

Analyzing Nietzschean Virtue in Business Ethics

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ABSTRACT The origins of virtue ethics can be traced back to the Ancient Greek philosophers, Aristotle, Socrates and Plato. Friedrich Nietzsche, an assiduous student of especially Aristotle, is regarded as one of the notable philosophers of virtue ethics. Since management is philosophy in action and each management theory has a philosophical background, it is pertinent to assess Nietzsche who has greatly influenced the modern era by his assertion that moral codes such as codes of conduct in business for example, are mere interpretations of reality that we now consent to. This does not mean that things will remain constant in the future. Consequently, especially managers when considering business ethics need to ask themselves what kind of leader do they want to be in their organization? What is it that they essentially accept as true about humankind? Why and indeed how ought they to lead through a strong moral compass in a globalized world in which the moral fabric is eroded daily by *inter-alia* corruption? How do they seek get the best out of their employees for the benefit of all stakeholders and consider the people, the planet and the profits with a mindset that enhances the prospects of sustainability? If managers have a better understanding of philosophy it will indeed serves a useful purpose in making them highly effective in what they undertake. This paper in which the approach taken is historical-analytical thus sought to evaluate the potentially huge contribution Nietzsche could make in the field of business ethics and also sought to make his work better known to management scholars so as to empower them to 'do-the-right thing'.