

# WAR ON MORALITY

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## ABSTRACT

*Friedrich Nietzsche is a prominent thinker in the philosophy of against Christianity and attacking morality. Almost in all of his writings, Nietzsche ignores the presence of morality on one hand; and he advocates the preference of any practice towards behaving master traits and noble characters – master morality. I am arguing that, Nietzsche's concept of morality should be adjusted in a way to reconcile contradictions by providing a justified explanation unless his total philosophy of morality would fail. In addition, Nietzsche tried to expose as there is no morality and every value is a fabricated result of man as to refer nihilism. There is great paradox as a choice to continue one's own life while at the same time stating that it is not worth more than any other life and it is the source of critical paradox in relativism.*

## KEY WORDS

*Morality, Nihilism, slave, Master, Christianity, Good, Evil.*

## INTRODUCTION

Friedrich Nietzsche is well known in his philosophy against Christianity and morality. He has a significant influence on the 20<sup>th</sup> century philosophy. Influenced by the thoughts of Darwinism, he thinks that evolution shows that life is a struggle for existence. Nietzsche's discussion of morality seems to be nothing more than a confused and polemic attack and a verbal war against the values and dogmas of Christianity. He tried to expose and criticize the traditional dogmas and values of Christianity by separating himself from the rest of humanity. But his attack on Christianity seems unjustified rather simply his personal aspiration of hating it. In this paper I will explore his assessment of morality and Christianity on the basis of his works the *Genealogy of Morals, the will to Power, Anti-Christ, Beyond Good and Evil* and others<sup>1</sup>. I will consider some of the problems that he posed.

Friedrich Nietzsche advocates that Christianity and Jewish religion are the means to the existence of slave morality<sup>2</sup> by inspiring the mass to revolt by which begins when resentment<sup>3</sup> becomes a creative force. Slave morality is essentially negative and reactive which is originated from a denial of everything that is different from it. It looks outward and says “no” to the aggressive external forces that oppose and oppress it. On the other hand, master morality deals itself very little with what is outside of it. The low people or the “bad,” are an afterthought and they are noticed only as a contrast that brings out more strongly the superiority of the noble ones (Melinkova, 2010, pp. 2-3). While both slave and master morality can involve distortions of the truth, master morality does so far more lightly. Nietzsche notes that almost all the ancient Greek words denoting the lower orders of society are related to variants on the word for ‘unhappy’. The nobles saw themselves as naturally happy and any mistake rested on the contempt and distance they held from the lower orders. By contrast, the man of resentment distorts what he sees so as to present the noble man in as bad a light as possible to gain reassurance. Nietzsche's claim about morality is inclined to possess master morality of which some qualities that Nietzsche appreciates like dominance, suppression, exploitation, etc. This way would lead him to his major plan to achieve ‘the superman’. I will see his philosophical concept of superman in another term if possible. For now, let us come back to morality.<sup>4</sup>

Nietzsche occasionally spoke of morality unfavorably and critically. His philosophy had got little realization since it is difficult to realize it in real life. Some of his best-known phrases might give

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<sup>1</sup> The Will to power, Ecce Homo, The Gay Science, Untimely Meditations, Human All Too Human, Thus Spoke Zarathustra, And the Birth of Tragedy.

<sup>2</sup> Nietzsche had written more than ten philosophical works in his life time; he identified two types of morality

<sup>3</sup> Originally this term has been used as ‘*Ressentiment*’ in the works of Nietzsche, but for making it familiar with us I had chosen as it is. The term ‘*ressentiment*’ in Nietzsche's philosophy had been contextualized as a psychological reaction of different social classes; the nobles, the priests, and the slaves. While we are making with philosophical analysis of this word, it becomes a generative source of varied moral values.

<sup>4</sup> This way would lead him to his major plan to achieve ‘the superman’. I will see his philosophical concept of superman in another term if possible. For now, let us come back to morality.

the impression that he wished to drop the distinction between good and evil in order to transcend ethics altogether. Many serious thinkers, like B.D. Spinoza, have believed that everything that happens is equally necessary and equally expressive of the will of God, be it favorable or unfavorable to our special interests (Spinoza, 2002, p. 237). Therefore, we would call it as good or bad based on our met desires and its conformity to the will of God. However, Nietzsche was entirely free from this divine impediment and disorder in morals. The courage to adhere to what his soul loved, he puts severe criticism on the conception of God and teachings of Christianity. And what he liked was to think of power, he seriously commanded man and nature to pursue for their single object (Santayana, 1968, p. 125). What he criticized of was not all morality, for he had an enthusiastic master-morality of his own to impose on the weakest. He was thinking of the Christian virtues and especially of a certain Protestant and Kantian moralism with which he had perhaps been surfeited. Kantian morality conceived that duty was something absolute and not a method of securing whatever goods attainable by action. But Nietzsche, who was not humble enough to learn very much by studying, thought that he was propounding a revolutionary doctrine by putting beyond goods and evils and above right and wrong.

Nietzsche openly attaches morality to the attainment of power for gaining dominance over others. He tried to show the tight relation that good has with power in his work *Anti-Christ*:  
What is good? - Everything that enhances people's feeling of power; will to power and power itself. What is bad? Everything that stemming from weakness. What is happiness? The feeling that power is *growing*, that some resistance has been overcome. Not connectedness, but more power; not peace, but war; not virtue but prowess ..... (Nietzsche F. , 2007, p. 4).

For Nietzsche, every action, value and conduct could be the source of power if it is considered as good by any means. But the way he understands the use of power is difficult to realize and he does not consider whether it is easy to realize or not. It is difficult to grasp what Nietzsche means by the concept of power. In *On the Genealogy of Morals*, he gives emphasis on the shortcomings of the Judeo-Christian tradition and tracing back its origin. Disclosing the origin of slave morality in Christian tradition is the main objective of the book. He starts his discussion by rejecting the moral concepts descended from Judeo-Christian tradition. Nietzsche has mentioned the death of God in his earlier book<sup>5</sup>; as 'God is dead<sup>6</sup>: but given the way of men, there may still be caves for thousands of years in which his shadow will be shown' (Nietzsche, 2001: 109). His work *on the Genealogy of Morals* is seemed to rest on this statement. In the latter works, Nietzsche puts forth one question: what are the consequences for morality if God is dead? He suggested that, we could be free to act and no challenge to enjoy our will to life. Nietzsche criticizes Christian tradition for basing itself on two main weak points: the passivity and reactivity rather than creativity and activity. He argues that Christianity has led the western man to live in a state of passivity and negativity rather than creativity and activity. According to him, Christianity erodes the capacity or excellence of the 'superman' by imposing unimportant and weak moral codes in the name of God (ibid: 113). On the other hand, the philosophy of Christianity<sup>7</sup> regarding with the concept of superman is another point of departure for philosophical discussion.

Nietzsche denies all aspects of traditional morality in order to introduce a new type of morality of his own to impose. He continuously provides his argument on morality, particularly Christian morality, that it doesn't affirm life but of the reversal of it. It advocates and values a kind of person in whom it finds nothing to be valued: like a 'herd animal' that has very little or no idea of greatness and needs more security, absence of fear and suffering. Morality restricts the natural instincts of human beings (Craig, 1998, p. 166).

Nietzsche has tried to show the origin of morality through historical progress. He first establishes the origins of Christian values and believes that slavery has been an inseparable part of Christian tradition and values. He believes that Christian tradition has been contrarily enslaved during an important period of its development. Such a slave morality is analyzed by Nietzsche *On the Genealogy of Morals* in the following way:

The slaves' revolt in morals begins with this, that resentment itself becomes creative and gives birth to values: the resentment of those who are denied the real reaction, the deed and who compensate with an imaginary revenge, whereas all noble morality grows out of a successful affirmation of oneself, slave morality immediately says 'No' to what comes from outside, to what is different, to what is not oneself: and this 'No' is creative deed (Nietzsche, 1967: 24).

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<sup>5</sup> Gay Science.

<sup>6</sup> By this claim, Nietzsche wants to express the human's psychological denial of God or God's role in our life but not of the ontological existence of God.

<sup>7</sup> In this article, by Christianity I am referring to the teachings of Ethiopian orthodox church.

The above extract shows the attitude of Nietzsche towards the origins of moral approvals ('yes') and disapprovals ('no'). The factual motivation for such reactivity is hidden in the western man's state of slavery. He states that the word 'good' was first used by the nobility who applied it to themselves in order to set themselves apart from the so called ordinary people. The word 'bad' was not first the antonym of 'good'; instead it was the opposite of how the nobility class of those societies performed as such.

Another term that needs to be explained in detail is '*ressentiment*'<sup>8</sup>. The word resentment appears frequently in the works of Nietzsche. Most of his critics believe that Nietzsche uses this term because there is no exact German word for it (Nietzsche, 1967: 5). One can have a better understanding of the resentment of the slave by contrasting it to the contempt felt by the master towards the slave. For Nietzsche, the bad acts of the masters are bad only in the eyes of the slave. The slave is resentful and this characteristic of resentment becomes the energetic source for the later revenge of the slave. The man of resentment (i.e. slaves) becomes ultimately cleverer than the noble man. Resentment is the emotion felt by the oppressed that could be an internal pain or external grievance. For Nietzsche, resentment is an imaginary revenge by those groups of the society who has been oppressed by the nobility. This feeling of having an enemy generates the most important creation of resentment which is evil.

This binary opposition of good and bad was reversed later on. The common people, who could not adopt the aristocratic style of life, have overturned this opposition in their frustration. Subsequently, the good-bad value system was reversed and the morality of the common was announced to have greater value whereas the morality of the nobility was declared to be 'evil'. In his book *on the Genealogy of Morals* Nietzsche writes:

The reverse is true of the noble way of evaluating: it acts and grows spontaneously, it seeks out its opposite only in order to say 'Yes' to itself still more gratefully, still more jubilantly; and in its negative concept, "base," "mean," "bad," is only an after-born, pale, contrasting image in relation to the positive basic concepts, which is nourished through and through his life and passion: "we who are noble, good, beautiful, happy ones!" (Nietzsche F. , *On the Genealogy of Morals*, 1967, p. 37).

This slave culture which is the culture of the common people celebrates this "after-born" reversal of values and ultimately glorifies its own existence. The Christian tradition celebrated negative values in the way adversely affected the world as he argues. However, for Nietzsche morality should celebrate the "noble, good, beautiful, happy" activity. As he argues, the slaves refuse this way of life. In other words, "salve morality immediately says 'No' to what comes from outside, to what is different, to what is not oneself and this 'No' is its creative deed". As a result, this tradition is not creative; it is instead reactive to negative impulses (ibid: 42).

Nietzsche's radical and harsh refusal of the traditional moral system is mostly because of he assumes that it grows out of hatred, self-denial and a favorite reversal of the realities of the time. The attention of the slave first focused on the nobility who hardly thought of him. The wishes of the slave are fulfilled when the value system of the nobility is reversed. As a result, this reversal of values was originally a negative act produced by resentment. In Nietzsche's view, this is exactly what has come to be true in the history of the dominant moral tradition of Europe:

Conversely, imagine "the enemy" as conceived by a man of resentment and here precisely is his deed, his creation: he has conceived "the evil enemy," "the evil one" and indeed as the fundamental concept from which he then derives, as an afterimage and counter instance, a "good one" himself (Kaufmann, 1982, p. 452).

Nietzsche elaborates how the concepts of bad and evil are regarded by common people as opposed to the concept of "good". He deals with this difference by mentioning that the concept of "good" has two distinct meanings. The nobility's "good" is what the slaves call the "evil". Nietzsche's harsh critique of the slave morals is mostly based on this fact that it makes progress because of hatred and denial by the slaves. One could mention that these characteristics of Nietzsche's criticisms of morality are not based on particular values he appreciates or refuses.

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<sup>8</sup> Nietzsche, 1967, *The Genealogy of Morals*, Edited and Trans. by Walter Kaufmann, p. 5-10. Walter Kaufmann's commentary, *GM* Editor's Introduction at section 3. '*Ressentiment*' is a French equivalent for the English word resentment. Most translators agreed that Nietzsche uses this word in order to show the deep pain and suppression of the slaves by their masters. I will come back later for detail discussion of this concept.

On the other hand, in *Beyond Good and Evil*<sup>9</sup>, Nietzsche seems to be more careful in his explanations of the nobility and slave culture. Here he appears to be a much more profound philosopher whose definition of such concepts as “greatness”, “good” and “evil” are more sophisticated than his other reflections. He characterizes both the dominant slave morality and the modern world as arising from a complex mixture of drives and values:

Confronted with a world of “modern ideas” which would banish everybody into a corner and a speciality, a philosopher - if there could be any philosophers today would be forced to define the greatness of man, the concept of greatness ... of man’s comprehensiveness and multiplicity, his wholeness in manifoldness (Kaufmann, 1982, p. 445).

In general, all his attempts to exert power presuppose an interpretation that gives purpose and justification to a particular way of securing power as he puts:

.... all events in the organic world are subduing a becoming master, and all subduing and becoming master involves a fresh interpretation, an adaptation through which any previous “meaning” and “purpose” are necessarily obscured or even obliterated’... (Nietzsche F. , *On the Genealogy of Morals*, 1967, p. 77).

He clearly tries to show his strong disposition of attaining power at any cost by which this would lead him to make his works unfinished since it makes all more or less imaginary. In the genealogy, Nietzsche shows that the morality which we usually count as self-evident is in fact the product of a long history<sup>10</sup> in which decisive developments took place. At this point, he tries to show the struggle to attain dominance in the history of Jews based on his analysis of Christian and Jew religion not based on commentaries of the Holy Bible.

In his books, *Beyond Good and Evil*, *On the Genealogy of Morals* and *The Antichrist*, Nietzsche draws a sharp distinction between all conventional moralities. All moral systems that we live up with would be familiar with today if what he considers the original, animal or natural morality is the quality possessed by the ‘superman’. The moralities of kindness, forgiveness, mercy, peace and fairness are termed as slave morality. He considers them as weakness and biological feebleness (fragility). In contrast, master morality is the morality of strength, animal spirits, power and the ability to control others.

Nietzsche believes that the original or biological morality is the master morality of strength and dominance. It is the earliest and most natural morality. This instinctual morality is that which values strength and dominance. Winning through power is the morality of the original, strong, and natural masters which is good for those with power and strength to force others to their will. It overcomes those who are weak and bends them to the will of those who have the strength and power to exploit others for their own benefit. In this sense, it is not good for the weak and the feeble ones.

Nietzsche believes that, it is through gradual process that the weak figured out such a deceitful way to win some power over the masters. It was a small and sneaky trick that the weak used to gain power over those who have empowered them. Their trick, according to Nietzsche’s contentions, was to develop an entirely new morality that could put limit on masters. This is the revaluation of those old values, which is helpful to persuade the society that the characteristics of weakness were good and that of strength were evil. The weak taught that gentleness, kindness, sympathy, and mercy are good qualities. On the other hand, dominance, exploitation, and subjugation are bad. For him, these new values of the weak were the exact opposite of the original biological, natural or master values of power, strength and control. Nietzsche believes that the weak attempted to overcome the power of masters by this sneaky and underhanded method of re-valuing all values which makes them as lower ones. They could not overcome the strong by any other methods which required strength and control. The prominent agents of this decadent morality that values weakness over strength were Socrates, Judaism and Christianity that is why Nietzsche severely criticizes of them in many of his works.

Nietzsche offered partly a historical account of the harmful consequences of traditional ethics in *On the Genealogy of Morals*. For him, ‘good’ initially and properly designated only the right of those individuals who had social and political power to live by sheer force of will. But a ‘priestly’ social order is motivated by the resentment of the herd and it is a corrupt alternative that would appeal to the ‘herd’ of less capable persons. In ‘slave morality’ endorsed by religious establishments,

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<sup>9</sup> Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Portable Nietzsche*, especially sections 200 and 212 of *BGE*, Edited and Translated by Walter Kaufmann, 1966.

<sup>10</sup> Friedrich Nietzsche, *BGE*, 1966; 110 Translated and Edited by Walter Kaufmann.

Nietzsche argues that forceful actions which should be admired are labeled as evil, while the cowardly tendency is transformed into the supposed virtue of prudence.

The real autonomy to man as Nietzsche maintained could only mean freedom from all external constraints on one's behavior and actions. In this natural and admirable state of existence, each individual human being would live a life without artificial limits of moral obligation. No other authorization on conduct would be necessary than the natural punishment involved in the victory of a superior person over the defeated enemy. But the wish of lesser people is to secure themselves against interference from nobles who are better gave rise to a false sense of moral duty. The natural fear of being overwhelmed by superior rival becomes internalized as the self-generated sense of guilt and individual conscience places severe limits on the normal exercise of human desire. According to the moral philosophy of Nietzsche, the fundamental self-betrayal of the human race is to submit its freedom to the fictitious demands of an imaginary God. Afraid to live by the strength of our own wills, we invent religion as a way of generating and explaining our perpetual sense of being abused and defeated in life.

Nietzsche does not take into account the contributions of Christianity for the development of this world. His critique of theistic belief is essentially nihilistic.<sup>11</sup> This undermines the meaning of our world that has been acknowledged through our contextual involvement in it for the sake of fictitious reality identified with the truth. His critique does not stop here. He is not simply interested in claiming that a belief in God undermines our meaningful involvement in world but also interested in exploring how life came to weaken itself through morality and religion. Does he consider the life of people without the values of Christianity?

## SLAVE AND MASTER MORALITY

In this section, I will discuss Nietzsche's assessment of values and his concept of traditional morality. I will also try to show how Nietzsche deals with master and slave distinction of morality. His critique mainly depends on life-enhancement in which it could be reconstructed from many of his writings. He is also concerned with the general manner in which we value whether these values arise in a sovereign way or, as a reaction to our envy/fear of others (May, 1999, p. 41) As Simon May tried to elaborate the term 'master' and 'slave' denote the sovereign and the reactive manner of valuing something respectively.<sup>12</sup>

The characteristics of a sovereign/master can be stated as follows. The master has no interest in universalizing his values and expects others like him to share his values because they are the same type of persons. His conception of 'good' is not shaped by a reaction of fear towards another in whom the master calls it as 'bad' (Nietzsche F. , *On the Genealogy of Morals*, 1967, pp. 39-43). By being courageous enough to recognize his own nature, the master has no need to expose onto external authority.

According to May (May, 1999, pp. 1-2), the primary meaning of 'master' in its conceptual form is not the domination of others in which the 'slaves' attempt too. Instead, it is the relation of oneself namely that of self-legislation by culminating in the capacity to promise oneself. This sovereignty would be up to consciously submitting to one's own nature and its behavior of historical determination. It does not need any type of authoritative guidance for the master which makes it as 'passive'. The master fully and courageously wills his own necessity and moreover, in the age of *decadence*, seeks uncompromisingly to abandon all life-denying ways of employing values, which makes the master active. Therefore, there is an ideal combination of activity and passivity which characterizes a healthy relation of an individual with the 'will to power'.<sup>13</sup>

On the other hand, the reactive individual needs physiologically speaking external stimuli in order to act freely at all. These stimuli are the triggers of all his most enduring valuations and practices that concern the strength in others or in him importantly of his fears. In a response, the slaves experience the reactive affects like hatred, envy jealousy and attempts to neutralize strength by

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<sup>11</sup> Nihilism is Nietzsche's term for reality's meaning essentially nothing.

<sup>12</sup> Simon May quoted and use this idea on his work as he deliberately uses the term 'sovereign', rather than 'active'. First, 'sovereign' better describes the noble person's capacity to live 'in trust and openness with himself (*GM*, I, 10) than does 'active' and is also closer in meaning to the masterly ideal of 'autonomy' that Nietzsche introduces in *GM*, II, 1-2, which is essentially the self-mastery to 'promise oneself'. Second, the term 'active' usually denotes the opposite of 'passive'; and yet, as mentioned in the next paragraph, passivity is also a crucial feature of the master, in his submission to the reality of his own historical determination. Third, the 'slave' is also active in the search for power, indeed crucially so; for with his very persistence he is able to overwhelm the masters.

<sup>13</sup> Simon May, *Nietzsche's Ethics and his War on 'Morality'*, Clarendon press, Oxford; 1999; 42.

taking it as evil and shameful (Nietzsche F. , *On the Genealogy of Morals*, 1967, p. 40). Thus, this reactive spirit never defines itself for itself and is always against something higher and stronger. Therefore, this act of resentment becomes the cause of oppression and suffering. This interpretation morally defines suffering by ascribing it to failure to respect unconditional maxims, a failure which is in turn held to originate inessential guilt. This resentment of one's perceived weakness that fuels these attitudes Nietzsche calls it as '*ressentiment*'.

According to Nietzsche, *ressentiment* has some principal features which distinguish it from mere resentment. First and foremost, its purpose of hatred is large in scope, i.e. it is universal that embraces all of the existences at the limit. Secondly, it falsifies that aim in order to blame the act of masters. Finally, this universal resentment is impossible to satisfy; its revenge must be imaginary at least in part (Deleuz, 1983, pp. 111-124).<sup>14</sup> This universal *ressentiment* cast blame on both specific objects such as on masters and on the whole world including the general features of it as time, space and contingency. Blame could be universal for two main reasons: first due to the direction of slave's anger towards suffering and from where this generates; secondly, to show their strong disagreement with the masters of the world and by this slaves could get better option to undermine anything that they could possibly live for (May, 1999, p. 43). Also on his work of *On the Genealogy of Morals*, Nietzsche makes a contrast between what he calls "master" and "slave" morality.<sup>15</sup> Master morality is the morality of the masters, the nobles, the warriors, who see themselves and their actions as good. For him, strength, power, health, wealth, and happiness are all considered as "good" qualities of masters. These masters perceive what he calls 'pathos of distance' between themselves and those who are poor, unhealthy, weak, or impotent. For him, these are all undesirable qualities hence the masters call them as "bad". Insofar as they consider themselves to be the sole ground of values, they find no need in projecting their values onto some external authority. In its pure conceptual form, the word 'master' concerns not the domination of others in which the slaves similarly attempt but rather a relationship to oneself through sovereign self-legislation<sup>16</sup>.

There are two forms of master morality - passive and active. These are in no case mutually exclusive. Master morality is passive when the person submits to his own nature and historical determination. On the other hand, it is active when one wills one's own necessity and seeks to abandon all life-denying ways of employing values. Those opposed the masters developed slave morality by which Nietzsche recognized it with the plebs and the Priestly caste (May, 1999, p. 25). For him, these people are the poor, unhealthy, weak, and impotent and they have learned to hate the power of masters. The slaves experienced reactive effects, like hatred, envy, jealousy, and attempt to neutralize the strength of others. According to Nietzsche's contention, slaves believe that masters are the very source of their suffering and hence they stamp them as evil.

Nietzsche's account of master and slave morality is an attempt and challenge to explain human understanding of what is right and wrong. Master morality is based on strength that is used to influence others. What is strong is good and what is weak is bad. Those who are with master morality are strong and have created their own morality. They know that they are their own judge. Slave morality is the opposite of master morality. Slaves believe in the highest good for the most people rather than considering the good that benefits the strong. With the help of his concept of master-slave dichotomy, Nietzsche attempts to provide explanation for the conflicts existing in societies as created by master and slave distinction.

But it is not possible for an individual to be completely in slave or master group. One would have to be deliberately illogical to have a fully independent moral viewpoint. The morals of the slaves are generally the accepted moral stances. Someone in a master position would have to be in favor of murder, rape, robbery, and all sorts of things that are generally accepted as wrong by the herd, as Nietzsche argues, while it is possible that there are people who go against everything that slaves stand for. On the other hand, it is very unlikely that someone in the slave group follows every single moral concept of the society. It is not possible for a large group of people to fully have one moral profile.

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<sup>14</sup> A substantially different and very interesting account of *ressentiment* is given by Gilles Deleuz in *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson, London: Athlone Press, 1983: 111–24—though Deleuz, here as elsewhere, and takes great liberties with Nietzsche's texts. Perhaps the subtlest critique of Nietzsche's conception of *ressentiment* and its nourishment of Christian morality is by Max Scheler in *Ressentiment*, trans. W. Holdheim, New York: The Free Press, 1961.

<sup>15</sup> *GM*, Essay I. For additional information on this concept read the work of Simon May, *Nietzsche's Ethics and His War on 'Morality'*, Oxford: Clarendon Press—Oxford University Press, 1999: 41. The ideas of master and slave morality are also expressed by Nietzsche in 1878 in section 45 of *Human, all-Too-Human*, and this is the passage in which his famous terms "master morality" and "slave morality" are introduced.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid* p. 44.

In reality, there would be a combination of master and slave in every individual because it is not possible to follow completely either the slave's or master's profile. Nietzsche's concept of slave-master morality is a better generalization than an actual truth. There will always be those who break the master-slave social system and human's actions and habits cannot be split into only two categories. There will also be those who do not desire to make themselves as masters and slaves. There would be those who were happy with the social positions they had and who do not worry about the morality of slaves or masters. Does a person live entirely outside of the slave-master morality or is it the self-surmounted man that Nietzsche has described?

Using this master-slave morality as general the self-surmounted man can exist within the system. Nietzsche describes him as a person who is beyond the morality of the slaves and masters. He is a person who is entirely unconcerned with being a master and far too intelligent to be a slave. Nietzsche is in favor of the self-surmounted man. He believes that there is a feeling of superiority in being beyond the moral concerns of others and living outside of the slave-master disagreement. But the self-surmounted man could not truly exist as there is no way to be above morality. In reality it could not be possible to live without the idea of what is right and wrong. Perhaps Nietzsche is simply advocating the disregard he had for morals. But this seems to have terrible implications. What good could possibly come from being a person without morality?

Nietzsche has tried to describe a person who was truly a free-thinker, capable of applying morality depending on the given situation and understanding the fluidity of morals. If this is the self-surmounting man he is describing than his reasoning better and it would be advantageous for society to strive (ibid: 31). Without the sanctions of strict moral thinking society could grow into more flexible. This struggle would have high possibility to the advent of civil disorder since human desires are incalculable.

Now, let's come back to the discussion of his master-slave distinction. *The Genealogy of Morals* seems to be credible concerned to expose the origin of our moral prejudices. He states that: "in the beginnings were the knightly-aristocratic masters who determined for themselves that they were 'good' and the weak unfortunates lacked masterly qualities were in consequence 'bad'" (Nietzsche F. , *On the Genealogy of Morals*, 1967, p. 33). Not surprisingly, the numerous and miserable bad grew gradually resentful of their lot until in a surprising and under described stroke of genius, their resentment becomes creative and the fruit of this creative resentment was an unheard of new morality.

Slave morality at the heart of the claim that those who had previously been regarded as inferior and bad embody good qualities of humanity. The masters are not good but "evil" and the slaves' resentment is universal and they falsify the object of their sovereign individual for the purpose of making their master undeniably blameworthy (ibid: 42).<sup>17</sup> They assign whoever they resent to a corrupting realm called the phenomenal, in contrast to those who are supposed to be truly 'real' transcending it altogether. Likewise, they posit a God who saves the weak and damns the strong. That means the slaves invent all sorts of philosophical concepts through essence and metaphysically free will. Those who possess strength will be made to feel constitutionally guilty and yet still capable of choosing to disclaim what they inescapably are. With the aid of such fictions,<sup>18</sup> says Nietzsche, the slaves are able to despise and take revenge upon their enemies in cooperation or in representation which then brings about "spiritualization of revenge" (ibid: 33-34).<sup>19</sup>

In addition, as *ressentiment* is impossible to satisfy, the revenge of the slave must be imaginary. Nietzsche declares that good judgment did not originate from those to whom "goodness" was shown rather it was the "good" or the powerful; themselves who could feel establish themselves and their actions as well. It was out of this pathos of distance they first seized the right to create values and to coin names for things. Above all else, noble morality is self-established and develops from a triumphant affirmation of itself (Nietzsche F. , *On the Genealogy of Morals*, 1967, pp. 37-38).

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<sup>17</sup> It is said that there are two reasons blame which the slave commits are universal. First, the slave's extreme anger is directed at suffering which existence generates. And second, to repudiate the world as a whole it is best strategy for undermining anything that masters could possibly live for.

<sup>18</sup> The ascetic ideal structures the above fictions created by the men of resentment, which in its limiting form, demands that the whole of phenomenal existence be transcended for the sake of a metaphysical realm.

<sup>19</sup>In *GM*, it is said that spiritualization of hatred and revenge is vital for the slave for two reasons. First, revenge against the master is best achieved by revaluing their values rather than by attempting a direct assault and second, revenge against existence or time itself cannot be enacted and must be imaginary (revenge over and above the revaluation is imaginary).

The noble type of man is aware that he determines values. He does not need any type of approval from other members of the society. Nietzsche expresses this concept as:

It is obvious that everywhere the designations of moral value were at first applied to *men*; and were only derivatively and at a later period applied to *actions*; it is a gross mistake, therefore, when historians of morals start with questions like, "Why have sympathetic actions been praised?" It judges what is harmful to me is harmful in itself"; it knows itself to be that which first accords honor to things; it is value-creating. Everything it knows as part of itself it honors: such a morality is self-glorification (Nietzsche, 1966, p. 205).

Here, the idea looks to clarify morality has always rested upon the value of utility. Because it gives attention to what is harmful to the master should be harmful for others and in itself. For Nietzsche, master morality is essentially bound up with an energetic transcendence to the standpoint of utility for superior ones and disregards values of mere comfort and survival.<sup>20</sup> The conclusive intention of nobles is to affirm about themselves in their ability to raise themselves above the common mob and concern for comfort and survival. Nietzsche speaks of an aristocratic value-equation according to which they are the only good, noble, powerful, beautiful, and happy (Nietzsche F. , On the Genealogy of Morals, 1967, p. 34). We can see from this, at the bottom of the self-affirmation of Nietzsche's nobles is their delight in their own abundant energy and abilities. Nobles seek to give expression to their feeling of power by engaging themselves in certain activity. Initially, one that demands determined physical effort and involve taking large and dramatic risks like war, adventure and hunting have virtues of strength. These qualities of nobles have key role for the emergence of the future far-fetched 'superman'.

On the other hand, the slaves are the poor, impotent, deprived, sick, and ugly are blessed by God. The powerful and noble are on the contrary the evil, the cruel, the immoral, shameless, the greedy, the godless to all eternity; and you shall be in all eternity the unblessed, accursed, and damned!<sup>21</sup> This valuation of Jewish revaluation provides for the most fundamental of all declarations of war which is incalculable and tremendous in their life history<sup>22</sup>.

In fact, the nobles choose to engage in challenging risks and take themselves in honoring such activities. They automatically begin a cycle of self-reinforcement by honoring themselves for being so good at these honorable pursuits. They set deliberately tough standards of excellence and then think well of themselves when they pass with supreme self-possession. Hence, the criteria of masters are self-generated and self-grounded and these criteria would be the values of noble men. But measuring up to these criteria is often a matter of readily ascertainable fact because superiority in respect of strength, daring and competence can be eliminated objectively (Danto, 1965, p. 158). We can nevertheless specify certain features of noble lives that account to their favorable self-evaluation, i.e. their ability to hit the target they have set for themselves. I could suggest that, the most important feature of the activities through which nobles characteristically manifest their appetite for life is not demanded by material circumstance or external authority. Noble morality is a morality of intrinsic value of lives lived for the sake of happiness inseparable from engaging in actions and activities deemed worthwhile in and of them together with the honor upon excelling at such actions and activities in the eyes of one's peers (ibid: 159).

On *the Genealogy of Morals*, we are clearly informed that:

In the majority of cases, those who feel themselves to be men of a higher rank, designate themselves simply by their superiority in power (as "the powerful," "the masters," "the commanders") or by the most clearly visible signs of this superiority. For example, as "the rich," "the possessors." ... But they also do it by a typical character trait: ... They call themselves, for instance, "the truthful" (Nietzsche, 1967, pp. 28-29).

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<sup>20</sup> "What he writes had nobles to do with utility? The viewpoint of utility is as remote and inappropriate as it possibly could be in relation to such a burning eruption of the highest rank ordering rank-defining judgments: for here feeling has attained the antithesis of that low degree of warmth which any calculating prudence, any calculus of utility, presupposes—and not for once only, not for an exceptional hour but for good." Ibid. Essay I, Section 2.

<sup>21</sup> In *BGE*, section 195, page 108: it clarifies that the Jews are the people "born for slavery," as Tacitus (Roman historian who wrote major works on the history of the Roman Empire (56-120)) and the whole ancient world say; "the chosen people among the peoples," as they themselves say and believe the Jews have brought off that miraculous feat of an inversion of values, thanks to which life on earth has acquired a novel and dangerous attraction for a couple of millennia. Their Prophets have fused "rich," "godless," "evil," "violent," and "sensual" into one and were the first to use the word "world" as opprobrium. This inversion of values (which includes using the word "poor" as synonymous with "holy" and "friend) constitutes the significance of the Jewish people: they mark the beginning of the slave rebellion in morals."

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

Nietzsche's point here is not connecting power, wealth, truthfulness and courage with primitive nobles. Rather, his account of master and slave morality would have been scarcely intelligible to anyone in the epoch of "pure" master morality. If these claims could have been made intelligible to the masters, they would have rejected just as the members of the present day teenage "in teenage" would reject the claim.<sup>23</sup>

The early nobles are intellectually too primitive to be able to defend or articulate their sense that their several virtues naturally belong together. It is just this incapacity that will render their world vulnerable to the corrosive influence of slave morality. This inability of nobles informally to account for them certainly indicates that the early masters are unreflective. But it does not entail that their favorable self-evaluation is merely a groundless prejudice. In fact, we have seen Nietzsche's claim that the origin of the opposition of "good" to "bad" is found in the "pathos of distance" (ibid: 26) presupposes the self-glorification of the masters<sup>24</sup> has significant basis in facts rather than in fiction.

The bad are simply those who lack the distinctive values of desirable qualities that the nobles have. The distinction introduced by the slave revolt in morality between good and evil marks radically different sorts of contrast. Nietzsche takes pain to emphasize that when slave moralists deny that the masters are good. They are using a different sense of the word "good" from that embodied in master morality and that in order to think of the masters as evil and the slaves must first cover them in another color<sup>25</sup> (ibid: 39-43).

When the eye of resentment looks at the nobles, it does not see power, wealth, courage, truthfulness and the like that the nobles themselves could perceived. But it sees instead only cruelty, tyranny, lustfulness, insatiability and Godlessness (ibid. 33-40). The resentment of the weak has become creative and given birth to a new kind of morality what Nietzsche calls it 'slave morality'. Hence, the slaves become capable of when they look at themselves no longer to see pitiless, unredeemed misery and unhappiness. Instead, they could form a new kind of goodness constituted by the voluntary cultivation of patience, humility and justice.

The most important accomplishment of slave morality for Nietzsche is not turning the tables on the masters and deeming the previous bad to be good and an earlier good to be evil. But what is the most important about slave morality<sup>26</sup> is that it does this by inventing a new type of values, impartial values. Slave morality is the morality of impartial value in that it is the morality of value chosen by an impartial subject and more precisely a subject who is in himself neither a master nor slave but who can freely choose to behave and evaluate as either this or that.

The idealized relationship between nobles and subjects that Nietzsche imagines to have been the norm throughout pre-history and early history is most obviously exemplified in the pre-history of one particular culture, i.e. Classical Greece. But it is impossible for an individual to be outside of the norms that have been created by a given cultural society. Either directly or indirectly someone's actions within his/her life styles could not be free from such dominant values and codes of the mentioned cultural society.

## CONCLUSION

Generally, Nietzsche's account of master and slave morality assesses how the values of traditional Christian and moral codes arise and how would challenge men in life. He tries to trace back to the origin from where does this antiquity begins to create a formal pattern as a part and parcel of each life. But the way that Nietzsche analyses strongly shows to what extent he has hatred on the

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid. Essay II, section 23, Nietzsche inferentially admits their ancient Greek nobles were capable of acts that they themselves would deem disgraceful. He insists that such occurrences had to be rare, and that their possibility had to explain by appeal to a puzzling sort of divine intervention: "How is it possible? How could it actually have happened to heads such as we have, we men of aristocratic descent, of the best society, happy, well-constituted, noble, and virtuous?" Thus noble Greeks asked themselves for centuries in the face of every incomprehensible atrocity or wantonness with which their kind had polluted him. 'He must have been deluded by a god,' they conclude finally, shaking their heads..."

<sup>24</sup> See also Part 9, Section 257 of *BGE*: Trans. and Ed. by Walter Kaufmann, Random House, Inc. New York (1966).

<sup>25</sup> Cover them in another color, interpret them in another fashion and see them in another way, through the hopeless eye of resentment.

<sup>26</sup> Nietzsche, *BGE*, Part 5, Section 195, p. 108. Nietzsche indebted the Jews as the beginners of slave morality through revolt and that revolt has a history of two thousand years behind it and he predict as we will no longer see it.

practices of Christian life since influenced and directed at *'imaginary belief'*<sup>27</sup> of the society of his time. On the one hand, he favors master characters with power but hard and absurd to realize it. But there are some traits that could be labeled as master characters like, bravery, strong, noble and the like. On the other hand, he tries to ignore the presence of morality but construal of actions as moral phenomena by men. This seems a confused polemic attack on what his spirit hates of as exposed in many of his original works like the Anti-Christ, Beyond Good and Evil, the Will to Power etc.

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## BIOGRAPHY

I am **Temesgen Berhanu** from Ethiopia. I was born on March 29 1989 in North West province particularly named as Gojjam in Ethiopia. People and when my age reached for education, I have joined in Woncher primary School. I have completed my Elementary and high school education up to grade 12 in Woncher elementary school, Anjenie junior school, and Dembecha Senior secondary School. Then I have joined in Bahir Dar University in Civic and Ethical education and I have successfully graduated with good academic performance. After two years of Instructorship in Aksum University for under graduate students I have joined Addis Ababa University in Philosophy department as student and graduated successfully. Afterwards, I have left Aksum university and joined at Debre Markos university and still am here as a lecturer for Philosophy Courses in the department of Civic and Ethical Studies.



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<sup>27</sup> I make the phrase italic because of the expression is of Nietzsche's own. But in fact, there is no imaginary and utopian description beyond what is proposed as a claim in philosophical concepts.