

bert C. Newman and Herman J. Eckelmann, Jr., *Genesis One and the Origin of the Earth* (Downer's Grove, Illinois: IVF, 1977, 156pp.). The authors are trained in both theology and science. Newman, a Ph.D. in physics from Cornell University, holds to long indefinite periods for the days of Genesis one. A strongly defended long-day position is also seen in Davis A. Young's *Creation and the Flood* discussed elsewhere in this paper. Another important and impressive recent book is Weston W. Fields, *Unformed and Unfilled* (P&R, 1976, 245pp.).

It is a study of Genesis chapter one in reference to geological theories of interpretation. The author is a follower of the Van Til apologetics, defends Flood Geology in general, but appears to be a careful and cautious scholar in so doing. He is a theologian, not a scientist.

It is earnestly hoped that this long discussion of books relating to science and the evangelical faith will show the pastor and layman, as well as some faculty members and even specialists, that a wealth of Christian literature in a once-neglected field is available in English today. The situation in the Korean Christian church-world is about where it was thirty or forty years ago in America. May it soon change and may good books be written by Korean writers, not just translations. More than that, however, we urge courses in Christian high schools, colleges and seminaries that will give a good foundation for Bible belief and true scientific understanding.

"How strange that even our brief lend-lease of dust
Supposes flowers and fish and men a-link!"

Vere Jameson, quoted in Evan Schute, *Flaws in the Theory of Evolution*, p. 176.

Ethical Problems at Issue

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Is there anyone that has never asked: Now why did I do that? Have you ever blamed yourself for something? Do you blame others? Is it ever right to kill someone? Never? Sometimes? When? Who should be killed? By whom? Where? In Vietnam? What about in New York City? What do you mean by "right"? Is it wrong then? Wrong to kill? Always wrong? What about abortions? They may be rather convenient. And suppose you want to make a revolution. "Pigs" are tough. Should you ever use violence? Never? Always? Sometimes? When? Where? Who decides? Do you decide? How do you know when you have made the "right" decision? Is there anyway of finding out if you are wrong?

What do you understand by such words as "right", "wrong", "good", "bad"? How you use these words? What do you mean by them?

Ask yourself the following question: Is there any act that you would say is *always* wrong? Think for a moment. Here are a few possibilities.

1. "Killing is always wrong."
2. "Lying is always wrong."
3. "Stealing is always wrong."
4. "Slavery is always wrong."

Let us examine the first sentence. Suppose you say: killing is always wrong. What makes it wrong? Do you mean that it was wrong in the past, is wrong today, and will be wrong tomorrow? Are you sure that it was wrong to kill German soldiers during World War II? Is there any difference between a policeman who kills a kidnapper and a kidnapper who kills a policeman?

Do killing, lying, stealing, and slavery, have anything in common. Suppose a lie is the only thing that would prevent someone from killing someone else? Can the poor ever steal from the rich? Suppose they are hungry? Is it wrong to kill to free slaves?

When you judge an individual act to be right or wrong, moralists usually say you make a *moral judgement*. Moral judgements are made on the basis of *moral principles* or generalizations.

The form of moral reasoning may be simplified as follows. When asked: "Why do you say that a particular act, x, is wrong?" the reply might be given, "because x is an example of y, and all y's are wrong."

Suppose x is an act of killing. When challenged, Why is x wrong? one might then say, "because all unjust acts are wrong, and x is an unjust act."

Someone who states that: "all unjust acts are wrong," may mean that one should always do what is just, and avoid doing what is unjust. Why should one be just?

But what is meant by just? Is all killing unjust? Are all forms of what is usually understood as lying unjust? Is it always unjust to keep slaves? Why?

What is justice? Can we agree on a definition? And if we can, why *should* we prefer justice to injustice? Aren't my ethical decisions simply a matter of education, a part of my early training, a matter of feeling?

Perhaps the situation is something like this. People do not live in isolation. They live together in groups: in families, tribes, communities, neighborhoods, towns, cities, nations. For convenience we can regard people as belonging to different societies. A common language, a shared past, common interests, and values unit large groups of people.

Imagine three such societies S_1, S_2, S_3 ; In S_1 , we find certain practices, a, b, c ; S^2 is different. Instead of a and b occurring in S_2 , we find d and e ; c is common to S^1 and S_2 . S_3 has very little in common with S_1 and S_2 ; its practices conflict sharply with those of S_1 and S_2 . In S_1 it will be considered right to do a, b , and c , but d and e will be wrong. In S_2 d and e are considered right, but a and b are considered wrong. In S_3 a, b, c, d , and e are all held to be wrong. S_3 requires that its members do the very opposite of what is required in S_1 and S_2 . The acts approved of in S_1 and S_2 , and S_3 , although different, and sometimes in conflict, are simply the values of that particular society, at a particular time in its history.

When person living in S_1 says a is right, and e is wrong, he may simply be saying that in S_1 , to do a will meet with approval on the part of most members of S_1 , and to do e will meet with their disapproval. Of course, a member of S_2 might say just the opposite.

To state the a is wrong is simply to state how most members of S_1 react to a . It is possible that an individual member of S_1 does not share feelings of some other members of S_1 . Such conflicts may be resolved by persuasion or force, or they may simply remain unresolved.

What is right or wrong is then simply a matter of conditioned feelings, feelings conditioned, in part at least, by the groups or groups with which we identify. At times we may be in conflict with ourselves, since we belong to diverse groups: to a family, a state, a student body, a "crowd." Our parents may tell us one thing, the government another, our friends still something else. At home we may hear that war is immoral; our government may seek to draft us; our friends may be conscientious objectors. It is not easy to follow our feelings, and to determine our group loyalties.

But is the matter so simple? Are we prepared to say: "all moral principles are simply a matter of feeling." Should we then do what we *feel* is right? Can our inner emotional states serve as a reliable guide for action? Notice what this might mean.

Suppose you go home for the weekend; there on the floor of the living room lies someone with a knife in their back. Dead! Someone you love is dead! Stabbed. You feel awful, hysterical. Blinded with grief, you find your way to a phone and sobbingly grasp: "Murder, murder, murder, my... is dead." The operator reports the call to the police; a cruiser arrives, the now still heap of bones and blood is removed. You feel even worse. You are given a pill; you feel a little better. You continue to make noises. "Murder, its awful, why? Why? *Murder is wrong*; its horrible! Why would anyone do it? My poor... she was so kind. Everyone loved her... she only had friends."

Now consider the sentence, "Murder is wrong." What do you mean? Initially you told the telephone operator that there had been a murder. The term murder refers to an event, to an illegal act of killing. The results can be photographed. The murderer can be caught; the case

can be brought to trial. Is the judgement that such an act is wrong more than a report on how you feel about such acts. Does the predicate, "is wrong," say more than I have a feeling, a feeling of deep grief, a sense of horror, revolution, loss. My feeling is shared by others. The word "wrong" expresses my feeling. It may also disguise an imperative, an exhortation. "Don't murder." There are signs that say: "keep off the grass!" Other signs may say: "Don't murder!" Of course most people feel more strongly about certain acts of killing than about shrubbery violations. That's why we use stronger language, the language of morals. Certain acts about which we have very strong negative feelings we call "wrong"; other acts about which we have very strong positive feelings we call "right." we urge everyone to avoid the first, the "evil" acts, and to do the second, the "good" acts.

Do you buy the preceding analysis? Are you convinced that moral principles are reducible to feelings? Consider the statement: Moral principles are nothing but statements of feeling. What kind of a statement is this? What does it presuppose? For this analysis to true, true, what other statements would also have to be true? Notice that the preceding analysis of a murder situation simply points out that when we utter the statement: murder is wrong, we also have very strong feelings. The point at issue is not whether or not we have feelings but whether or not more is involved than feeling. Is that dimension of human experience that we call ethical merely a matter of human psychology? Is the ethical aspect of experience reduceable to the psychological?

Feelings are an individual matter. Persons alone act; society has no feeling. Can society have a toothache? Society on a motorcycle; indeed! Society touring the country; society visiting society, taking a social census, using the long form; sixty pages long; questions made up by society, written for society, asked by society, reported to society; busy society, tired after a long societal bay. The term "society" has a use. Its a short hand expression that in part stands for many complex relationships that you and I have with other people. Society has no answers; abstractions don't speak, at least not very loudly.

That in S_1, S_2, S_3 different acts are performed at different times, with degrees of approval and disapproval, is not the solution, but the occasion of the problem. That there are in fact such diverse practices as starving children in Biafra, performing abortions, napalming villages, assassinating village chieftains, killing presidents and senators, protest marches, throwing bombs, getting married, sleeping around, taking aspirin, shoring horse, building hospitals, building slums, somefomes leads people to raise the question as to which acts are right and which are wrong.

The person who uses the terms "right" and "wrong" usually has strong feelings when he does so, but in most cases, at least, he *believes* that he is saying more than "I feel strongly that..." or "Don't do such and such."

To ask such questions as: What is being done? How do people act? Where? In Mesopotamia? Is not to ask: should people in Mesopotamis act the way they do? Should anyone anywhere even act like that? Imagine! Putting a spankingly new Spartan baby in the garbage; retroactive abortion; odorless gas, sanitary body disposals, barb wire enclosures to keep refugees of the streets, to get rid of undesirables. Keep the third Reich clean! To describe what is the case, to describe what people do is scientific; at least its relatively easy. To try to find an answer to the question, what, if anything, ought people to do? is hard. Perhaps, there is no answer to this se-

cond question. At least there is no answer that everyone will accept. Nevertheless, to ask: What *ought* to be done? is not to ask: What is being done?

You may be convinced that the question of ought, ought not to be raised, Okay. Stop, do not turn the page, return to the section on natural science. There are no "oughts" in physics. But, what did you say? Did you say that no one *ought* ever to raise questions about ought? Ought they to raise other questions? Why the restriction? Suffice it to say, that, in fact, most people do continue to raise questions about how they and others ought to act, and when they do so, usually they believe they are doing something quite different from asking about feelings. Do you have post-operative pain? Is slavery always wrong. The first question is a simple matter. The answer is a straight forward, yes or no. The second is more puzzling. You know immediately, if you feel pain. To answer the second question about slavery requires reflection. The question is not whether slavery is still practiced, or whether it is economically profitable. It is not a question as to whether slaves enjoy being slaves, or how would the owners feel if slaves were freed. To ask about the wrongness of an action is to ask whether a certain act ought to be performed. And how you answer a question about human behavior will in part depend upon what kind of creature you regard man as being.

What is this strange creature called man? Are all men equal? If so, in what sense? Are they equal in ability? equal before the law? Equal in their human nature? What nature? We have come full circle. We are back to the question: What is man? What kind of a world does man live in? Is man the only creature that forms concepts, makes judgements, and acts intentionally. Does man determine how he ought to act. Throughout the course of human history many answers have been given to questions of human conduct. We shall briefly summarize a few of them, and then we shall see, if any are applicable to a few present day problems.

2. Jean Paul Sartre

The position taken by the philosopher Jean Paul Sartre is popularly known by the term existentialism. Existentialism in its Sartrean form, is alleged to safeguard the very possibility of human life, ¹⁾ Every truth and action is held to be a human truth, a part of a human setting, a part of human subjectivity, Human subjectivity is the point of departure.

There is no God in Sartre's world. There are only men. Since God is absent, before man came on the scene there was no one to conceive of a human nature and then to create creatures endowed with that nature. To hold that all men were created free and equal, endowed by their creator with certain inalienable natural rights, presupposes that man has a nature imposed from outside. It assumes that a divine intelligence formed a concept of man and that man is the realization of that concept. To hold that man's existence precedes his essence is to begin with human subjectivity. It is to deny that each individual man is a particular example of a universal concept of man.

Human reality, man, is a being who exists before he can be defined by any concept. Man is at first nothing. He simply makes the scene; turns up, exists. By doing his own thing, man defines himself, and becomes something. Man makes himself, what

1) See, Jean Paul Sartre, *Existentialism*, Philosophical Library, N. Y., 1947 pp. 12 ff.

he conceives himself to be. Human nature is non-existent, since God does not exist. Man is what he makes of himself. Man alone is completely responsible for what he is. He cannot get beyond his own subjectivity. What we choose for ourselves, we regard as good, and what we regard as good, we regard as good for everyone. By creating ourselves, by choosing the kind of person we would be, we create an image of man as we would have all man be. This tremendous responsibility, this choosing for everyone, fills man with anxiety.

The seriousness of a world without God makes man forlorn. Such a world is distressing, for now everything is possible. There is no way of finding values in a heavenly realm of ideas. There is no infinitely perfect consciousness to think of an *a priori* good. Man cannot find any excuses; he alone is responsible; he is completely free, condemned to be free. There is no ethics in general, no universal principles, no omens in the world that can show you what ought to be done. Man is simply what he plans to be. To the extent that man fulfills himself, he exists. Man is what he does; he is his own history. Man alone is the law maker, the source of all value.

Now Sartre would not choose to make men slaves; for he would generalize the choices that he makes. Obviously not everyone could be a slave. There must be owners, too. But why should the individual be concerned with anyone other than himself? Why would my choice be regarded as being good for anyone else.

Serious attempts have been made to find universal principles of conduct. Strangely enough even people under duress may find Plato's¹⁾ discussions of moral issues relevant. Plato discusses such questions as we have raised. A partial report of his conversation is found in *The Republic*.

3. Plato's *Republic*.

The *Republic* attempts to examine and to define the concept of justice. Besides defining how the word justice is used, Plato seeks to discover the nature and reality of justice. He would also give reasons why we should be just.

The *Republic* is concerned with how man can best live. The central question: what is justice? involves Plato in a discussion of our basic nature. What is Man? How is he best to realize his potential as a human being? To understand what life is best, Plato is concerned with man's life in a community. The dialogue form chosen by Plato employs individuals to express certain principles.²⁾ The discovery of truth is a gradual process, a process aided by asking questions and searching for answers. The basic principle presupposed in the *Republic* is that there is a moral order inherent in the very structure of our world. To develop fully, to realize oneself, to be happy an individual must pattern his conduct in conformity to that order.

Book I and II, to 367E, serves as an introduction to the central problem: what is morality, and how does it affect the moral person in his innermost nature?

The first discussion takes place between Socrates and Cephalus, a wealthy old man. Cephalus represents the experienced older generation. He has led the "good" life but has not reflected

1) If Plato had lived, he would nearly be 2500 years old.

2) See, Richard Lewis Nettleship, Macmillan and Co, London, 1951 pp. 7ff. The authors are indebted to Nettleship throughout this entire Section on Plato.

upon what he does. For him to be just is simply a matter of speaking the truth and paying one's debts. Like the majority of people, Cephalus' view of life cannot withstand the critical questions of the philosopher. He is wise enough to regard money as simply a means to an end not an end in itself, but he lacks the ability to enter into philosophical inquiry.

In the second discussion, between Polemarchus and Socrates, Polemarchus represents a *person who repeats a maxim* he does not fully understand. To define justice or morality as doing good to friends and evil to one's enemies, permits the just person to do what is unjust, namely, to harm someone. Again, like most people, Polemarchus has not thought much about his ethical positions and cannot defend them. It is not always possible to know who really are our friends and who are our enemies. The crucial issue is whether the just ought ever to injure anyone.

The third person to engage in dialogue with Socrates is Thrasymachus, a sophist, portrayed very unfavorably by Plato, as not caring for truth, being concerned with money, and with verbal victory. Thrasymachus is rude coarse, vulgar, a cynic; he does not really believe that there is any moral truth.

To Thrasymachus justice is simply whatever serves the interest of the stronger, What is right is simply what the government decrees. Moral law is equated with positive law, the laws enacted by the legislature... Justice is identical with the state. Selfinterest when successful is called justice. The true end of life is to get whatever you can, get ahead by any means. To know how to get away with any big deal you want to pull. If you fail, your act will be called unjust; if you live is to know how to get away with any big deal you want to pull. If you fail, your act will be called unjust; if you get away with it, just. There is no real distinction between what is right and what is wrong. The person who takes all he can get will live better and will be happier than the person who does not.

Socrates, in contrast, seeks to show that justice and injustice has an effect upon our inner life. It is not clear what it means to hold that a government simply legislates in its own interests. Do those that govern always know what their real interests are? Do the rulers never make mistakes? If a government is analogous to an art, the interest of the government is to govern well, that is, to meet the needs of the governed. To hold that everyone should get what he can would remove all limits to human conduct. Without limits, without norms or restrictions, life would simply be impossible. There would then be no unity of purpose and people would be incapable of any common action. Society would simply disintegrate. There must, in other words, be some *establishment*, and, at least, within the establishment, a principle of order must prevail. Otherwise no one could accomplish anything. Justice is not simply a matter of external behavior; it is rather a vital principle within the human person, a principle that expresses itself in a person's life. Life would not be possible without unity with oneself and with others. Divisions, conflict, and fighting are created by injustice, whereas justice produces harmony and friendship. Injustice will not make a man happy but miserable.

A person is happy when he functions to his fullest capacity. A person develops to the fullest by realizing his potential. A virtue such as justice enables man to function to the fullest extent. When an agent is working well, what enables it to function is a certain quality. The function of the eye is to see, of the ear to hear. To see well, and to hear well is the virtue of the eye and ear. To live well is to be happy. Man's soul is what enables him to live; it is the principle

of life. Qualities that enable him to live well are virtues. Justice is such a virtue, so justice rather than injustice will enable man to his fullest, to live well, to be happy. A person at war with himself and with others is miserable.

At the end of Book I, Socrates admits that he has not yet defined justice as it is in itself. He has simply shown that consistent selfishness would lead to chaos.

Glaucon and Adeimantus are not satisfied. Glaucon wants to know what justice and injustice are in themselves, and Adeimantus wants to know their effects upon the just and unjust person.

Certain goods are desired *for their own sakes*, independently of their consequences; others, such as knowledge, and health, are desired *for their own sake, and for their results*; still others are desired *solely for their consequences*. Both Glaucon and Adeimantus believe that justice is good both in itself and for its results, but they would examine the nature of justice independently of its consequences.

Glaucon is troubled by the popular notion that justice is simply a compromise between what is best: to do injustice without punishment, and, what is the worst: to suffer injustice without being able *retaliate*. Justice is a matter of contract and convention.

Adeimantus suggests that justice is not pursued for its own sake but for its results. The best policy is honesty or at least the reputation of honesty. Socrates is challenged to show that justice is an intrinsic good, to be valued for its own sake. Socrates' problem is to show what justice and injustice are, and how they work in their possessors.

The main part of the Republic begins with Bk. II 367E. Justice is the virtue of the individual and of the state. The nature of justice is more readily evident where it exists in a larger quantity, namely, in the state. The best form of human society will clearly show us what justice is. A just society will express the inner life of man, since the institutions of society are based upon the needs of human nature.

The state exists to satisfy human needs; it has an instrumental value. Man's basic needs, food, lodging, and clothing are best satisfied by a division of labor. Different people are adapted to different occupations. While simplicity is the mark of a healthy state, the complexity of a civilized state requires that the artisan class be protected by a professional soldier, possessing the courage to protect the state against aggressors, and internal disorders.

The subordinate theme of education II 376c to III 412B, is not irrelevant to the main theme. A state cannot maintain the harmony necessary to be a just state, unless its members are properly brought up to perform their respective tasks. Every person has an appetitive, spirited, and philosophic element in his nature. Each of these elements must receive their proper cultivation or care, if the individual and society are to flourish.

Education for Plato is distinct from mere training, from merely learning how to do something, from the acquisition of a skill. The educational process is directed toward an end. The purpose of education cannot be separated from what is taught.

The person being educated becomes like that to which he is exposed. The educative process is imitative. The function of education is not simply to put facts into the mind but rather to bring out the best traits already latent within the soul. To be nurtured properly the soul must be surrounded solely with objects and notions that are to be developed, to provide it with a proper environment, with music, literature, and the arts. The soul is to be nourished in its

love of beauty, in preparation for its love of truth. Both truth and beauty are forms of the good, so that the ultimate aim is to make the soul aware of the good in its rational forms. The soul is not unaffected by the body, so that both music and gymnastic are needed to train the soul. The harmonious soul will be both temperate and courageous. To rule the state the interest of the state must be the rule of one's life. The rulers equate the interests of the state with their own best interests. The rulers, the guardians of the state, must possess wisdom, the knowledge of the good of the community as a whole. To possess such wisdom the rulers must be educated beyond level of music and gymnastic. They must study the sciences, to understand the world, and they must study philosophy to understand the ultimate nature of the universe, to understand the ultimate forms of being, and to know the good. Our senses disclose a diversity of objects. The forms are elements of unity found in particulars. A philosophic nature loves to look at truth, at what is universal, at principles, laws, or unities found within the diversity of experience. Complete knowledge, the knowledge of philosophy, requires insight, rational intuition, into the really real, into a transcendent, metaphysical realm of universals, eternal forms.

The warrior class need not possess the highest wisdom, the knowledge of philosophy, but the warriors must have some awareness of the nature of things to be feared and not to be feared. They must be courageous and hold the right opinion of what is to be feared. The necessity of resisting fear is not limited to the battle field. Moral courage is a power within man.

The citizens of the just state must exercise selfcontrol or the virtue of temperance. Just as within a person, the better must hold the worse in check, so too in a society, the superior should rule the inferior. To submit willingly to the rule of the superior is to be temperate. Temperance is a sort of harmony permeating the whole of society.

What then is a just state? A just state is a state in which each person is doing his own work, performing the function that he is best suited to perform. It is the virtue of justice that makes the other virtues possible; justice is a necessary condition of all the other virtues. Justice is like a sense of duty. Without it the wise would not remain warriors, and those in a subordinate position would not accept their role.

Justice within the state enables each of the three classes to do their own business. Within the individual, there are three corresponding principles. The human soul is composed of three parts or aspects: the appetitive, that of desire, the spirited, that of volition; and, the rational, that of reason. It is justice within the individual that enables a person to function in a way that his reason rules his passions and desires. The several qualities of man's nature will do their own work. A wise person will be ruled by reason and not carried away by his desires. A courageous person will carry out the orders delivered by his reason. A temperate person does not rebel against the rule of reason; his desires and will are equally agreed that reason ought to rule.

Justice is, therefore, not concerned with the outward man but with the inward. The just man is at peace with himself; he is perfectly adjusted, for he does not allow the various elements within himself to interfere with one another, or any of them to do the work of the others.

Thus at the end of Bk. IV Plato has shown that in a just society every element of human nature is given its proper scope. The external order of society depends upon the inner nature of man.

Every individual requires the aid of others, and each has something to contribute to the common good. In an ideal society each would do what he is best fitted to do. Every member would participate fully, holding everything in common, including wives and families, held together in a bond of unity.

The concern of the ideal community is with the greatest happiness of the whole, not of any particular class. Plato's ideal is, however, not one of tyranny, for the ideal society will be ruled by a philosopher. Statedmanship and philosophy must be combined. The philosopher has knowledge of what is absolute beauty, of absolute good, of what is the essence of the many particulars.

For our purposes it is sufficient to note that Plato answers ethical relativism by appealing to a transcendent world of absolute forms. To each universal predicate there is a form corresponding which can be affirmed of a diversity of subjects. There is a moral order in the very structure of the universe. The good is what holds everything together and is the cause of all order. This source of all reality, this supreme cause, transcends every particular and is the transcendent source of the reality and intelligibility of everything except itself. The good, as the source of all value and existence is apprehended solely by a personal insight.¹⁾

There are many difficulties associated with a transcendent order above the level of our immediate sensory experience. Plato was himself aware of the difficulty of conceiving of ideal chairs and tables in a heavenly realm. There is also the difficulty of knowing when a personal insight into the good has been attained. And, the question still remains as to when and how a particular universal principle is to be applied to a concrete act of human behavior.

Whether or not you find Plato's position attractive may in part depend upon certain convictions that you may already hold. Do you think that there is something inherent in your own existence and in the structure of the universe that is of a moral character?

The details of Plato's ideal state, and remember it was proposed as an ideal, and not a program for action, are of secondary interest. Do you think that Plato has given a satisfactory answer to Thrasymachus, to Sartre, and to the notion that morality reduces to questions of feeling? Do you have the suspicion that Socrates is concerned with abstract definitions, whereas decisions are made in concrete instances, down on the street?

Plato's definition of justice in the state may be what justice means conceptually. With certain refinements it may adequately state what most people mean. But is there an ontological form of justice? An absolute justice in a mysterious transcendent realm? And even if injustice in the state and within the individual leads to chaos and a disordered personality, can we say that the choice of one way of life rather than another is more than a personal decision, the expression of an individual preference?

There is little room for personal choice in Plato's ideal community. An open society recognizes the relative independence of certain societal forms other than the government, e.g., the family, economic, educational, and religious institutions, the mass media, and other forms of free associations, such as, clubs, etc. The government enters into these sectors when one threatens to encroach upon the other. By preserving a harmony, a society may attain a certain quality

1) A.E. Taylor, Plato, *The Man and his work.*, The World Publishing Co. Cleveland and New York, 1966, p. 286, ff.

known as justice. Each segment may receive its due, and each individual may do his own job. Such a formal conception may be useful up to a point. But how do you determine when one sector or societal sphere does encroach upon an other?

The sole and final authority in Plato's state resides in the philosopher king who supposedly knows what is good, an assumption that in practice has seldom, if ever, worked consistently. How much creditability you are willing to give to this assumption will in part depend upon whether you regard human nature as intrinsically good or inclined toward "evil." Do you regard man as being prone to satisfy his own selfish interests or as being prone to sacrifice his own immediate satisfactions for the interests of others? How do you behave? Do you always do what you think you ought to do?

A view of ethics closely related to that of Plato is to be found in Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*. Aristotle agrees with Plato that moral behavior is not singly a matter of arbitrary individual choices. He differs in that his ethics do not presuppose a transcendent realm of forms.

4. Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*

Human activity is not simply a random chance affair. We do things for some reason or other. When we act we usually have some purpose. We drive a car to go somewhere, or simply for the satisfaction of driving it. Sometimes we may be unaware of why we do something, and some of our behavior may have no reason at all, but some of our acts are done for a purpose.

Have you ever asked yourself, now why did I perform a certain act, x,? And then answered, because I wanted something else, y, . My performance of x enabled me to attain y. X was done for the sake of y, x is instrumental to y. But why did you want to attain y in the first place. Suppose you merely want y for the sake of z. And what about z? Is z done for the sake of something else? Is there anything that you want for its own sake? Is there anything that you think is good in itself? Something you simply want for no other reason than that you want it. Do you want money just to have money? Is there something that you want more than anything else? Is there one single end that you have? Is there a chief end of man? Is your chief end what every one else wants? Does everyone want something different? Is there a single end that everyone does in fact want? Is there an end that everyone *ought* to want? Are all acts x, y, z, n done for the sake of a single end, E, the supreme end of man.

Apparently many people are confused about what they want in the "great rat race." For example, why go to college? To get a degree. Why get a degree? To get a better job. Why get a better job? To be able to enjoy leisure. But suppose you just did nothing in the place, would that have been leisure? Are you sure that leisure is enjoyable?

Aristotle was concerned with the purpose of living. He sought to find something that we desire for its own sake, something for the sake of which everything else is desired. Aristotle sought to find the chief good, the chief end of man. Knowledge of man's chief end will certainly influence the way we act.

There is a verbal agreement among people that man seeks happiness but there is no agreement as to what constitutes happiness. Is it to be found in pleasure, in wealth, in honour? Not for Aristotle. A final end must be final without qualifications. It must always be desirable and never

for the sake of something else. We do choose honor, pleasure, reason, and every virtue for themselves, but not for themselves alone. Such ends are also chosen for the sake of happiness. Happiness alone is chosen for its own sake. It is self-sufficient and final, the end of action.

To understand happiness the function of man needs to be ascertained. The life of nutrition and growth, the biological mode of existence is shared by man with plants. With animals man shares a life of perception, but man alone possesses a rational principle. Man's function is not simply to live but to live in a certain way, to live as a rational being.

Happiness is an activity of the Soul. A man will be happy when he lives in accordance with perfect virtue. But what is virtue? Virtue like happiness concerns the human soul. Two aspects of the soul are to be distinguished, namely, the rational and the irrational. The irrational element has a vegetative aspect, a power that causes and nutrition, and it has a appetitive or desiring element.

Virtue is concerned with the rational element of the soul. Virtue is of two kinds: intellectual and moral. Intellectual virtue is the result of teaching; it includes philosophic wisdom and understanding as well as practical wisdom.

The moral virtues are not innate, nor are they contrary to our nature; they are the result of habit. What we are by nature adapts us to become virtuous by acting virtuously. States of character are the result of what we do. We become what we are by the way we behave. The person who acts justly becomes just.

To become good we must know how to act. We must know we ought to act if we are to acquire the proper character.

Our actions must be neither excessive nor defective. They must maintain a balance, a mean between too much and too little. Our desire for pleasure may cause us to do bad things, and to avoid pain, we may fail to do noble things. It is, however, not enough that we perform acts which are in themselves virtuous. The person performing an act must himself be in a certain condition. We must know what he is doing, and he must choose to do what he does for its own sake.

Virtue is not a matter of feeling; it is not to be identified with anger, fear, joy, longing or pity. It is not to be equated with the feelings that are accompanied by pain and pleasure. Virtue is not a passion, nor is it a faculty that enables us to have feelings. We simply have feelings without choosing them. We are moved by feelings. Our capacity to feel is neither good nor bad. Virtues, however, are states of character. The virtue of man is the excellence, the perfection of man. It is that state of character that makes a man good and makes a man do his own work well. Virtue enables us to avoid excess and defect, to avoid failure.

"Virtue, then, is a state of character concerned with choice, lying in a mean, i. e., the mean relative to us, this being determined by a rational principle, and by that principle by which the man of practical wisdom would determine it. Now it is a mean between two vices, that which depends on excess and that which depends on defect; and again it is a mean because the vices respectively fall short or exceed what is right in both passions and actions, while virtue both finds and chooses that which is intermediate."¹⁾

1) Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* 1107a, in *The Basic Works of Aristotle*, ed. Richard McKeon, Random House, New York, 1941. p. 959.

Certain actions, such as adultery, theft, and murder are intrinsically wrong, wrong under every circumstance. Not every act or passion admits of a mean.

Virtue, however, aims at an intermediate in passions and actions. To find the appropriate middle position is no simple task. To get angry or to give money, is no difficult task, but do so at the right time, to the right person, in the right way, for the right reason, and to the right extent is not easy.

Before an act can be considered praise worthy or blame worthy it must be performed voluntarily. Unless voluntary acts are distinguishable from involuntary acts, there is no use talking about virtue. It would make little sense to bestow honors or to mete out punishment.

An act is involuntary when it occurs under compulsion or due to ignorance. To be compulsory the cause of an act must lie entirely outside the agent who performs it. The person who is acting or feeling contributes nothing. Instead of acting such a person is acted upon. He is overcome from the outside. A person caught in an avalanche, an earthquake is simply overcome by the severity of external forces. He may be pitied; he cannot be blamed. Compulsory acts have their cause entirely in external circumstances; the agent involved is not the cause of his action. Certain acts may be a mixture of choice and compulsion. An act is voluntary, however, to the extent that the principle that moves the agent lies within the agent. To the extent that a person has the power to do something or not to do it, he is responsible for his actions and feelings.

There is a second reason why a person is not responsible for what he does. When ignorance is the cause of his acts. When ignorance of particulars is the reason, a person is not accountable. There is a difference, however, between an act done *in ignorance* and act done *by reason of ignorance*. Mistaken purposes, ignorance of universal principles are no excuse. A person is responsible for the foreseeable consequences of his acts. The drunken driver may not intend to run over a child, but he is responsible. He cannot plead ignorance as a defense. Prior to the accident he could not know every detail of what would occur but he could know that drunken driving leads to accidents. Here ignorance is no excuse. On the other hand, a person may find himself in a situation where he could not be expected to know what he is doing, or what the results will be. A parent who administers a drug prescribed by a physician may not be held responsible for harmful side effects.

For an act to be voluntary its moving principle must be within the person performing the act, and the agent must be aware of the particular circumstances under which the act is performed.

Voluntary acts involve choice. Virtue and vice are partly a matter of making the right or wrong choice. Choice is related to what is possible. The impossible may be desired or wished for. Choice, however, is concerned with what is in our own power, with what can be brought about by the efforts of the person choosing. Choice is concerned with means; it involves a rational principle. We deliberate about things that can be done and we choose the means of attaining the end we wish for.

It is within our power to choose to be virtuous or vicious, for the exercise of the virtues is concerned with the means and means can be chosen. States of character are produced by the exercise of activities on particular objects. An unjust person and a self-indulgent person are what

they are voluntarily. What they now are is the result of past choices. Once a person has become unjust or self-indulgent, it is not possible for them to choose, but initially it was open to him not to become such a person.

Virtues are habits and habits are acquired by constant repetitive acts. Vices, too, are acquired through repetitive experiences. Let us consider several of the virtues individually.

a. *Courage*. As a virtue, courage is a state of character, a mean between feelings of fear and confidence. Many evils are to be feared, for example disgrace, poverty, and disease, but the most terrible of all things is death. And in the strictest sense, a person is brave who faces death in the proper manner, that is, with courage. A brave person fears the right things, from the proper motive, in the proper manner, and at the right time.

It is possible to have an excessive amount of fearlessness. A madman or an insensible person may fear nothing. Moreover, a person is not courageous but rash if he is excessively confident about what is really terrible.

A rash person is not truly brave. A coward, on the other hand, fears everything; he lacks confidence and fears what he ought not to fear in an improper manner. The brave man is confident but not overconfident; he is not precipitate as the rash. The brave do not wish for danger, nor are they paralyzed when danger comes. To the coward, the brave, the courageous, appear rash; to the rash, the brave appear cowardly. The rash and the coward occupy extremes, and excessive extreme, and a defective extreme; the courageous occupy an intermediate, middle ground, a mean with respect to things which arouse confidence of fear.

The courageous person does not flee from what is troublesome; he is not ready to die to escape the unpleasant but as Socrates, he would rather die than do or be a partner to what is evil.

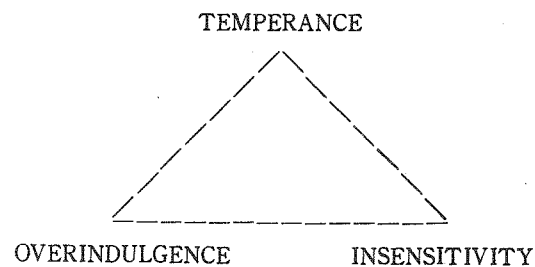
Not everything that resembles courage is courage. To be truly courageous an act must be the product of a courageous state of character. Certain acts resemble courage but are not courageous in the strict sense. For example, the citizen soldier may face danger to avoid penalties or to win honors. Truly courageous acts are not performed under compulsion but because their performance is itself noble. A person may also appear courageous because he possesses great skill and belongs to superior forces. Such may flee in the presence of real danger. Courageous acts, moreover, are not performed when passion is the moving force, nor are sanguine people brave. And finally to be brave one must not be ignorant of the danger. Men are brave when they face what is painful. To die or be wounded is painful, and yet the brave will face death and wounds because not to face them is base and to face them is noble.

b. *Temperance*. A second virtue is temperance. Temperance is a mean between the excess of self-indulgence, and the defect of insensitivity. It is the rational control of our desire for the pleasure derived from bodily experience. It is brutish to receive excessive delight in the pleasures of the senses. The self-indulgent either delight in the wrong things, or in the wrong way. The self-indulgent is pained more than he should be by not getting pleasant things. His appetite leads him to choose all pleasant things or the most pleasant at the expense of everything else. When he fails to satisfy his craving, the self-indulgent is excessively pained. The self-indulgent is like a child who lives at the beck and call of appetites, and fails to live according to a rational principle.

Unlike the self-indulgent, the insensitive person fails to receive the proper satisfaction from bodily pleasure. The insensitive do not take sufficient delight in what is pleasant. They find nothing more attractive than anything else. While complete insensitivity hardly occurs, extreme asceticism might well serve as an example.

The mean between the extreme of over-indulgence and insensitivity is occupied by the temperate man who does not enjoy anything to excess. The temperate person has a moderate desire for what makes for health and good condition. The pleasures that he seeks are not contrary to what is noble, or beyond his means.

To the self-indulgent the temperate person may appear insensitive, and to the insensitive, the temperate person may appear over-indulgent.



The good life has many aspects. Let us consider the virtue concerned with wealth.

c. *Liberality*. It has been said that money is the root of all evil. Present day Marxists, and many other regard wealth in private hands as being an evil. Aristotle was aware of the moral difficulties with respect to the giving and taking of wealth, that is, with respect to the things whose value is measured by money.

Riches are useful; they have instrumental value. Whatever is useful may be used well or badly. The virtuous man knows how to use what is useful in the best manner. The person who possesses the virtue concerned with wealth is the liberal man. The possession of wealth, that is, the taking and keeping of wealth is not the same as the using of wealth is used when it is spent or given away. The mark of the liberal man is that he gives to the right people, for the sake of the noble. The liberal man cheerfully gives the right amount, at the right time. He sets no store by wealth, but he does not neglect his own property. Otherwise, he would have nothing to give.

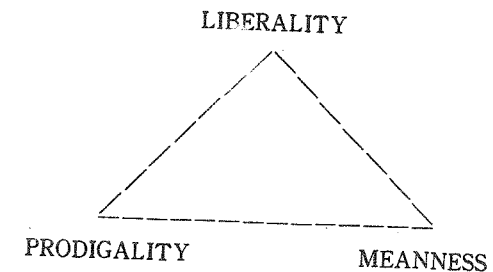
It is not the amount given that characterizes liberality, but it is the character of the giver. A person with less to give may give less and be more liberal than the person who gives more but has more to give. The liberal person values wealth as a means of giving, not for its own sake.

In contrast to the liberal person, the prodigal person wastes his substance. The prodigal gives to the wrong people, takes from the wrong sources, and spends money on the wrong things. The giving of the prodigal is excessive; it does not aim at nobility. Those who ought to be poor are made rich; much is given to flatterers and the unworthy. Most prodigals are self-indulgent and spend money lightly on their pleasures.

Prodigality is the vice that exceeds the mean of liberality. As the mean between giving and taking wealth, the liberal person gives and spends the right amount on the right objects, and takes the right amount from the right sources. Prodigality exceeds in giving and not taking,

and comes short in taking, whereas meanness falls short in giving, and is excessive in taking.

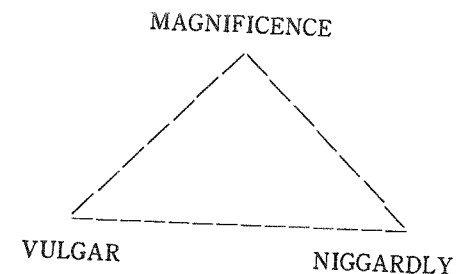
Meanness is a vice by defect. It is more common than prodigality. Meanness is a deficiency in giving and an excess in taking. Some people take in excess and are short in giving. The miserly, the stingy fall short in giving without necessarily desiring the property of others. They are satisfied neither to take nor to give. Others, however, will take whatever they can get their hands on, from any source. Loan sharks, unscrupulous businessmen or labor leaders may seek to take more than they ought and from the improper source. Mean people have a sordid love of gain.



d. *Magnificence*. A second virtue concerned with the expenditure of wealth is that of magnificence. To be magnificent a person must spend large sums of money with good taste. A person may be liberal without being magnificent, but to be magnificent a person must have large amounts of money at his disposal. The expenditures of the magnificent are primarily on public objects of lasting value.

To spend more than is required, simply to show off one's wealth, is to fall into the vice of vulgarity. The vulgar spend much where little should be spent, and they spend little where they should spend much. The expenditure of the vulgar occurs under the wrong circumstances and in the wrong manner. Vulgarity is the vice of excess, whereas the deficiency of the virtue of magnificence is niggardliness.

The niggardly is deficient in every respect. He hesitates in whatever he does, and reluctantly spends as little as possible, always believing that he is spending too much.



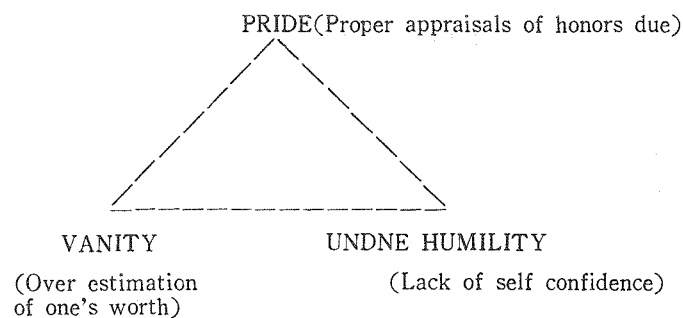
e. *Pride*. To conceive of pride as a virtue will at first seem strange, since we frequently use the term to refer to what Aristotle understood by vanity. For Aristotle the term signifies a quality that can be attributed to a good man.

Pride is proper for a person who deems himself worthy of great things when in fact he is really worthy of them. A proud person claims for himself such honor as properly belongs to him. The proud person receives honor for noble deeds. And he deserves such honor. To be justly proud a person must possess greatness in every virtue. The honor bestowed upon the proud is

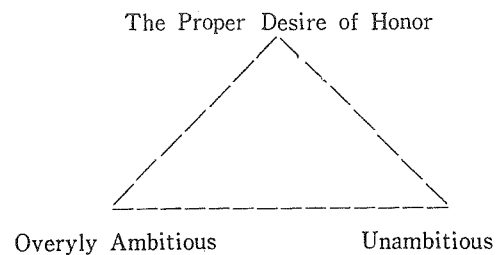
the prize of virtue. Pride is virtue's crown, and unless goodness of character is present, proper pride is absent. The proud man despises honors bestowed for trifling reasons, is only moderately concerned with wealth and power, and is neither overjoyed by good fortune, nor over-pained by evil. The good man alone is worthy of honor. The disdainful and insolent are not truly proud.

A person who thinks more of himself than he is worthy is not proud in Aristotle's sense of the term. He is rather a silly fool. Vanity is a vice in excess. The vain person is ignorant; he deems himself worthy when he is unworthy. A vain person unsuccessfully attempts honorable undertakings; they make an outward show, and seek to be honored without deserving it. In short the vain person thinks him-self worthy of great things being unworthy of them.

In contrast to the vain person, the vice by defect is that of undue humility. The unduly humble think of themselves as being worthy of less than they are really worthy of. Being worthy of good things, such people rob themselves of what they deserve. They do not know their true value and are unduly retiring. Such people do not claim what rightfully theirs and do not attempt noble acts.



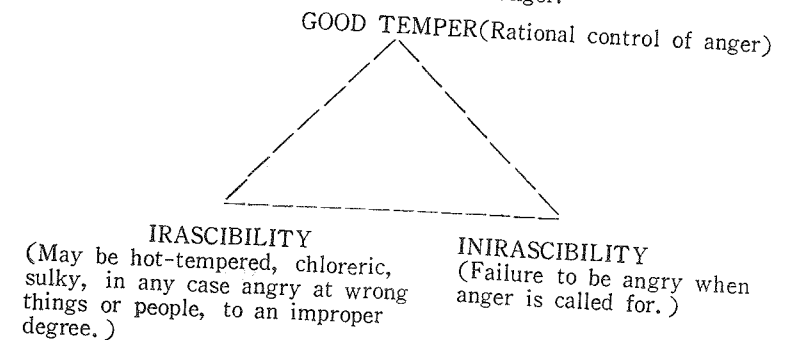
f. *The proper desire for honor.* Closely related to pride is the proper desire for honor. To desire honor more than one should, and from the wrong sources is to be overly ambitious, whereas the unambitious is not willing to receive honors even for noble reasons. To desire honor properly, from the right sources and in the right way, is virtuous, a praiseworthy see of character. The proper desire of honor is, thus, a mean between over-ambition and unambitionness. With respect to ambition, to desire honor properly will appear as a deficiency, and with respect to an improper lack of ambition, the proper desire will appear as an excess.



g. *Good temper.* To be good tempered does not simply mean that one is never angry. A person is good tempered when he controls his anger rationally and is not led by passion. It is difficult to state how, with whom, at what, and how long one should be angry, as he ought, when he ought, and as long as he ought. He is angry at the right things and with the right people. Good temper is a mean with respect to anger.

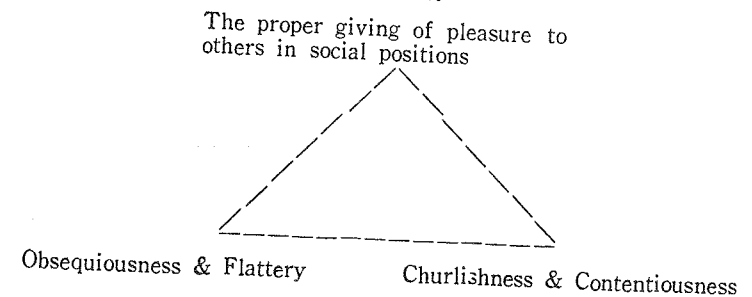
Never to be angry is a deficiency, a vice by defect, a sort of inirascibility. Not to be angry at the things one should be angry at is not praiseworthy but blameworthy. The good-tempered are righteously indignant.

The vice associated with excess is called irascibility. Here one is angry with the wrong persons at the wrong things, too quickly and too long, and more than is right. Such people may fail to restrain their anger being hot tempered; others, chloric people are ready to get angry on every occasion with everyone. The slky, however, repress their passion and retain their anger for a long time, and the bed tempered are angry until they inflict vengeance or punishment. Such forms of irascibility exceed the rational control of anger.



h. *Social virtues or virtues of sound life.* (We shall group the next three virtues under a single main heading, since they are all concerned with some aspect of social intercourse, with what might be called social grace)

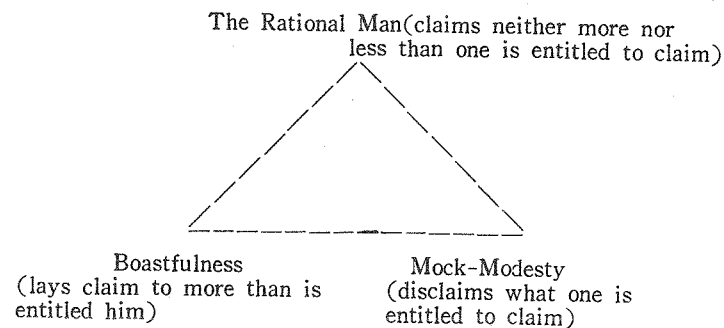
1) The rational mean between the obsequious and the flatterer, and the churlish and contentious. Aristotle does not employ a distinct term to distinguish a middle state between two extremes in attitude that characterize a person's interaction with others. However, there are two types of behavior that do not contribute to the characters of the virtuous person. On the one hand, there are people who praise everything and never oppose, so that they might give pleasure and no pain to whomever they meet. Those who act in this manner without an ulterior motive are simply obsequious, whereas those who seek to give pleasure for a selfish end are flatterers. On the other hand, there are people who oppose everything and do not care a bit about hurting others. Such people quarrel with everything; they are the churlish and the contentious. The virtuous, however, attain a mean between these two extremes. His association with others he will put up with, and will resent the right things, in the right way. His attitude resembles friendship, although it lacks the intimacy of the latter. The virtuous person will refuse to give pleasure when it is unhonorable or harmful for him to do so.



2) Truth in social life. The rational mean between the boastful and the mock modest. Here again Aristotle does not employ a distinct term to describe the mean between two vices connected with human social life. In our associations with others we have all encountered the boastful and the mock-modest. Let us consider the boastful man. Such a person is untruthful in his claims about things that bring glory. He may claim more than he has, and claim what he does not have. The boaster may claim more than he has for the sake of reputation, for honor, or for money. The boaster may seek to win praise, congratulations or gain. Such a person corrupts his own character.

The mock-modest, in contrast to the boastful, disclaims and belittles what he has. He understates and disclaims qualities that bring reputation. To disavow what one has it also a form of untruthfulness.

To avoid the extremes of boastfulness and mock-modesty, the person of virtuous character acknowledges truthfully what he has, neither more or less. Such a person is truthful in both his life and in his words. Such a person loves truth, and neither understates or overstates his worth.



3) The rational between buffoonery and boorishness. The virtuous character displays good taste in his social life. He exhibits what has been called social grace. Aristotle recognizes the need for amusement and relaxation. Life is not all activity. There is room for rest and a sense of humor. However, the virtuous person will here again display the proper character and occupy the mean between extremes. The vulgar buffoon carries humor to an excess. Such a person seeks to get a laugh at all costs, frequently disregarding the feelings of the object of his buffoonery. The buffoon is a slave to his sense of humor; he spares no one, nor no subject, and says things that should neither be said nor listened to by the virtuous man of refinement.

In contrast to the buffoon, the boorish person can neither make nor stand a joke. Such a person contributes nothing to social life and finds fault with everything, a real party pooper.

The virtuous person is both ready witted and tactful, avoiding the extremes of joking about everything and of not joking about anything. The ready-witted jokes in a tasteful way, and says and listens to what one should in thy way one should. The person occupying the mean between buffoonery and boorishness is also tactful. There are things that he will not joke about, language that he will not use, and things that he will not listen to. In short, his jests will display propriety and good taste, and will not be offensive to others.

I. Justice

Aristotle's treatment of justice and injustice may prove helpful in the discussion of concrete problems. It may be that Aristotle's reasons for being virtuous are unconvincing to many centem-

poraries, however, his notion of what justice and injustice mean is at least interesting.

Justice for Aristotle is a state of character that not only disposes a person to act justly but also makes him wish for what is just. Injustice is the very opposite. It is that state of character which predisposes a person to wish for what is unjust and to act unjustly.

Justice and injustice may be used respectively to refer to virtue and to vice as a whole. The law requires that every virtue be practiced and every vice avoided. There is, however, a sense in which justice is a part of virtue.

Justice in the narrow sense is also concerned with man's relationship to one's neighbor. Such particular justice is of two kinds. The first is distributive justice; the second, rectificatory.

Distributive justice is applicable to the distribution of honour, money or such things that are given out on the basis of merit. Here not everyone is to receive an exactly equal amount of what is distributed. An unjust man is unfair, and an unjust act treats people unequally. Nevertheless, there is a geometrical as well as an arithmetical equality. Awards are according to merit, and what is just in distribution is according to merit. Everyone is not to receive the same amount but the amount he deserves, and what a person deserves is his share. What a person deserves is in a sense in proportion to what he has contributed. To distribute rewards justly requires the division of what is to be distributed into parts which are to each other as the merits of the persons sharing in the distribution.

Let us imagine two people, A and B. Each are to receive a share of something that is to be distributed. suppose it is money, M. A fair distribution does not require that the amount of money A receives equal to the amount to money B receives. It is not necessary that if A receives \$10.00, that B also receive \$10.00. For in addition to something to be distributed, and persons to whom something is to be distributed, there must be a basis of distribution, X. There are many problems connected with finding a basis of distribution. Formally, however, we might say, that A's share of the money, ought to be to B's share of the money, as A's share of X is to B's share of X, where X is the basis of distribution.

Suppose A is a carpenter, and B is a carpenter's helper. Both are working in the construction of the same house. They are not paid the same dollar amount but in proportion to a certain basis of distribution, X, their productivity, in proportion to their contribution to the finished product. The amount of money they receive depends upon their share in the work, in the production, in the finished house.

A's share of the money is to B's share of the money as A's share of X (the work involved) is to B's share of X.

What is just is a species of the proportionate, an equality of ratios. At least four terms are involved in what is just. The ratio between one pair is identical as that between the other pair. A is to B as C is to D; where A is the first person, B, the second person, and C, the first portion, and D, the second portion. And as A is to C, B will be to D.

"The problem of distributive justice is to divide the distributable honour or reward into parts which are to one another as are the merits of the persons who are to participate. If,

A (first person) : B (second person) : : C (first portion) : D (second portion), then (alternando) A : C : : B : D, and therefore (componendo)

A + C : B + D : : A : B. In other words the position established answers to the relative

merits of the parties."¹⁾

The just is the proportional and the unjust violates the proportional. The person who acts unjustly acquires too much of what is good and the person unjustly treated receives too little of what is good.

The second kind of particular justice is rectificatory. Here we are not concerned with the distribution of rewards in terms of any geometrical proportion or ratio. Our interest is rather in voluntary and involuntary transactions between individual persons where the equality involved is arithmetical. The parties involved are regarded as equal on a one to one sense. For example, when two parties, A and B, are involved in a case of fraud, where A has defrauded B, the court does not investigate the character of A and B. The law only regards the nature of the injury; it treats A and B as equals. The judge seeks to restore equality.

Justice differs from the other virtues, since it relates to an intermediate amount, while injustice relates to extremes. Just action is midway between acting unjustly and being treated unjustly. The person who acts unjustly has too much, whereas the person unjustly treated has too little. The just man chooses to do what is just. When distributing rewards between himself and another, the just man will not give more of what is desirable to himself and less to his neighbor. He will give what is proportionately equal. Injustice is productive of excess and defect. The unjust person acts in such a way as to receive an excess of what is useful and is deficient in receiving what is harmful. To have too little is to be unjustly treated; to act unjustly is to have too much.

For a person to act unjustly or justly, his act must be performed voluntarily. Simply to perform an unjust or a just act does not make a person just or unjust. For an act to be just or unjust, it must be chosen after deliberation.

It is not our purpose to give a complete exposition of Aristotle's analysis of the virtues. Does Aristotle offer an alternative to a purely emotive view of ethics? Are there certain acts that will perfect our nature? Are there others that will destroy us? Are certain forms of behavior higher than others? For Aristotle to live according to reason is preferable to a life of pure appetite. To be happy a person must live according to perfect virtue. A person ought to choose the intermediate, not what is defective or excessive. And what is intermediate is determined by the dictates of the right rule.

A person who possesses a practical wisdom is able to deliberate well about what is good and expedient for himself, about what is conducive to the good life. Practical wisdom is concerned with things about which we can deliberate. It is not simply concerned with universals but also with particulars. By virtue a person can aim at the right mark; by practical wisdom we can find the right means.

The end of human existence is happiness. What is happiness? It is an activity in accordance with virtue, in accordance with the highest virtue, in accordance with what is best in man.

"...that which is proper to each thing is by nature best and most pleasant for each thing; for man, therefore, the life according to reason is best and pleasantest, since re-

1) *Nicomachean Ethics*, BKV : Chapter 3. in *The Basic Works of Aristotle*, edited by Richard McKeon, Random House, N. Y., 1941, p.1007.

ason more than anything else is man. This life therefore is also the happiest."

Do you agree with Aristotle that man ought to perfect his nature? Does his description fit your own experience? Reflect for a moment. Do you have a moral sense? Granted that the judgments you make about your own actions are accompanied by feelings, are you prepared to identify them with feelings? Is there an ethical dimension to your experience?

When you judge an act to be wrong, you employ a principle. What is the source of your moral principles? Is there a moral order in the very nature of the universe? Can a person find out what he ought to do by thinking about it? Can you find out by staring at the wall? Does everyone want to be happy in Aristotle's sense? Suppose you agree that justice, for example, is what Aristotle describes. Why should you be just? To be happy? Suppose you value the immediate pleasure of the moment more than the more permanent pleasures of the life of reason. What then? You may be foolish, rather than wise but is there any reason why you should seek "happiness" in Aristotle's sense, rather than some other goal?

The ethics of Plato and Aristotle have exerted a great influence upon the historical development of what is known as Western civilization. In subsequent centuries a synthesis was frequently made between the ethics of the Greco-Roman civilization and those of the Biblical tradition. For the ancient world of Greece and Rome, man's reason enabled him to discover what he ought to do. For the world of the Biblical tradition, there is a divine Being who gives a moral law to man. God's very nature is that of moral perfection. As an infinite Being, God is a moral Being. God's moral attributes are that of Holiness, justice, and goodness. It is not simply that goodness and justice belong to God, but God's very nature, his very essence is justice and goodness. There is no moral order apart from God, but the very nature of God is moral. It is not simply that God acts justly but justice, goodness and holiness are essential attributes of the divine being.

Within the Biblical tradition, as expressed within the Old and New Testaments, God discloses principles of conduct, and makes moral demands upon man. Man's chief end is to love God with his entire being, with all his heart.

God is conceived of as the creator of the world. God is perfect and man is created in God's image. He, too, is to strive to be like God. God is love, and man is to love. First of all he is to love God, and then he is to love his neighbor as himself.

5. St. Augustine

The biblical ethic is represented in the writings of St. Augustine. For Augustine God is the source of wisdom and the wisdom is found in piety, in the fear of the Lord, in the worship of God.

God is to be worshipped with our faith, hope, and love. A person does not fully realize himself unless he is in a right relation to God. The three graces, faith, hope, love each have a proper object. As men, as sinners, we are miserable apart from God. Faith believes in the creed. Faith is concerned with the past, present, and future. Augustine believed, for example, that Christ died, a past event; that he is now sitting at the right hand of God and that he will come to judge the living and the dead. In the strict sense we do not see what we believe or hope for. Faith is the evidence of things not seen. What we believe is not directly seen, but it

is the words of Scripture, the testimony of witnesses. We need not probe into the nature of things. It is sufficient to believe that the goodness of the creator is the only cause of all created things. The one true God is the creator of all that is; nothing exists but himself that does not derive its existence from Him, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.¹⁾ All things were created good. What we call evil is simply the absence of good. To be happy man needs to know the causes of good and evil in order to avoid distress and error. The essence of error is the acceptance of what is false as if were true. To avoid error, however, we ought not to suspend belief, To assume that everything is uncertain or unknown is not an option. There can be no belief without assent. Certain truths must be believed to attain a happy, that is, eternal life. It is impossible to maintain that everything is uncertain. To hold that a person does not know whether he is living at the present moment is impossible. Certain things one cannot be ignorant of.

For it is impossible that any one should be ignorant that he is alive, seeing that if he is not alive it is impossible for him to be ignorant; for not knowledge merely, but ignorance too can be an attribute only of the living. But, forsooth, they think that by not acknowledging that they are alive they avoid error, when even their very error proves that they are alive, since one who is not alive cannot err. As, then, it is not only true, but certain, that we are alive, so there are many other things both true and certain; and God forbid that it should ever be called wisdom, and not the height of folly, to refuse assent these;²⁾

God alone is the cause of the goodness that we enjoy, and the sole cause of evil is the falling away from God.

Human misery is the result of an estrangement, an alienation from God. In a secondary sense evil is the result of ignorance of one's duty and lust after what is harmful, which in turn produce error and suffering. And yet in spite of his fallen state man still does not lose his desire for happiness, This happiness is to be found by trusting in God, by belonging to his kingdom, by accepting his salvation from sin. In short man's faith is properly directed to ward what is confessed in the creed. From this faith the believer derives a second virtue, namely, hope. He hopes for eternal life, and for the kingdom of God, as well as for blessings here and now. Hope prays the petitions of the Lords' prayer. To believe that the good is about to arrive is to hope for it. To say: Hallowed be Thy name: Thy kingdom come: thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven" is to ask for eternal benefits. To believe that such goods will be forthcoming in another life is to hope for them. Here and now, we ask for our daily bread, the forgiveness of debts, not to be led into temptation, and for the deliverance from evil. Such petitions reflect our hope in this life.

Love is held to be greater than faith and hope.

To know whether a man is good one needs to know what he loves. The man who loves aright hopes and believes aright. Love has as its object God and our neighbor. Man's chief good, is to know and reach God. To obey the commandments of love is to live well and to be happy.³⁾

1) St. Augustine, *The Euchiridion*, Gateway Edition, Henry Regnery Co. Chicago. p.10.

2) *Ibid.*, p.27.

3) See, William A Banner, *Ethics, An Introduction to Moral Philosophy*, Charles Scribners' Sons, N. Y. 1968. p.74.

love of God is to be worked out in love to man; it is to be expressed by serving God through the service of man. Love to one's neighbor is a concern for his well being that is equal to the concern for our own interests.¹⁾ It involves seeking the interests of others independently of their merit or reciprocation. The ethics of the Judeo christian religion differ from the philosophical ethics of plato and aristotle not only by adding faith, hope, and love, but also because they receive their Sanction from a source other than reason. They require the acceptance of a revelation from God.

1) Carl Henry, *Christian Personal Ethics*, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. Grand Rapids, Mich. 1957. p.22 iff.

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