



# Slavery and Freedom

By Nicolas Berdyaev

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## Slavery and Freedom By Nicolas Berdyaev

In this book, Nikolai Berdyaev examines the struggle against slavery in its diverse forms. When he speaks of slavery and freedom, although he also uses these terms in a political sense, the underlying meaning is metaphysical: for Berdyaev, political slavery and freedom are rooted in our metaphysical slavery and freedom. The philosophy of this book is deliberately personal; it is a philosophy of personalism. As a philosopher, Berdyaev not only wished to gain knowledge of the world, but also to change the world: he always denied that the things which the world presents to us are a stable and final reality; this also goes for the relation between slavery and freedom. For Berdyaev the spiritual liberation of man is tied to the realization of personality; it is the attainment of wholeness. The Russian philosopher Nikolai Berdyaev (1874-1948) was one of the greatest religious thinkers of the twentieth century. His philosophy goes beyond mere thinking, mere rational conceptualization, and tries to attain authentic life itself: the profound layers of existence that are in contact with God's world. Berdyaev directed all of his efforts, philosophical as well as in his personal and public life, at replacing the kingdom of this world with the kingdom of God. According to him, we can all attempt to do this by tapping the divine creative powers which constitute our true nature. Our mission is to be collaborators with God in His continuing creation of the world. This is what Berdyaev said about himself: "Man, personality, freedom, creativeness, the eschatological-messianic resolution of the dualism of two worlds - these are my basic themes."

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