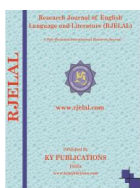




NIETZSCHE HAS NO SUPERWOMAN

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Abstract

This study provides an analytical view of Nietzsche's philosophical attitude towards woman considering three major themes: firstly, Nietzsche's relations with women in his life which influenced him negatively and left a harsh impact on his philosophy leaving him sink in a great dissatisfaction, self-hatred, anxiety, depression, and unhappiness. Secondly, the contradictory nature of woman which combines between the opposites: the vulnerable sex, strong, mysterious, changeable, wicked, dangerous, fierce, submissive, obedient and man's slave. And thirdly the relation between man and woman at three levels: sexual, social, and political. The sexual relation between man and woman is depicted in his philosophy as free, pure, and affirmative of life. The social relation between them, in contrast, is shown to be corrupt through marriage, also, it supports the master-slave relation in family to be the basis of the rational marriage. On the other hand, the political relation between man and woman shows Nietzsche's opposition of woman's emancipation since he wants her to bear the Superman who will rule over a worthy culture in a worthy society. By Male dominance, the superman achieves his high goals with a humiliated woman. The final analysis reveals that Nietzsche has no superwoman!

Key Words: Nietzsche's *Beyond Good and Evil*, *Thus spoke Zarathustra*, and *The Gay Science*, the nature of woman, the relation between man and woman, superman, master-slave, emancipation, whip

Are you visiting women?
Don't forget your whip!
Fridrich Nietzsche

Introduction

"Trying to understand the Greek without Plato is like trying to understand Modernism without Nietzsche." (Renton Thomas.p.88)

Nietzsche, this postmodern philosopher who precedes the logic of many in his century, devotes his own life for the sake of his philosophy. Many consider him the prophet of irrationality, new

morality, and super humanity. But he considers himself to be the torch of truth which isn't founded in the history of humanity. When he announces the "death of God" and the coming of the Superman, he doesn't exclude woman. When he says, "the world is the will to power and you yourselves are the will to power" he doesn't exclude her too. And when he says, "nothing is true and everything is permitted", he links that to the freedom of woman. In fact, he associates all of these principles to woman. In his philosophy, woman has to be the 'slave' of the superman or man to help him to transcend in his mission to reach the high goals. He considers the

relation between man and woman which is motivated by the sex drive as 'the will to power'. It is also important to highlight that he associates his principle "nothing is true, and everything is permitted" with the new morality in marriage, but not with modernity.

In this paper, I'd like to discuss Nietzsche's philosophical attitude towards women navigating from the following topics to be discussed in depth: his relations with women in his life, the nature of woman as it appeared in his philosophy, and lastly the relation between man and woman at three levels: sexual, social, and political.

I. Nietzsche's Relations with Women in His Life

Nietzsche's relations with women in his life are many. But all of them are unsuccessful experiences. So, they have bad impact upon his philosophy. Walter Kaufman (1968:22) points, "Nietzsche spent the rest of his childhood as the only male in a household consisting of his mother, sister, father's mother, and two maiden aunts". Therefore, we expect from Nietzsche to be well aware of the real nature of woman, but he is not. We can see also that the women whom Nietzsche lived with are close relatives. And they definitely treated him with great passionate love. So, why does Nietzsche say unflattering words about women? The answer will tell us that there is more to say about his relations with women.

Nietzsche had met many females in his life, some of them were his students, when he was a professor in Basel. The others were friends to him, or friends to other philosophers or writers whom Nietzsche knew at that time. It is hard now to scan his relations with every woman he had met in his life, although some books did that like a book entitled *Conversations with Nietzsche* (1987) edited by Sander L. Gilman, from this book, I'd like to focus mainly on the three women who have great influence on Nietzsche's writings. Those women are: Malwida Von Meysenbug, Lou Salome, and Cosima Wagner.

Malwida Von Meysenbug was older than Nietzsche. She looked after him exactly as the mother did with her child. We can listen to Malwida

for seconds telling us about her friendship with him in *Conversations with Nietzsche* (1987:49),"we parted in cordial friendship, and there now began between us a correspondence which was for many years among the dearest of my manifold associations."

Malwida warned Nietzsche about his premature criticism of women. She narrated to us in *Conversations with Nietzsche* (1987:88,89) how he refused listening to her and published what he wrote about woman in a book titled *Human All Too Human*.

Lou Salome was the second in effect upon Nietzsche's writings about 'woman'. When Nietzsche knew her in 1882, he thought that he had known the most intelligent woman on this earth. He flattered her too much and described her with many characteristics.

Walter Kaufmann, in his book: *Nietzsche, Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist*, (1974:48-5), speaks about the close relation between Lou Salome and Nietzsche. She, according to him, has "very unusual intelligence and character". Nietzsche considered her book a "*Hymn to Life*" as a sign of her wonderful intelligence. Kaufmann points also to Lou Salome's profession as a "prolific writer" 'but her literary works didn't gain fame for her. She was a very ambitious woman and she was eager to gain fame. When her career as a writer didn't make her famous, she looked for fame through meeting famous people like Nietzsche, Paul Ree, and Sigmund Freud. "A complete list of her friends approximates a catalogue of German and Austrian literary figures of the period. (p.50)"

Although Nietzsche believed in Lou Salomé's great intelligence, but after he broke with her, he described women with stupidity and lack of experience in his book *Beyond Good and Evil* and other works. But one might ask: why did Nietzsche break his relations with that intelligent, remarkable lady?

Kaufmann gives us the reason of the end of their relation by saying that Lou Salomé was a friend of another philosopher whose name is Paul Ree who was a friend of both Nietzsche and Salome. Both philosophers Nietzsche and Ree proposed marriage

to Salome. "After Ree's death, Lou Salome spread the tale that both he and Nietzsche had proposed marriage to her, and that Nietzsche had asked Ree to transmit his proposal. Others embellished the story by adding that, unknown to Nietzsche, she was Ree's mistress even then." (p.50)

It was very strange that Nietzsche had proposed to Lou Salomé and she refused his proposal. She betrayed him by choosing to be Ree's mistress or wife as other sources mentioned. Her refusal was a great shock to Nietzsche, and it was said that he tried to commit suicide after her breaking with him. After this unhappy ending in their relation, Nietzsche attacked 'woman' and her status in marriage harshly.

Thus spoke Zarathustra was influenced deeply by Nietzsche's relation with Lou Salome. In this book, he represents himself as Zarathustra, the man in solitude who wouldn't like to live with deceptive people, he chooses to live with himself searching deeply in the meaning of every aspect of this life and realizing the shadowy lines between Good and Evil.

Hollingdale, in his introduction to *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (1969:20-23) points to Salome's effect on this book:

In April 1882 began the one wholly serious sexual involvement of Nietzsche's life: his brief and humiliating affair with Lou Salome.... Nietzsche thought that the solitude in which he had been living since his enforced retirement from Basel University at Easter 1879 and which had been weighing more and more heavily upon him was about to come to an end. In a letter to Lou Salome (2 July 1882) he says that the previous day 'it seemed as if it must be my birthday: you sent me your assent' (i.e. to come and stay with him for three weeks)....when he wrote this letter he had just made a fair copy of the passage, which closes *The Gay Science* in its original version....The sense of that passage is repeated in other words at the end of the above quoted letter, 'I don't want to be lonely anymore; I want to learn to be human again..',....after he was abandoned during

the following October by Lou Salome and had to realize that his hope of marrying her was definitely not going to be fulfilled, he fell into an abyss of despair....His failure with Lou, however, threw him for a time completely off balance....,for example, from this letter to Franz Overbeck, posted on Christmas Day 1882: I am lost.... I now mistrust everybody: I sense in everything; I hear contempt towards me Sometimes I think Of driving my solitude and resignation to the ultimate limit.... the ground of this violent reaction was, as other letters but especially Zarathustra show, the realization he was back in solitude and that he was going to stay there.

In fact, Lou Salome had created the man in solitude (Zarathustra) in Nietzsche. He chooses to live on his own, philosophizing whatever come in his mind, and creating for the first time the ideas of "the will to power" and the "superman" which later appeared in other works in clear pictures.

We cannot simply say Goodbye to Lou Salome without highlighting her relation to the Nietzschean famous 'whip'. What is the story of this whip? What is the role of the whip in Nietzsche's attitude towards women? In the book *Nietzsche in German Politics and Society, 1890-1918*, R. Hinton Thomas approaches the story of the whip in the last chapter titled, 'Nietzsche, women, and the whip'. In the pages (129-130) Hinton Thomas tells us how Lou Salome after rejecting Nietzsche and accepting Paul Ree expressed her hope that they would remain good friends. Therefore, Nietzsche suggested to take a photo together: "Nietzsche had the idea of positioning himself with Ree between the shafts, with Lou Salome in the driver's seat, holding a whip extemporized by Nietzsche from bits and pieces lying around. This provided the photograph that was taken." Hinton Thomas goes on explaining that Nietzsche wants from this picture to give a message explicating that, "the woman who brandished the whip, and it is the men who are the potential victims."

Here I want to disagree a little bit with Thomas's interpretation of that picture. It is true

that Nietzsche wants to give a message through that picture which might reveal unconscious tendencies by him. But that message is not to be applied to all women and men. First of all, that picture was intended to be private among Lou, Nietzsche, and Paul Ree. It was not intended to be shown for the public. Therefore, the message which Nietzsche wants from the picture is not a generalization about "woman". Nietzsche wants the message to be directly given to Lou Salome who rejected him and made him her victim. It might be also a message to his friend Paul Ree to warn him that he will be her victim in the coming days. Moreover, Nietzsche reversed the possession of the whip in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. The whip should be with the man, not with woman (may be Salome).

Nietzsche's invention of the use of whip in a private picture leads him to develop the image of the whip in his book *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. He began writing that book after Lou's refusal of him. In that book, in a section titled 'of Old and Young Women', an old woman asked Zarathustra to speak to her about women, but Zarathustra answered her, 'one should speak to her about women only to men.' (p.19) But the old woman obliged him to speak about the woman.

Zarathustra speaks many unflattered words about woman (which will be discussed later). Then he asks the old woman to give him her truth about "woman", The old woman answers, "Are you visiting women? Do not forget your whip" (p.93). Thus, the situation is reversed from that on the picture. Here, "woman" is asking for the whip to be mastered by "man"; In that picture, man is the woman's victim. It seems for me that Nietzsche wants from this reversal to show that: even if man becomes one day a woman's victim, he will gain his strength and master woman. Moreover, to master woman based on her request of that mastery (as the old woman does in Zarathustra) is to emphasize her weakness and her permanent need of male dominance in her life. It is ridiculous to notice that this remarkable saying about bringing the whip in the company of women is the only thing which a hundred thousand women know about Nietzsche. Therefore, he was well known in Germany as well as in Europe not yet because of his new philosophy, but because of his

whip. There are two worthy stories in *Conversations with Nietzsche* about this whip.

The first story of that whip happened when Nietzsche encountered an ordinary man. Nietzsche without identifying himself asked that man about Nietzsche's philosophical works. That man said unpleasant things about his philosophy: "... it annoys me that he always writes as if the whole world consisted of professors of philosophy. Why can not a philosophy professor also write so that an average person with no special philosophical schooling can understand too?" (p.134)

Nietzsche, upon hearing this, got angry, revealed his identity and asked the man (whose name is Sebastian Hausmann) to give him a particular example that caused him difficulty, (p.135). Sebastian Hausmann said how Nietzsche embarrassed him in his own words, "I had not gotten very far in reading, or rather, studying his writings... I searched my memory and at first could think of nothing, till suddenly I thought of a statement that my circle of friends had discussed in detail: 'don't forget the whip, when you go to a woman! 'or something similar. When I cited this example, he looked at me in astonishment.'" (p.135)

In the same source: *Conversations with Nietzsche*, our philosopher expressed his astonishment towards the man's choice of this "much discussed and much misunderstood phrase". Nietzsche felt himself obliged to explain that quotation about the whip in his own words, "But, I beg you, surely that cannot cause you any difficulty! I mean, it's clear and understandable that this is only a joke, an exaggerated, symbolic mode of expression. If you go to woman, don't let yourself to subjugated by her sensuality, do not forget that you are the master, that it is a woman's truly not slight task to serve the man as a friendly companion who beautifies his life." (p.135)

The other story about the whip in *Conversations with Nietzsche* is narrated to us by Helen Zimmern (p.168). this story is about "an old Russian woman who suffered from a nervous breakdown and severe obsessions.... the patient's friends had a coach waiting in front of the hotel every day to take her to Italy.... But every day this

coach had to return home without the patient, who always refused to leave her room. One day, Nietzsche, who had heard of the strange case, said to the lady's worried friends: 'leave her to me just once!'. And one noon, when coach had driven up again, Nietzsche, suddenly appeared at the front door of the hotel with the sick lady, who followed him obediently like a little dog, whereas she otherwise used to fly into a rage at the very mention of the journey. But none of us ever learned how Nietzsche had done that. Certainly he didn't use the famous whip". I may add here that he used with her his sympathy and courtesy. I don't think that he is the master here, rather than a compassionate companion.

That was the whole atmosphere of the story of the whip included within the story of Lou Salome who made Nietzsche's heart bleed and fill with melancholy. As Nietzsche had invented the image of whip as a reaction to Lou's refusal of him, he had created of himself the Greek mythical god 'Dionysus' as a reaction to his relation with Cosima Wagner whom he had called "Arydane".

Cosima Wagner had the deepest impact upon Nietzsche's psyche and philosophical works. This intelligent woman had pleased Nietzsche from the first moment, he admired her strength and her challenge to the traditional values. But he admired her silently because she was his friend's wife. He did not dare to announce his deep love to Cosima especially that she was not in love with him. Her interest in Nietzsche was focusing on his praising of her husband's intelligence in his works. Therefore, Nietzsche continued in keeping his silent love, and it was said that his love to Cosima was one of the reasons why he broke with Wagner.

In *Nietzsche: Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist*, Walter Kaufman (1968:32) refers to Nietzsche's relation with Cosima, describes it, and explains how Nietzsche revealed his love to her:

Cosima Wagner, illegitimate daughter of Franz Liszt, and the wife of Hans Von Bulow before she eloped with Wagner, was.... The first woman of stature with Wagner, was.... the first woman of stature with whom he came into close contact.... Nietzsche never

outgrew her fascination: in his late notes and poems she appears as Adriadne, while he increasingly identifies himself with Dionysus and Wagner must occasionally fill the role of Theseus. It was not until the first days of his insanity, however, that he sent out several notes that revealed who Ariadne was Cosima herself received a sheet of paper with the sole inscription: "Ariadne, I love you. Dionysus." and on March 27, 1889.... Nietzsche said (when he grew mad): "my wife Cosima Wagner, has brought me here."

We can therefore assume that, Nietzsche was unsuccessful again in this hopeless love to this married woman who didn't give Nietzsche the love he wanted and waited for. Therefore, he began to have his own fancy about this love and imagined that Cosima was his wife.

Understood that way, Nietzsche's relations with women in his life left a bitter impact on his psyche and on his philosophy. So, there is no need to wonder why Nietzsche attacked 'woman' in his works.

II. The Nature of 'Woman' in Nietzsche's Philosophy

Nietzsche describes the nature of woman in several of his philosophical works. It is worthwhile to pay some attention to this nature as it appeared in his following works: *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, *Twilight of the Idols*, *Beyond Good and Evil* and *The Gay Science*. In all of the above books, Nietzsche depicts 'woman' as changeable, mysterious, incapable of love or friendship, superficial, seductive, stupid, thoughtless, vulnerable, submissive, and a fierce tiger at the same time. His philosophical views match the dominant view about 'woman' in the 19th century, so that was not much surprising.

In *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, there are three sections about 'woman': 'of Chastity', 'of Old and Young Women', and 'of Marriage and Children'. There is also 'of the Friend' which talks a little about woman. In that section, we notice that Nietzsche describes the woman as a 'slave', 'tyrant' and incapable of friendship:

Are you a slave? If so, you cannot be a friend. Are you a tyrant? If so, you cannot have friends. In woman, a slave and a tyrant have all too long been concealed. For that reason, woman is not yet capable of friendship: she knows only love. In a woman's love is injustice and blindness towards all that she doesn't love. And in the enlightened love of a woman, too, there is still the unexpected attack.... woman is not yet capable of friendship: women are still cats and birds. Or, at best, cows..... Thus Spoke Zarathustra. (p.83-84)

Nietzsche sees that woman instead of being capable of friendship, she is capable of love. And what kind of love? The blind love. She couldn't even know the best way of how to love or to whom she must offer that deep love. Woman is 'cat and bird' or 'a cow' at best in Nietzsche's opinion. Her lack of true love, her slavery and tyranny prevent her from being capable of friendship. We can notice that Nietzsche contradicts himself in describing woman as a 'slave' and 'tyrant' at the same time. I see that the slave cannot be a tyrant because s/he is under the tyranny of slavery. Thus, how it comes to be a tyrant and slave at the same time? The master is the one who is supposed to have tyranny upon his slaves. And we all know that man is the master and not woman according to Nietzsche. So, one can conclude that woman might be a slave to the Nietzschean man but not a tyrant.

Ofelia Schutte, in her book *Beyond Nihilism* (1984:184) points that, "Men who do not live up to Zarathustra's model of friendship are devalued to the status of women and animals." Consequently, the nature of woman is really insulted and degraded by Nietzsche who considers the status of women equal to that of animals.

In the section 'of Old and Young Women', Zarathustra-upon being asked by the old woman-speaks about the nature of woman (p.91-93) as following:

Everything about woman is a riddle, and everything about woman has one solution: it is called pregnancy. For the woman, the man is a means: the end is always the child. But

what is the woman for the man? The true man wants two things: danger and play. For that reason, he wants woman, as the most dangerous plaything. Man should be trained for war and woman for the recreation of the warrior: all else is folly. The warrior doesn't like fruit that is too sweet. therefore, he likes woman; even the sweetest woman is still bitter. Woman understands children better than a man, but man is more childlike than woman.... let woman be a plaything, pure and fine like a precious stone illumined by the virtues of a world that doesn't yet exist. Let the flash of a star glitter in your love! Let your hope be: 'May I bear the Superman!' The man's happiness is: I will. The woman's happiness is: he will. 'Behold, now the world has become perfect! -thus thinks every woman when she obeys with all her love. And woman has to obey and find a depth for her surface. Woman's nature is surface, a changeable stormy film upon shallow waters. But a man's nature is deep, its torrent roars in subterranean caves: woman senses its power but doesn't comprehend it.

In the above long description of woman, Nietzsche claims that the nature of woman is 'mysterious' like a 'riddle'. And the only solution to that riddle is the sexual relation which made her nature clear and light. Moreover, he sees a danger and bitterness in her nature. Add to that, he portrays woman as obedient and superficial. She cares about his will, freedom and happiness. The perfection of the world is achieved when she pleases her lover or husband. She has submission, obedience, and love or blind love. But, she lacks the depth and the power in her emotions, therefore, she is superficial, and weak.

In a section titled 'the Dance Song', Nietzsche continues to describe woman through the speech of one of the ladies as 'changeable and untamed... Although you men call me 'profound' or 'faithful', 'eternal', 'mysterious'. 'But you men always endow us with your own virtues-ah, you virtuous men!' Thus she laughed, the incredible woman; but I never believe her and her laughter when she speaks evil of herself. And when I spoke secretly with my wild

wisdom, she said to me angrily: 'you will, you desire, you love, that is the only reason you praise life!' (p.132) Thus Spoke Zarathustra.

In that passage, Nietzsche wants woman herself to emphasize the aspects of her wicked nature. To describe herself as 'profound'. Nietzsche wants also to show that woman inspires her virtues from the manly virtues, because she herself doesn't have any kind of virtues, "there is little manliness here: therefore, their women make themselves manly. For only he who is sufficiently a man will redeem the woman in woman." (p.189) *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*.

Having discussed the nature of woman in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, we need to discuss that nature in *The Twilight of the Idols*. In it, a little is said about the nature of woman, but that little is still worth noting and quoting. In a section titled 'Maxims and Arrows', there are some statements (p.24,25) which shed the light upon the nature of woman:

16. Among women- 'Truth? oh, you don't know the truth, do you! Is it not an outrage on all pudeurs?'-....
- 20.The complete woman perpetrates literature in the same way as she perpetrates a little sin: as an experiment, in passing, looking around to see if someone notices and so that someone may notice....
- 25.Contentment protects one even from catching a cold. Has a woman who knew she was well dressed ever caught a cold? -I am assuming she was hardly dressed at all....
- 27.Women are considered deep-why? Because one can never discover any bottom to them. Women are not even shallow.
- 28.If a woman possesses manly virtues one should run away from her; and if she doesn't possess them she runs away herself.

In those above statements, it is fairly obvious that Nietzsche mocks woman's ignorance of truth. He mocks her ways of dealing with literature, sin and dressing. He emphasizes her mysterious nature, 'one can never discover any bottom to them.' He emphasizes also her possession of the manly virtues as he does in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. He claims that

woman couldn't live without having those manly virtues.

In *Twilight of the Idols*, Nietzsche proceeds in describing woman as 'a serpent': "woman is in her essence serpent, Heva'-every priest knows that; 'every evil comes into the world through woman' every priest knows that likewise. 'Consequently, science too comes into the world through her'.... Only through woman did man learn to taste of the tree of knowledge, what had happened? A mortal terror seized on the old God.... God had created for himself a rival, science makes equal to God-it is all over with priests and Gods if man becomes scientific! Science is the first sin, the germ of all sins, original sin.... -And the old God comes to a final decision: 'Man has become scientific-there is nothing for it, he will have to be drowned!' "(p.164)

Nietzsche considers woman as a serpent, and to support his opinion, he says, 'every priest knows that.' In his view, she isn't only a serpent, but she is the source of every evil. He goes back to the story of fall to assert that woman is the cause of man's fall from Heaven. Woman gives man the science, knowledge and truth. By giving him all of these things, she makes him a rival for God, so the later decides to dismiss him with her out of heaven. Therefore, woman is responsible for man's catastrophe, 'he will have to be drowned!' into Earth for the sake of her eyes, 'the Serpent'.

Nietzsche says more about the nature of women in *Beyond Good and Evil*. In a section titled 'Maxims and Interludes'; the statement (84) (p.75) says, "woman learns how to hate to the extent that she unlearns how to charm". Nietzsche wants to show the cruelty of hatred in the nature of woman as he does in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* when he says, "let man fear woman when she hates." (p.92)

In another statement (86) in BGE, Nietzsche says, "Behind all their personal vanity women themselves always have their impersonal contempt for 'woman'." (p.75) Woman might love herself, but she will have a certain contempt for her sex, the female sex.

In the statement (115), (p.79), in BGE, Nietzsche describes woman more by saying, "where

neither love nor hate is in the game a woman is a mediocre player." She is the major player in the Game of love and in the Game of hate. Moreover, he says that woman is more powerful than man in those games, "In revenge and in love woman is more barbarous than man." (p.83)

In the same book (*Beyond Good and Evil*), Nietzsche believes that the nature of woman provides her with "the instinct for the secondary role", (p.84). Man is the one who bears the instinct for the first role. Nietzsche's evidence for that is woman's care about clothes, cosmetics, beauty and appearances. Whereas man doesn't care about that stuff, he cares about labor in his life to provide his family with essential needs. Statement (145) in *Beyond Good and Evil*, (p.84) echoes the essence of this Nietzschean thought, "comparing man and woman in general one may say: woman would not have the genius for finery if she didn't have the instinct for the secondary role."

In section (234) in *Beyond Good and Evil* (p.145-146), Nietzsche goes far in degrading woman's nature by linking between her role as a cook and her stupidity in an ironic style:

Stupidity in the kitchen; woman as cook; the dreadful thoughtlessness with which the nourishment of the family and the master of the house is provided for! Woman doesn't understand what food means: and she wants to be the cook! If woman were a thinking creature she would, having been the cook for thousands of years, surely have had to discover the major facts of physiology, and likewise gained possession of the art of healing. It is through bad female cooks-through the complete absence of reason in the kitchen, that the evolution of man has been longest retarded and most harmed: even today things are hardly and better. A lecture for high-school girls.

Nietzsche claims that woman is useless in everything, even the cooking which is part of her role in the family is spoiled by her stupidity and lack of thinking, so she is thoughtless creature. Being stupid and thoughtless, she harms the evolution of man and restricts his steps towards progress. When he

exaggerates that woman doesn't understand the meaning of the food and wants to be the cook, he sees that too much for her to ask for as if she asks him to give her a chair in the parliament or the ministry. We should not be astonished if we know that women at his time were considered to be dolls with empty heads!

Nietzsche discusses the nobility principle in the nature of woman in *Beyond Good and Evil*. He thinks that even the noble woman considers the man to be nobler than herself and draws her upward. She is driven by her instincts to see that man is her master, is higher in status than her, and is nobler than her. This idea appears in BGE section (236) (p.146), "That which Dante and Goethe believed of woman-the former when he says 'Ella guardave suso, ed ioin lei', the latter when he translated it 'the eternal-womanly draws us upward'-: I don't doubt that every nobler woman will resist this belief, for that is precisely what she believes of the eternal-manly....", the eternal manly will draw her upward.

Ofelia Schutte in *Beyond Nihilism* (1984:185) adds, "the criterion of a woman's "nobility", ..., is her "faith" that the male, as male, is more noble than herself."

In a section titled "our virtues" in *Beyond Good and Evil* (p.149-150), Nietzsche stands against the emancipation of woman (which I'll discuss later) because of her weak and vulnerable nature, he says, "... Fundamentally fear is her nature, which is more 'natural' than that of the man, her genuine, cunning, beast-of-prey suppleness, the tiger's claws beneath the glove, the naivety of her egoism, her ineducability and inner savagery, and how incomprehensible, capacious and prowling her desires and virtues are....That which, all fear not withstanding ,evokes pity for this dangerous and beautiful cat 'woman' is that she appears to be more afflicted, more vulnerable, more in need of love and more condemned to disappointment than any other animal." In this passage, woman in Nietzsche's views is no longer human, she is closer to the animals more than to the human beings! He uses the animalistic terms to describe her savagery, cruelty, and her inner weakness. He wants to emphasize that the

nature of woman is full of contradictions. Woman-in his view-is strong like a tiger and weak like a cat at the same time. She has fear, but she is cunning beast at the sametime. He concludes that whether she is strong or weak, she is still in need of love and man's passion which prevents her from being emancipated.

In *Nietzsche in German Politics and Society*, Hinton Thomas (1983:133) discusses the weakness in the nature of woman and her need to the man who supports her in Nietzsche's own words:

What a woman leans on in her weakness, Nietzsche noted, 'is not in all circumstances power that she has actually recognized, but power that she wants and has imagined', and the weaker a woman feels, 'the more power she will feel in him who "gives her support", 'the weakest woman', he wrote, 'will make every man into a god: and likewise she will make out of every moral and religious commandment something holy, untouchable, final, worthy to be worshipped.' so, it is clear, he added, 'that, as far as the origin of religion is concerned, the weaker sex is more important than the stronger', and, given the nature of women, 'they would, if one left them alone, not only create "men" from out of their own weakness, but even "gods"-and both presumably resembling each other-as monster of power.

Till now, Nietzsche's references to the nature of woman are unflattering. However, in *The Gay Science*, he gives us three flattering sections about the nature of woman. The first flattering section is in section (4) of the preface to *The Gay Science*, Nietzsche asks, "perhaps truth is a woman who has reasons for not letting us see her reasons?"

The second flattering section is shown in the last paragraph of *The Gay Science* (339) when Nietzsche says, "But perhaps this is the most powerful magic of life: it is covered by a veil interwoven with gold, a veil of beautiful possibilities, sparkling with promise, resistance, bashfulness, mockery, pity, and seduction. Yes, life is a woman." The third flattering section is presented in *The Gay Science* (377) when he points, "Humanity! Has there

ever been a more hideous old woman among all old women."

In the above three quoted passages, Nietzsche claims that woman is "truth", "life" and "Humanity", He considers her "truth" because she is the giver of life to all generations, therefore, she is the keeper of humanity. It is apparent that Nietzsche appreciates the nature of woman only in this book(GS). Any reader has to bear in mind that Nietzsche wrote this book before he broke with Lou Salome.

In sum, in most of his books, Nietzsche depicts woman as: the weak sex, vulnerable, strong, slave, mysterious, changeable, wicked, dangerous, fierce, submissive, obedient and man's slave. According to Nietzsche, the nature of woman is contradictory. Therefore, woman cannot rely on her intellect and passion, she has to rely on man her strong master who will support her and love her using his whip.

III. The Relation Between Man and Woman in Nietzsche's Philosophy

In this section, I'd like to tackle the relation between Man and Woman at three levels: the sexual one, the social one represented in marriage, and the political one represented through the movement of emancipation of woman.

1-The Sexual Level: To begin with the sexual level of that relation, one might need to say that sexuality is a positive idea in Nietzsche's thought. In his opinion, sexuality is the affirmation of life. I choose two of his books to discuss the aspects of sexuality: *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* and *Beyond Good and Evil*.

In a section titled "of Chastity" in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Nietzsche claims, "Those to whom chastity is difficult should be dissuaded from it, lest it become the way to Hell-that is, to fifth and lust of the soul," (p.81). He claims here that 'chastity' goes against the natural instincts in human beings. He wants to liberate the sexual drive from all the traditional morals. He wants 'new morality', he wants to say to all humans; 'be yourself, do whatever you like to do.' Nietzsche thinks so, because he considers the sexual drive the necessary essence of life.

It worths quoting Hollingdale (1973:181) who explains Nietzsche's views on sex in his book *Nietzsche*:

Nietzsche's views on sex are remarkable.... Only in the last half-year of his active life does give vent to such strident proclamations as "the preaching of chastity is a public incitement to unnaturalness. Every expression of contempt for the sexual life, every befouling of it through the concept "impure", is the crime against life-is the intrinsic sin against the holy spirit of life" (EH, III,5): before this time his attitude is far more than expressed in the aphorism. On the usefulness of adultery, ..., or in the remark that, in sexual intercourse, 'one person, by doing what pleases him, gives pleasure to another person-such benevolent arrangements are not to be found so very often in nature.

As we have seen, Nietzsche's opinion about sexuality is positive, since he considers it the affirmation of life. Whereas Nietzsche's opinion about chastity is negative. For he considers it an ill strategy of traditional morals which should be vanished. This what is called in Nietzsche's philosophy the "new morality" or the "revaluation of all values" which should replace the traditional morals. An example of his new morality is the epigram (p.80) in *Beyond Good and Evil*, "even concubinage has been corrupted by marriage."

Nietzsche's views about the freedom in sexuality allow woman to do what pleases her outside marriage. He considers the sexual enjoyment the gift of life, but to call it "impure" process, this will be a "crime" against life itself. He pleases only the people who'd like to be free sexually, but those who'd like to stick themselves to religious and moral values are annoyed by his call to freedom in sexuality.

Mary Ann Mariani (1994:1) analyzes in her article 'Woman' what Nietzsche says about woman's chastity in *The Gay Science*:

GS 71 deals with the subject of female chastity in a very sympathetic and sensitive

manner. He describes the unreasonable and distorted way in which upper class women were "educated" about sexual matters. They were kept as ignorant as possible about sexual matters in order to preserve their "honor". As girls and young women, they learned to feel that their normal and natural sexual feelings were shameful and evil. Upon marriage, they were expected to abandon this belief and become willing participants, with their husbands, in the same activities they were taught to think of as shameful. Nietzsche questions the ability of woman to accommodate themselves to this paradox, and suggests that it creates a philosophical dilemma for them. How can they perceive the world as real, when their perception of themselves, and even more importantly, of their husbands, will forever be unanswerable question? As an unfortunate consequence of this "education" even the natural maternal instinct becomes distorted, and her desire for children is a response to her lost "honor", a way to a tone for her "sin", or to apologize for her indiscretion, or so thought Nietzsche.

I think that the whole issue is a philosophical dilemma only for Nietzsche. Woman of his time understands well the necessity of remaining virtuous till marriage. She understands that it is shameful to have any sexual aspect before marriage. She maintains her virtues till she gets married. In that marriage, she will yield herself to her husband bearing in her mind that sexuality with her husband is no longer shameful.

In Nietzsche's *Beyond Good and Evil*, we find a passage (p.83) that establishes the wrong with woman's sexuality, "when a woman has scholarly inclinations there is usually something wrong with her sexuality. Unfruitfulness itself disposes one to a certain masculinity of taste; for man is, if I may be allowed to say so, "the unfruitful animal."

There is a famous epigram from *Beyond Good and Evil* (p.73), "the degree and kind of a man's sexuality reaches up into the topmost summit of his spirit." In this epigram, Nietzsche links between sexual satisfaction and the spiritual satisfaction, he

thinks that through the sexual experience one can reach his spiritual agreement within himself.

2- **The Social Level:** Secondly, the social level of the relation between Man and woman is represented through Nietzsche's views about marriage. The most important idea in his views about marriage is the mastery of man over woman.

In *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, in a section titled of 'Marriage and Children', Nietzsche defines the ideal marriage as, "Marriage: that I call the will of two to create the one who is more than those who created it. Reverence before one another, as before the willers of such a will-that I call marriage", (p.95-96).

Nietzsche thinks that the importance of the ideal marriage lies in its outcome. This outcome should be the child who is better and stronger than his parents. Later, he thinks that the outcome of the ideal marriage should be the **Superman**. This idea is tackled by Kaufmann (1974:311), in his book *Nietzsche, Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist*, who says, "Marriage, as Nietzsche sees it, is all too apt to be the supreme temptation for man to betray his call; but he does not, for that reason, deprecate marriage altogether. Although "for the most part two animals find each other", marriage can be creative and "holy": namely, when two single ones meet-two who have become single ones by overcoming the duality of the inward and the outward, thought and action, ideal and reality. Even if they have not yet attained this state of being, but come together to aid each other in this supreme effort, mutually intensifying the "longing for the overman", eager that their children should not only represent another generation but surpass them, their marriage is a true marriage, and they have something to live for together: educating themselves, each other, and their children."

In the section 'of Marriage and Children', Nietzsche doesn't consider it enough to define the ideal marriage and that is it. He proceeds in mocking the ordinary concept of marriage by saying, "let this be the meaning and the truth of your marriage. But that which the many-too-many, the superfluous, call marriage-ah, what shall I call it? Ah, this poverty of soul in partnership! Ah, this filth of soul in

partnership! Ah, this miserable ease in partnership! All this they call marriage, and they say their marriages are made in Heaven, (p.96) I wished that the earth might tremble in convulsions when a saint mates with a goose. This one went out like a hero in quest of truths, and eventually he conquered a little dressed-up lie. His marriage, he calls it, (p.223)." His thoughts about marriage are not pleasant at all, he was affected by the violations that are committed by some who consider marriage to be holy tie and then do the verse which might be really shameful.

Section (24) in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* presents Nietzsche's ideas about breaking up of the marriage. He says, "I have always found the badly-paired to be the most revengeful: they make everybody suffer for the fact that they are no longer single. For that reason, I want honest people to say to one another: 'we love each other.... 'Allow us a short term and a little marriage, to see if we are fit for the great marriage! It's a big thing always to be with another!'", (p.228).

In the above quoted passage, Nietzsche suggests a solution for the breaking up in marriage. This solution consists of two parts: the first part calls for the honesty in love for one another, the second part calls for a short term marriage as a test of expected continuity of the "great" marriage. I think that this short term of marriage is not real marriage or merely a test as Nietzsche claims, but it is an alternative for prostitution. I might add here that Nietzsche's solutions for the breaking up in marriage are relevant only to marriage of bodies and emotions but never refer to marriage of minds!

In *Twilight of the Idols*, Nietzsche calls us to witness the modern marriage (p.94), let us witness:

Witness modern marriage. It is obvious that all sense has gone out of modern marriage: which is, however, no objection to marriage but to modernity. The rationale of marriage lay in the legal sole responsibility of the man: marriage thereby had a center of gravity, whereas now it limps with both legs...., one does not, ..., establish marriage on the basis of 'love'-one establishes it on the basis of the sexual drive, the drive to own property (wife

and child considered as property), the drive to dominate which continually organizes the smallest type of domain, the family...

Modern Marriage has been introduced explicitly corrupted in Nietzsche's views. According to him, true marriage has to be built upon: the natural instinct, the sex drive, the property of woman drive, and the domination drive. By having all of these drives together, the society will have the rational and the uncorrupt marriage. Moreover, the society will have a strong family inside it. He adds, if man has lost his mastery over woman and children, marriage will be irrational and corrupt. So, the husband and not the wife must be the center of "gravity" or power in marriage. From here I can deduce that Nietzsche stands against the emancipation of woman which will destroy the strong structure of the family and will affect badly the whole society. In other words, woman must remain under the mastery of man.

In *Beyond Nihilism*, Ofelia Schutte explains the strategy of domination in marriage, "Nietzsche has defended a master-slave hierarchy as essential to the family as well as to society at large. The family, as the smallest but most important social structure, consists of a master-slave structure in which duty suppresses emotion, man suppresses woman, and parents suppress the children. The latter relationship-parents versus children-provides the form through which the structure of domination is passed from one generation to the next." (p.182-183)

3- The Political Level: The political level in the manly-womanly relation is represented through the emancipation of woman which Nietzsche was totally against. He couldn't see woman more than a slave or an "Oriental Property" to man. She has to be an organizer of the family issues and she has to be responsible for children and their education.

Nietzsche thinks that woman has no place in politics, education, writing and jobs. Her right place is in her family as a mother and wife, and not more. Add to that, he claims that woman wants to be more, and there are "learned asses of the male" who "advise woman to defeminize herself in this fashion and to imitate all the stupidities with which "man" in

Europe, European 'manliness', is sick-who would like to reduce woman to the level of 'general education', if not to that to newspaper reading and playing at politicsthere is a desire to make her in general more 'cultivated', and as they say, to make the 'weak sex' strong through culture."(*Beyond Good and Evil*,p.149)

In *Beyond Good and Evil*, in section (238) (p.147) Nietzsche sees that the base of the problem between man and woman is that the latter is asking for or dreaming of her equal rights. He describes the asking of woman for equal rights as, "a typical sign of shallow-mindedness". On page (148), he adds, "As she thus seizes new rights, looks to become 'master', and inscribes the 'progress' of woman on her flags and banners, the reverse is happening with dreadful clarity; woman is retrogressing...and the 'emancipation of woman'....as it has been demanded and advanced by women themselves, ...is thus revealed a noteworthy symptom of the growing enfeeblement and blunting of the most feminine instincts. There is stupidity in this movement...to let herself go before the man, perhaps even 'to the extent of producing a book.'" Nietzsche considers this movement a stupid one, since it gives woman the freedom which she should not have. According to him, she has to be restricted to her husband's mastery and she has to maintain her role as a wife and mother only. She doesn't have the right to ask for imaginative rights. She has to stick herself to life force: she is female grows to be submissive, obedient wife and compassionate mother.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Nietzsche sees the nature of woman as contradictory which combines weakness and strength at the same time. He sees the sexual relation between man and woman as free, pure, and affirmative of life. He sees the social relation between them corrupt through marriage. He also supports the master-slave relation in family to be the basis of the rational marriage. According to all of these descriptions and conditions which surround woman in his philosophy, Nietzsche opposes the emancipation of woman completely. He considers

those who supported woman in asking for her rights 'learned asses'.

Nietzsche wants woman to bear the Superman who will rule over a worthy culture in a worthy society. And for him, this couldn't be achieved when all people are masters. Such a relation(master-slave) has to be developed between husband and wife, master and workers. By this domination, the superman achieves his high goals. It seems for me that Nietzsche has no superwoman.

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