

Friedrich Nietzsche: Master & Slave Morality

Review Questions:

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

According to Nietzsche, a healthy society does not exist for its own sake, but exists for the sake of a higher type of person. He stated that all higher civilization arose from the barbarians, who with their will and desire for power, have preyed upon the weaker, moral and peaceful societies. Furthermore, the superior person pursue a master-morality that emphasizes power, strength, egoism, and freedom, as distinguished from slave morality that calls for weakness, submission, sympathy, and love.

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

For Nietzsche, injury, violence and exploitation is the consequence of the will to power by man. The will to power is the dominant principle of organic function. Without the will to power exploiting the sentimental weaknesses of equality among people, society cannot develop. The will to power is the will to life. According to him, "to refrain from mutual injury, mutual violence, mutual exploitation, to equate one's will with that of another," is nihilistic. It is a "denial of life." As a "principle of society," it is "a principle of dissolution and decay." He also stated that, "Exploitation pertains to the essence of the living thing as a fundamental organic function; it is a consequence of the intrinsic will to power which is precisely the will to life." This is what he believes in and this is his view on the following. For him, the life of a person naturally involves injury, violence and exploitation and you can only belong either to the ones who do it to others or the one being done unto.

3. Distinguish between master-morality and slave morality.

Master Morality is a "yea-saying" attitude where "good and "bad" are equivalent to "noble" and "despicable" respectively. The master creates values. Slave morality is a "nay-saying" attitude or herd morality which holds to the standard of that which is useful or beneficial to the weak or powerless. The virtues are sympathy, kindness and humility. Strong and independent individual are evil.

Nietzsche, slave morality takes certain typical characteristics of the "lowest order" and master morality in slave morality, "good" means "tending to ease suffering" and "evil" means "tending to inspire fear." Nietzsche believes that slave morality is expressed in the standard moral systems. Master morality on the other hand, discusses the opposite. Master morality is to inspire fear; to inflict injury and exploitation to others.

The history of morals is the conflict of these two moral outlooks. The higher type creates his own values out of strength; the meek and powerless begin with resentment. Coexistence is impossible because the herd seeks to impose its values universally.

4. Explain the will to power.

According to Nietzsche the goal of Will to Power is essentially engaged in the preservation and enhancement of itself: The Will wills itself. Thus the Will to Power is essentially an activity of interpreting aimed at preserving and enhancing life itself. This is Nietzsche's notion of 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 there charges justified or not? Why or why not?**

It is understandable for people to think of it in this manner. Nietzsche does use big words and use them to divide further the superior from the inferior. They may think it inspired Nazism because his master morality takes account on inspiring fear to the weak ones. He believes that life revolves on the master who dictates everything and inflicts pain on those who don't follow and the slaves who have no choice but to accept the suffering the master puts on them.

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

To be a creator of values is Nietzsche's overman or in other terms his superman. It is his heroic individualism that makes a person an overman. He will be the creator of master morality and the likes.