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Analysis of selections #108 and #125 in Gay Science

In selection 108, Nietzsche gives his points which he wants to make frankly. The Buddha was dead, but his shadow was displayed for centuries; God is dead, but there may still be caves in which his shadow is displayed(The Gay Science, selection 108). Then, he says that we must still defeat even his shadow. So, what does God mean? What is the shadow? And, why we must defeat the shadow? Those are the main questions that I need to consider, and I want to explain them with my personal understanding.

God, in selection 108, can represent a great number of things, for example, the real Christian God, the two worlds(the true world, and the apparent world), god of philosophy, etc. In general, God can be anything. However, I consider that the old standards, and values are the best explanation. Nietzsche argues that the old standards and values are gone, and we should rethink and reevaluate all values. This argument seems to appear in selection 125, the madman.

What is the shadow? Personally, I suppose that the shadow is something which replace the God, after God is dead. It is not God, but it follows the rule of God, and God influences it, so that is why we should also defeat even the shadow. Nietzsche does not simply consider that we should rethink and reevaluate all values, besides, he points out that we should break out the whole model which is built under the rule of God. It seems that the most likely replacement shadow is science, according to the history. However, Nietzsche seems not satisfied with it; he does not think that science and scientific procedure are absolute foundation. It seems not good to lose God for him, so he considers that we need to build a firm foundation, a new standard. And in section 125 of *The Gay Science*, he explains why we need God.

In selection 125, Nietzsche raises several questions through the voice of a madman, and obviously, the madman represents Nietzsche, himself. The response of the public to the madman is what Nietzsche thinks the world will do to his view. The series of questions posed by the madman represents what will happen to us after the death of God. There is no fixed source of order and direction beneath the flux of events in the world, no “spider of purpose and morality behind the great captious web of causality.” This is the significance of the statement, made by the madman(GP, p. 101). Madman tries to get people to try to think about those questions, but unfortunately, people do not realize that God is dead, even though they have witness it. And Nietzsche sees nothing funny about the thought of the death of God, if there is nothing that is an absolute in our culture, then this opens the door to nihilism, the complete disbelief in all values.

Besides, in the first part of those question, Nietzsche supposes that the nihilism will come and cover us after we lose God; where are we moving? Is there still an above and a below? Are not we wandering as if through an endless nothing(The Gay Science, section 125)? These questions indicate a negative, nihilistic view. Furthermore, these questions also support the section 108, which he explains that it is serious and worse if we do not have God. In the following questions, he seems to give his thinking about how can we build the new God. He asks that do not we have to become gods ourselves just to seem worthy of it(The Gay Science, section 125). Nietzsche assumes that human can become Gods themselves; they can become their standards and values, and he describes this behavior as “there is never a greater deed”(The Gay Science, section 125). Nietzsche, in my opinion again, tries to encourage people to break down old values, and at the same time, I think it also express that Nietzsche argues against the religion. Besides, we have to become gods ourselves, in my opinion, should refer to another Nietzsche's conception: Overman. The overman is a person who constructed by a new value system with a new world outlook on the basis of his declaration that God is dead, and we need to reevaluate all traditional standards and values.

I think there is one thing that Nietzsche agrees with the grand inquisitor- that is, they both express the denial of the existing God. From the dialogue between the grand inquisitor and Jesus, it can be seen that he thinks the appearance of Jesus (the son of God) is not necessary, while Nietzsche directly expresses the idea that God is dead. Nietzsche will agree with Ivan Karamazov that suffering to death is worth it if it brings human happiness. And for the underground man, he seems to have the same attitude as Nietzsche, they both have a negative impression about science, and scientific procedure; the underground man thinks that they restrict human’s free will, while Nietzsche considers that they cannot build an absolute foundation for our lives.