

ORIGIN OF MORALITY ; VIEWS

- Thrasymachus in Plato's Republic, Mandeville in The Fable of the Bees,
Morality is an invention of the rulers to control their subjects
- Callicles in Plato's Gorgias and Nietzsche in Toward a Genealogy of Morals :
Morality is a defense of the weak against the strong.
- Morality is a convention that contractors agree upon to protect their self-interests.
- Morality is born from the helplessness of the individual, who must resort to mutual help in order to survive (Feuerbach, Kropotkin)
- Morality is the part of religion concerned with the right conduct necessary to obtain eternal life, nirvana, or some other transcendental goal.
- Montesquieu, Durkheim, the functionalist anthropologists, and many Marxists: every social group ~~holds~~ practices the morality that best suits its needs or aspirations, and changes it once it becomes dysfunctional as a result of profound social changes. (Durkheim: "chaque société a la morale qui lui faut".)
(For a general criticism of functionalism)

see Merton, R.K. (1949), Field Theory and Field Structure (Glenns, Ill. : Free Press.)

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