

Raymundo, Jino

ITETHIC

Book: Contemporary Moral Problems

Title: Chapter 1: Ethical Theories (Friedrich Nietzsche: Master and Slave Morality)

Internet Reference:

<http://www.amazon.com/Contemporary-Moral-Problems-James-White/dp/0534517242>

Learning Expectations:

To know what is the difference of master and slave morality

How morality is connected with the master and slave relationship

Quote:

“The notion of ‘favour’ has, inter pares, neither significance nor good repute; there may be a sublime way of letting gifts as it were light upon one from above, and of drinking them thirstily like dew-drops; but for those arts and displays the noble soul has no aptitude. His egoism hinders him here: In general, he looks ‘aloft’ unwillingly—he looks either forward, horizontally and deliberately, or downwards—he knows that he is on a height.”

Book Review:

Friedrich Nietzsche stressed on two types of morality, namely, **Master and Slave Morality**. The former, states that this is the morality of a person who is distinguished as “creator of values”, the latter, states that this is the morality of a person who surrenders himself to the master, it is the very opposite of master-morality. Nietzsche also declared that a good society must be powerful in the sense that they must be supreme to all other societies. I think that Nietzsche abides by the saying “Survival of the Fittest”, meaning only the strong shall survive and the weak shall perish. He might have believed to the supreme race, the *Aryan race*. In my honest opinion, the battle for supremacy here in earth is constant and never ending. From technology to military arsenal, nations across the earth have been pulling strings here and there. The one top can claim that they are the masters, and everyone else beneath them is slaves. The hunger for power continues every minute. Morality has suffered very severely through the years. The battle for supremacy lingers every corner. Some nations will pursue it, no matter what the cost. Millions have died in wars around the world. Billions have been injured. The number keeps on growing and that, I think, will remain constant. World peace seems impossible. Many have tried but all of them failed. I just hope that someday, balance of power will exist, or perhaps close to that.

What I have learned:

I have learned that there remains, and always will, a master and a slave.

Integrity Questions:

1. Who deserves to be called as “masters”?
2. Who deserves to be called as “slaves”?
3. Will “morality” be existent if there are things such as a master and a slave?

Review Questions:

1. How does Nietzsche characterize a good and healthy society?

- “The essential thing in a good and healthy aristocracy is that it should *not* regard itself as a function either of the kingship or the commonwealth, but as the *significance* and highest justification thereof—that it should therefore accept with a good conscience the sacrifice of a legion of individuals, who, *for its sake*, must be suppressed and reduced to imperfect men, to slaves and instruments.”

2. What is Nietzsche’s view of injury, violence and exploitation?

- “To refrain mutually from injury, from violence, from exploitation, and put one’s will on a par with that of others: this may result in a certain rough sense in good conduct among individuals when the necessary conditions are given. As soon, however, as one wished to take this principle more generally, and if possible even as *the fundamental principle of society*, it would immediately disclose what it really is—namely, a Will to the *denial* of life, a principle of dissolution and decay.”

3. Distinguish between master-morality and slave-morality.

- Master-morality: “When it is the rulers who determine the conception ‘good’, it is the exalted, proud disposition which is regarded as the distinguishing feature and that which determines the order of rank. The noble type of man separates from himself the beings in whom the opposite of this exalted, proud disposition displays itself: he despises them. Let it at once be noted that in this first kind of morality the antithesis ‘good’ and ‘bad’ mean practically the same as ‘noble’ and ‘despicable’;—the antithesis ‘good’ and ‘evil’ is of a different origin...The noble type of man regards *himself* as a determiner of values; he does not require to be approved of; he passes the judgment: ‘What is injurious to me is injurious in itself’; he knows that it is he himself only who confers honour on things; he is a *creator of values*.”

- Slave-morality: "The slave has unfavourable eye for the virtues of the powerful; he has skepticism and distrust, a *refinement* of distrust of everything 'good' that is there honoured—he would fain persuade himself that the very happiness there is not genuine...Slave-morality is essentially the morality of utility."

4. Explain the Will to Power.

- Nietzsche defines: "The organization in which the individuals treat each other as equal, which the individuals within it refrain from doing to each other. It will endeavor to grow to gain ground, attract to itself and acquire ascendancy—not owing to any morality or immorality, but because it *lives*, and because life *is* precisely Will to Power.

Discussion Questions:

1. Some people view Nietzsche's writings as harmful and even dangerous. For example, some have charged Nietzsche with inspiring Nazism. Are those charges justified or not? Why or why not?

- Yes, according to http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Friedrich_Nietzsche, "However, the Nazis made very selective use of Nietzsche's philosophy; this association with National Socialism caused Nietzsche's reputation to suffer following World War II"

2. What does it mean to be "a creator of values"?

- It means that a man honors whatever he recognizes in himself.