupposition is that there exist animal-trainers who are not afraid of terrible means—who know how to handle red-hot iron. This frightful species which takes up the fight against the wild animal is called “priest.”*³⁴

Christian morality has caused more harm than good for humanity, one of it is in the declaration of the homosexual act evil, sinful and wrong. Christian morality is full of lies, is a shame, and disgrace despite all the holiness of its art of seduction.³⁵

Being a “herd animal morality”, Christian doctrine of the intrinsic evil of the homosexual act is a capital crime against life. Its root lies in the instinct of the ecclesiastical hierarchy to dominate the world, to have the world at their service, to instill subservience in humans, while engaging in debauchery. The Church should be true to the world by telling the world that their morality is borne from their instincts and not from any Divine source. When they are true to this, then people’s perception of homosexuality will change. Homosexuality will not be seen as an abnormality, but a drive equal in priority to heterosexuality. By then we will be morally tolerant and allow every group freedom to act according to their moral norms.

As said earlier, Nietzsche’s position seems to cover all forms of relativism. First, that there is no necessary or absolute concept or being (metaphysical relativism). Second that there is no true religion, one religion is as good the other (religious relativism). Third, that there is no absolute truth, and even if there is, we cannot know it (epistemological relativism). Fourth, that there is no absolute or unitary way of action. No action is moral or immoral except a group considered it so (moral relativism). From these assumptions, homosexuality, from Nietzsche’s perspective cannot

³⁴ Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, No. 397.

³⁵ Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, No. 251.

be judged immoral on the grounds of universality of moral principle, religion, or scientific findings of abnormality in the individuals who possess this trait. Therefore every individual should be allowed liberty to practice sexuality the way his/her instincts dictates.

4.1. Objections to Nietzsche's Moral Relativism.

Freedom and Equality:

Freedom to act according to the dictates of our mutually accepted moral code is one of the implications of Nietzsche's moral relativism. It presupposes that moral relativism supports tolerance, upholds fundamental human rights and fosters equality. But it may not actually be the case. Moral relativism is a philosophical position or idea. Ideas are not tolerant; humans are. Tolerance is thus an attitude. One can present an absolutist position in a very tolerant manner, respecting the rights of others. On the other hand, a person can present a relativist position in an intolerant manner. In fact, Nietzsche's type of moral relativism is not tolerant at all because he speaks of morality as a tool for dominance, and dominance is completely at war with tolerance. It breeds anarchism in the society. Nietzsche is not a proponent of equality either for he says:

*"Life itself recognizes no solidarity, no "equal rights," between the healthy and the degenerate parts of an organism: one must excise the latter-or the whole will perish.- Sympathy for decadents, equal rights for the ill-constituted-that would be the profoundest immorality, that would be antinature itself as morality!."*³⁶

The will to power is striving towards the "higher type man", and so moral norms are defined as the man climbs this ladder of the *Overman*, such that former moral norms must be done away with because they militate against self actualization. Two implications arise from this. First, the group that arrives at a higher morality endeavours to crush, destroy and extinct those still within the level of the "lesser morality." Second, every group will perceive the other, possessing a

³⁶ Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, No. 735.

different moral norm, as a potential threat, an enemy and so will act in order to bring the other to an untimely end, because life is all about dominance. These are intolerant repercussions of a Nietzschean moral relativism. Again, what if the moral norm of the group is to be intolerant to other groups, how do we deal with this? Are we to be tolerant at the detriment of self preservation?

In concrete terms, homosexual movements today advocate for prosecution of persons who do not offer employment to those with homosexual tendency and also of homophobes.³⁷ The one to whom homosexuality is wrong should be allowed to hold onto his views and act according to his conscience, in the spirit of moral relativism, which may include refusing jobs to homosexuals. It is rather intolerant for homosexuals to advocate prosecution of those who find their way of life despicable. Flowing from this, the homosexuals will, if they are allowed full societal consent in the nearest future, request for heterosexuality to be considered a crime because it is for the weak.

Moral Value of Actions

Once we have no grounds on which to judge the different practices of members of other groups, we are inclined to doubt the value of our practices as well. Values should possess some kind of objectivity for persons who appreciate or derive pleasure in moral actions. How does a homosexual propagate the act as a right conduct if he/she does not see any value attached to it. Without value attached to acts, one cannot find a basis or moral justification to rebuke, correct, criticize or reprimand someone else, because these actions are applicable only to cases where there are shared ethical precepts, which moral relativism denies. The homosexual does not have the justification to call his acts right, and woo anyone to perform it because the act does not carry

³⁷ A person who has an irrational hatred, disapproval or fear for homosexuals, lesbians or their culture.

any moral value. It does not carry any value because the next day, his will to power might demand that he engages in sexual intercourse with animals, and he will oblige to it. If Nietzsche does not attach a value to moral acts, then he definitely is not talking about morality because there cannot be morality without value. He seems to see morality as rules of a game that can change at any time.

Self Preservation

Self-preservation consists of preserving one's life as long as the person is able to (survival), and propagating into the next generation. Homosexuality does not seem to satisfy the other requirement of self-preservation because two persons of the same sex are not able to give birth to children. Considering the homosexual act as a means of attaining the Overman is thus ridiculous.

5. The Position of the Catholic Church on Homosexuality.

The Catholic Church has never stopped advocating against the legalization of homosexuality in the world. In the Catechism of the Catholic Church, homosexual acts are considered “...as acts of grave depravity...intrinsicly disordered...contrary to the natural law not proceed[ing] from a genuine affective and sexual complementarity.”³⁸ The homosexual act is a corrupt, debaucherous, pervert action. It is an act that springs from an evil intention, one intended to displease God. It is also contrary to nature. Naturally a man is supposed to be attracted to a woman and vice versa. This is how the creator has made them right from genesis.³⁹

The Church's position on homosexuality is based on two broad theories. One is the Divine Command Theory which simply states that an action is morally forbidden if God commands that

³⁸ Catechism of the Catholic Church. No. 2359.

³⁹ Cf. Gen. 1 (New Jerusalem Bible).

that act be not be performed. God has revealed his will in the form of commands that are made available to us through Oral tradition, Holy Scripture, or Church law. All we need to do to be good is to follow those commands. Since the scripture is opposed to the homosexual act, then it is morally wrong to act upon homosexual desires.

The second is the Natural Law Theory expounded by the great medieval theologian Thomas Aquinas. Aquinas says that the homosexual act is an unnatural sexual practice whose root causes are the corruption of the soul and a distortion of right reason.⁴⁰ Aquinas says that “*certain special sins are said to be against nature; thus contrary to sexual intercourse, which is natural to all animals, is unisexual lust, which has received the special name of the unnatural crime.*”⁴¹ It is not what nature has prescribed for man, and so is a sin.

Sexual intercourse is supposed to be between a man and a woman, never between persons of the same sex. If homosexuality is a sexual act, it must, according to Aquinas be intended towards begetting and rearing of children for it to be natural. Since it does not satisfy the end of sexual intercourse, it is considered an act contrary to nature.⁴² The natural law rejoinder is that while vaginal intercourse is a potentially procreative sex act, considered in itself (though admitting the possibility that it may be impossible for a particular couple), oral and anal sex acts are never potentially procreative, whether between heterosexuals or homosexuals. Therefore all means of the sexual act by the use of the genitalia other than what is natural –penis to vagina- is unnatural. These exceptions are actually the predominant actions found among homosexuals, so it is unnatural.

⁴⁰ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* 1p 2p, q.31 a 7.

⁴¹ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* 1p 2p, q.94 a 3.

⁴² Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, Supplementary. 3, q.65 a 3.

Most often the moral relativists argument of diversity in humans is exaggerated, as if there is nothing we have in common. Rationality is a common feature of all humans. It is an entitative faculty that gives the human person the power to reason. That all humans have reason is a truism. This reason according to Aquinas is a participation in the Natural law, which is in turn a participation in the Divine Law. Therefore we can by reason attain the morality prescribed by God, because all humans are partakers in the Divine plan of God guiding all of humanity towards “the good.” Denials of a meeting point of our moral principles a denial of one’s humanity.

Even though the Catholic Church considers it as a distorted orientation, she is not unaware of the numerous individuals who have this orientation. She condemns the act, but as members pf the household of God, homosexuals are called to a life of chastity like every other faithful.⁴³ She does not encourage discrimination against those with the inclination because some have this orientation not of their own making, but were born with it, but everywhere condemn expression of homosexual desires.

6. Conclusion.

Nietzsche’s moral concepts although built on nihilistic foundations have a relativist bent. He holds that moral concepts are not objective, but subjective, and serve the purpose of self-preservation. Instincts and the drive to dominate are guiding principles of the shape of moral norms. Homosexuality, like every other drive, is instinctual, an expression of the power to will, and so are necessarily amoral. Flowing from this, homosexuals, according to Nietzsche are to be free to act out their desires, and not to be discriminated against, based on relativity of moral norms in persons, places and times.

⁴³ Catechism of the Catholic Church. No. 2360.

History has it that the society's perception of the homosexual act has been fluctuating between the extremes of the moral pendulum. So that what we are experiencing may not actually be a new thing in history. But the Church is not relenting in her resolve to emphasize the evil nature of this act, with hatred for the sin and love for the sinner. For her, homosexuality is rooted in corruption of the soul and an act contrary to nature. But with the new trends of relativism and extreme libertarianism, it is doubtful if the war can be won in favour of the Church. It seems that modern man is unrelenting in ensuring absolute freedom for all including homosexuals just as the Church is not daunting in her resolve to establishing the intrinsic evil inherent in practicing homosexuality.

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