

Introduction to Philosophy Readings

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Readings Part One: Introduction

The Nature & Value of Philosophy

What is Philosophy?

The word “philosophy” literally means “love of wisdom.” While wisdom is a critical part of philosophy, the nature of wisdom has been extensively debated. In fact, there are some philosophers who have claimed that philosophy, in the current sense, has nothing to do with wisdom at all.

Given the fact that there is not a clear definition of “wisdom” and that people disagree about the role of wisdom in philosophy, how is a person to get a grasp on what philosophy is about? Fortunately, it is possible to provide a general overview of philosophy without having to become involved in any debates of wisdom. This is done by looking at the traditional subject matter of and questions addressed by philosophers.

One way to define an academic field is in terms of its subject matter. Like other academic fields, philosophy does not consist of a single, monolithic subject. For example, people do not study a single thing called “history”; they study various parts of history, such as Hellenistic Greece, 12th century Japan, or the Second World War. Like these other fields, philosophy is divided into various branches based on specific content. Not surprisingly, there is extensive debate about the proper subject matter of philosophy.

A second way to define an academic field is in terms of the questions that it asks and seeks to answer. For example, psychology asks questions about the mind and tries to answer these questions. As is the case with subject matter, an academic field can also be divided into branches in terms of the specific questions that are being asked. There is also extensive debate over what constitutes a ‘proper’ philosophical question.

Various traditional branches of philosophy will be briefly presented below in terms of their subject matter and the questions they address.

Philosophy and Science

From both a historical and a theoretical standpoint, the sciences arose from philosophy and so there is a special relationship between the two areas. Both address similar (and even identical) questions and employ similar (and even identical) methods. Both are concerned with the origin of the universe, the nature of the mind, the nature of space-time, the foundations of ethics, the basis of human behavior and so on. Both employ observations, symbolic logic, mathematics, hypothesis testing and so forth.

Because of these similarities, the boundaries between science and philosophy are somewhat vague. This often leads to controversy over what counts as scientific and what belongs in the realm of philosophy. It is a common mistake to assume that science is concrete and provides definite answers and that philosophy is merely theoretical and provides no definite answers. However, the facts of the matter are that both are highly theoretical and are swamped in unanswered questions and intellectual controversy.

Philosophy and Religion

Philosophy and religion are distinct areas and have experienced both conflict and cooperation through the centuries. Currently though, faith (religion) is often seen as being in conflict with reason (philosophy). This

conflict dates back to the origin of philosophy-the discipline began by offering alternative explanations to those given by Greek religion. In many respects this tradition of competition has remained strong. Contemporary philosophers are often regarded as atheists and anti-religious and faith is often seen as irrational or beyond reason. In the past, early Christian thinkers blamed philosophy for many of the early heresies. Some religious thinkers claimed took reason as a threat to faith and something that misleads people.

Despite the existence of conflict between the two disciplines, there is also extensive overlap. Philosophers and religious thinkers address many of the same problems such as the existence of God, the nature of morality, the origin of the universe, and the purpose of existence.

Although many contemporary philosophers are atheists or at least agnostics, many philosophers have been religious thinkers and many religious thinkers have been philosophers. Among these thinkers are Augustine, Anselm, Aquinas, Descartes, Locke, and Berkeley. These thinkers and others made use of reason to defend and support religion.

One important debate in both philosophy and religion has been over defining the proper sphere of each. Some thinkers take the spheres to overlap in some degree so that philosophy can address some, but not all, matters in religion and vice versa. On this view, philosophers and religious thinkers have legitimate concerns within each others' disciplines. Naturally, thinkers vary in their view about the extent of the overlap.

On one extreme, some thinkers take the spheres to overlap completely so that one can address all the matters of the other. One view is that religion should be used to address all allegedly philosophical problems. For example, questions about reality and morality are to be addressed by religion and not by a distinct discipline of philosophy. Another view is that philosophy/reason should be used to address all allegedly religious problems. A third view is that religion and philosophy can be used interchangeably-truth is truth, no matter how one reaches it.

On the other extreme, some thinkers take the spheres to have no intersection at all-each must stick to its own domain. On this view, religious methods are useless in dealing with philosophical matters and reason has no role in religious matters. Some scientific and philosophical thinkers, such as Freud, take the religious sphere to be 'empty' and hold that religion should be studied purely in scientific terms. One example of this is the view that religion should be looked at entirely as a psychological or sociological phenomenon. Freud, for example, took religious belief to be a psychological phenomenon and even wrote a work on religion entitled *The Future of an Illusion*. As another example, Marx considered religion to be "the opiate of the masses" and regarded it as a social phenomenon without a metaphysical foundation.

While the relation between faith and reason is a matter of significant controversy, for the purpose of the class, it is assumed that reason is useful in addressing some relevant theological matters-but the possibility is left open that this assumption might be incorrect.

Some Branches of Philosophy

Philosophy is divided into various branches based on content and questions. While the divisions presented below are traditional, they are not without controversy.

Aesthetics

Aesthetics is a branch of philosophy concerned with theories of art and beauty. Aesthetics can be divided into three general academic areas which are as follows.

Descriptive aesthetics is what is typically done by art historians and anthropologists. When one practices descriptive aesthetics one provides a description of a culture's, group's or a person's aesthetic views. This simply

states the characteristics of the aesthetics in question. For example, an anthropologist might describe the artistic style of Greek statues from the Hellenistic period or an art historian might describe the aesthetics evident in the works of Andrew Wyeth or Britney Spears.

Meta aesthetics is the most theoretical level of aesthetics. Doing this sort of thing involves the creation and assessment of aesthetic theories. Developing a theory of art, such as was done by thinkers like Plato and Tolstoy, would be an example of meta-aesthetics. For the most part, people tend to be less concerned with this level of abstraction and focus more on the more concrete and specific matters in aesthetics such as those covered by normative and applied aesthetics.

Normative aesthetics is more concrete than meta-aesthetics because it deals with the creation and application of aesthetic standards. An example of this is when a music critic develops a set of standards for classifying music into various genres (for example, country and western) and assessing music in terms of its aesthetic value.

The most concrete and specific type of aesthetics is applied aesthetics. As the name suggest, this involves the application of aesthetic standards to specific cases/situations. For example, a film critic is practicing applied aesthetics when she assesses a movie and assigns it stars, thumbs, or spitting llamas based on her aesthetic principles.

In somewhat more specific terms, aesthetics is a rational and systematic attempt to understand aesthetic statements, principles and theories. To achieve this goal, aestheticians analyze aesthetic concepts and terms, create and assessing principles relating to the arts, define and assess artistic value and create and assess aesthetic theories.

Classic Problems in Aesthetics

Over the centuries, philosophers have created and attempted to solve various problems in aesthetics. One of the most basic problems is the nature of art. Attempts to solve this problem involve trying to provide an adequate definition of the word “art.” Given the great diversity of things that the term is applied to it is no wonder that an adequate definition of the term is still not available.

Another problem is the nature of beauty. Intuitively, beauty is connected to art and many thinkers have attempted to define art in terms of beauty. Of course, beauty itself is a matter of great debate. Plato regarded beauty as an objective property of objects. Just as a statue could have the properties of being bronze and weighing 700 pounds it could also have the property of beauty. Other thinkers, such as David Hume, regarded beauty as a subjective matter. This view is nicely summed up by the saying “beauty is in the eye of the beholder.” There are many other views of beauty that have been presented over the centuries.

In addition to providing one of the first philosophical discussions of beauty, Plato also presented one of the first philosophical discussions of censorship. His argument, that art should be censored because of its corrupting influence, provides the standard template for almost all censorship arguments. Thus, Plato helped begin the ongoing and seemingly endless debate over censorship.

Another classic problem is the problem of objectivity. Some people, like Plato, have argued that artistic qualities are objective and that art can be assessed on objective grounds. On this view there are correct and incorrect aesthetic judgments and art is not just a matter of opinion. Other thinkers have contended that artistic judgments are subjective and hence they are a matter of mere opinion. This dispute gave rise to what is known as the paradox of taste. Presented by the 18th century Scottish philosopher David Hume, the paradox presents the following problem: On one hand, tastes cannot be disputed-if a person likes or dislikes a work they cannot be wrong about this. On the other hand, some aesthetic judgments seem not only wrong but also obviously absurd. The problem lies in sorting out these two plausible yet seemingly inconsistent claims.

Some Questions in Aesthetics

The following are some questions that arise in the field of aesthetics. This list is not exhaustive.

1. What is art?
2. What is beauty?
3. Is beauty subjective or objective?
4. Should art be censored by the government?
5. Should artists censor their own work?
6. What makes one work of art better than another?
7. How are genres defined?
8. Do genres matter?
9. Is art important to society?
10. Is art education important?
11. What, if anything, makes art valuable?
12. Can a forgery have the same value as "real" art?
13. What distinguishes "real" art from a forgery?
14. Should art serve political or social purposes?
15. What is the distinction between pornography and art?
16. Should historical films be historically accurate?

Aestheticians, Art Critics and Artists

A final way to understand aesthetics is to consider an analogy to the legal system. Aestheticians are like lawmakers—they create aesthetic theories. Art critics are like judges, applying the theories created by aestheticians. The artist is like the one on trial—they create the works of art that are to be judged.

Aesthetics involves, in part, developing theories or principles for assessing works of art. The art critic applies a specific theory or principle when assessing a specific work of art. The artist can use a specific theory or principle when creating her work. Naturally, one person might occupy all three roles.

Epistemology

Epistemology is a branch of philosophy concerned with theories of knowledge. The name is derived from the Greek terms for *episteme* (knowledge) and *logos* (explanation).

As a branch of philosophy, epistemology is a rational and systematic attempt to understand epistemic terms, statements, principles, and theories. In order to do this, an epistemologist analyses epistemic terms, concepts, principles and theories. The epistemologist also creates and assesses epistemic principles and theories and applies these principles and theories to epistemic problems.

Classic Problems in Epistemology

Epistemology is one of the fundamental branches of philosophy and includes a variety of classic problems. One of the oldest problems is the problem of skepticism. In philosophy, skepticism is the view that we cannot have knowledge. There are many varieties of skepticism that differ in terms of the extent of the doubt accepted.

Another problem is determining the limits of knowledge. This involves trying to find the boundaries of what can be known. Not surprisingly, this search is connected to the problem of skepticism. After all, if there are certain types of knowledge that cannot be had, then this would place limits on what can be known.

Like all philosophers, epistemologists generally spend considerable time sorting and categorizing. In epistemology, three of the basic categories are ignorance (a lack of knowledge), belief (accepting a claim as true), and knowledge (whatever that might be).

Returning briefly to skepticism, two specific skeptical problems include the problem of the eternal world and the problem of other minds. The French philosopher Descartes was one of the first thinkers to extensively develop the problem of the external world. Perhaps the most famous presentation of this philosophical problem is *The Matrix*. While we tend to believe that there is an eternal world—a reality beyond our minds, the problem is trying to prove that there is such a world. As the skeptics have shown, this is surprisingly difficult to do.

The problem of other minds is based on the difficulty of proving that other beings have minds. While it might seem obvious that other people have minds, all that a person has to go in is external behavior. For example, you see someone talking to you and they seem to make sense, so you infer they have a mind. However, this other “person” could be a robot constructed to greet visitors at Disney. It talks and listens, but has no mind. Even if you find out that the other “person” is a human being like you, you cannot actually see his/her mind—just the external behavior.

At one point, some philosophers claimed that knowledge could be defined as justified, true belief. To be more detailed, the view was that if you believed a proposition (such as “ $2+2=4$ ” or “I am a person”), then you had knowledge if that proposition were true and you were justified in your belief. In response to this a philosopher named Gettier wrote a clever paper and thus created the Gettier problem. This problem allegedly shows that someone could have a justified, true belief and still not have knowledge.

Some Questions in Epistemology

The following are some epistemic questions. The list is rather short and there are many other questions that epistemologists attempt to answer (or claim cannot be answered).

1. What is knowledge?
2. What can be known?
3. How do we gain knowledge?
4. How do we know there is an external world?
5. How do we know other people have minds?
6. How do we know if God exists?
7. How do we distinguish dreaming from reality?
8. What is adequate justification for a belief?
9. Are we obligated to examine our beliefs?
10. What are the objects of knowledge?
11. What is skepticism?
12. Is it possible to refute the skeptic?

Ethics

Ethics is the branch of philosophy that is concerned with morality. There is some debate about whether “morality” and “ethics” mean the same thing. People generally use the terms interchangeably so there is some

reason to follow that practice. Other people claim there is a distinction. Either approach seems equally acceptable, but some distinctions between the terms can be drawn.

Morality, in general terms, consists of the customs, precepts and practices that deal with matters of good/bad and wrong/right. Social scientists, such as sociologists and anthropologists, deal with descriptive morality. This, as the name implies, is a description of an actual morality of an individual or group. Presenting a description of a morality simply states the characteristics of the morality in question. For example, stating that Bill thinks lying is wrong or that the Spartans believed that slavery was morally acceptable.

Ethics is the entire realm of morality and moral philosophy. Philosophers tend to divide the branch of ethics into three general areas based on how abstract or concrete the content happens to be. The most theoretical and abstract division of ethics is meta ethics. Roughly put, this is the investigation of the creation and assessment of moral theories. For example, if someone claims that morality is based on God's commands, then they are doing meta ethics. Getting a bit closer to earth is what is known as normative ethics. In general terms, this involves the creation and application of moral standards. For example, if someone claims that lying is wrong and hence people should not lie, then she would be engaged in normative ethics. The most concrete aspect of ethics is known as applied ethics. As the name suggests, this is the application of moral standards to specific cases/situations. For example, George might reason that because lying is wrong, he should not lie about eating the last of the cake.

As a branch of philosophy, ethics is a rational and systematic attempt to understand moral terms, statements, principles, and theories. An ethicist analyses moral terms, concepts, principles and theories. Ethicists also create and assess moral principles and theories. These moral principles and theories are generally applied to various moral problems.

Some Classic Moral Problems

One of the oldest problems in morality is the objective/subjective dispute. This is the problem of determining whether ethics is objective or subjective. If ethics is objective, then morality is not simply a matter of opinion. If ethics is subjective, then there are no objective ethics. In ancient Greece, the sophists argued that both morality and truth were subjective. In return for suitable payment they promised to train people to acquire success. Socrates, at least according to Plato, opposed the sophists are argued in favor of both objective truth and morality. Since that time the debate has continued.

Another classic problem is the problem of the basis of morality. Solving this problem involves figuring out the foundation for claims about good and evil. Not surprisingly, there are many different opinions about the basis of morality. Some people consider religion to provide the foundation of morality and believe that God determines what is right and wrong. This view is known as divine command theory. Other people, such as Aristotle, believe that morality is based on human nature. Some people even claim that morality has no basis whatsoever and when people talk about good and evil, they are talking about nothing. There are many other approaches as well.

A related and rather old problem is Plato's Euthyphro problem. While Plato's original dialogue discussed the nature of piety, the argument has been modified and applied as a problem for divine command theory. The problem is presented in this question: is something good because God says it is good, or does God say it is good because it is good? This problem raises questions about the relationship between morality and religion and has led to extensive debate between philosophical and religious thinkers.

Another classic moral problem is determining the scope of morality. Solving this problem involves determining who and what counts morally. Perhaps the narrowest scope is held by the ethical egoist. The ethical egoist believes that only s/he matters morally. Many thinkers are more generous in regards to the scope. For

example, Immanuel Kant extends it to all rational beings and John Stuart Mill extends it to include not only humanity but also sentient beings.

There are also many specific enduring moral problems. These include such classics as: euthanasia, capital punishment, suicide, abortion, lying, stealing.

Some Moral Questions

The following are some moral questions. There is a multitude of moral questions and new ones arise each day.

1. What is good?
2. What is evil?
3. What is the correct life to live?
4. Is stem cell research morally acceptable?
5. What is the basis, if anything is, of morality?
6. Is morality objective or subjective?
7. Is it morally acceptable to use torture as a means of combating terrorism?
8. Is euthanasia morally acceptable?
9. Are there moral rights?
10. Is it morally acceptable to cheat in a serious relationship?
11. Is cloning morally acceptable?
12. Is there a moral obligation to test oneself for STDs?

Logic

Logic is the study and assessment of arguments. It ranges from fairly basic critical thinking to highly advanced symbolic systems. While people often think of logic as being just one thing, there are actually many different varieties.

The most common type of logic is critical thinking. Most colleges and universities offer classes in critical thinking and the ability to think critically is considered to be, at the risk of being repetitive, critical. While much can be said about critical thinking, being a critical thinker involves rationally assessing claims to determine whether you should accept, reject or suspend judgment in regards to a claim.

One of the earliest forms of logic was developed by the Greek philosopher Aristotle. This logic is known as categorical logic because it is a logic of categories. To be more specific, it is a logic of class membership. This logic is very simple and involves only four types of sentences: all S are P, no S are P, some S are P, and some S are not P.

A more complex type of logic is truth functional logic. This is a logic in which the truth of the more complex claims is based on the truth values of the simpler claims. Truth value is the value of the claim in terms of being true or false. While it seems odd to say that the truth value of a claim can be false, that is how the term works.

One type of somewhat odd logic is modal logic. This is a logic which uses possibility and necessity operators-a logic of what can, cannot and must be. Another odd type of logic is fuzzy logic-a logic that accepts values other than just true or false. This logic actually has many practical applications including such things as climate control in buildings as well as applications in robotics.

There have also been attempts to create “exotic” logics such as moral logics for ethical reasoning and “perfect” logics that reveal the nature and structure of reality.

Some General Questions in Logic

These are some typical questions, but there are many more.

1. What is a good argument?
2. What is a fallacy?
3. What is a valid argument?
4. What is a sound argument?
5. Do logical languages mirror reality?
6. Can logic be used to do significant and substantial work in philosophy?

Metaphysics

Metaphysics is the philosophical investigation of reality. One area of metaphysics is ontology, which is the study aimed at determining the constituents of reality. The word “ontology” is from the Greek “ontos” which means “thing” and the Greek “ology” which means “study or science of.” So, an ontologist is a philosopher who studies things.

One expression used by philosophers is “ontological zoo.” This refers to a collection of entities that a philosopher accepts as real. For example, if a philosopher accepts the existence of immaterial minds, then this sort of entity would be in her ontological zoo.

Some classic metaphysical problems

Metaphysics includes a wide variety of problems. One rather old problem, which date back to before Plato, is the problem of universals. Solving this problem involves determining in virtue of what are individuals grouped into types. For example, consider four human beings-solving this problem would reveal what is it that makes them all the same sort of thing, namely human beings.

Another old problem is that of personal identity. Philosophers have long been fascinated with what it is that makes a person the person who s/he is, distinct from all other things in the universe. Associated with this is the problem of what it is to be a person. Both scientist and philosophers raise questions as to whether animals such as dolphins and apes are people. Some scientists and philosophers have speculated that it might be possible to build a thinking machine that could be a person.

Closely related to the problem of personal identity is the problem of the mind. Thinkers have long wondered what the mind might be. Some claim that the mind is identical to the brain and nervous system. Others claim that the mind is a non-physical entity and often refer to it as the soul or the ‘ghost in the machine.’

There is also the problem of modality. This problem deals with matters of possibility and necessity: what can be and what must. Some philosophers and scientists explain possibility in terms of there being real possible worlds-all that can happen does happen in some other reality. Some versions of quantum physics include this view as part of the theory. Other thinkers see this sort of view as quite crazy and prefer other explanations for possibility and necessity.

The most general problem in metaphysics is the problem of reality. To solve this problem one must determine what is truly real.

Some Questions in Metaphysics and Ontology

These are some questions dealt with by metaphysicians and ontologists but there are many others.

1. Does God exist and what is His nature?

2. What is a person?
3. What are space and time?
4. What is real?
5. Is time travel possible?
6. Do ghosts exist and if so, what are they?
7. Is there an afterlife?
8. Are properties metaphysical entities?
9. Do possible worlds exist?
10. Are there multiple dimensions?

Social Philosophy

This is the philosophy of society and social sciences: economics, history, sociology, anthropology, political science, and the others. One type of social philosophy is political philosophy. This is the study of the nature and justification of coercive institutions. Another type of social philosophy is the philosophy of law. This is the study of the nature and justification of law. Not surprisingly, this branch of philosophy overlaps with the practice of law. While lawyers generally deal with the practical application of law, judges often have to focus on philosophical matter relating to the law. The Supreme Court, for example, often deals with rather philosophical aspects of the law.

Classic Problems in Social Philosophy

One of the fundamental problems in this area is the problem of the state. While most people simply accept that states have authority it is quite reasonable to inquire what the basis of this authority might be. In short, the problem is determining why (or even if) people are obligated to obey their state.

Another basic problem is the problem of rights. In the United States it is generally assumed that people have all sorts of rights, such as those presented in the aptly named Bill of Rights. However, not everyone agrees that there are rights and even those who accept rights disagree about their basis. Sorting out this matter is what this problem is all about.

A third problem is the problem of law. While people obviously create laws there is still the question of what these laws should be based on. Some think that laws should be based on religion. Others think they should be based on moral principles. Some say that laws are simply useful fictions.

A fourth

4. The problem of the individual and the state: to what extent should the state control individuals?
5. The problem of liberty and security: to what extent should liberties be restricted in order to provide security?

Some questions in social philosophy

These are some classic questions but there are many more.

1. What are rights?
2. What is justice?
3. What is the ideal society?
4. What justifies laws?
5. What is the basis of political authority?

6. Should limits be placed on the power of the state?

Other Branches

Given the fact that philosophy has been practiced for thousands of years across the entire world, it is hardly surprising that there are many other branches of philosophy aside from those listed above. In fact, it is hardly an exaggeration to say that there could be a philosophy of anything that can be discussed.

Regional Based Branches

These branches are defined in terms of where the philosopher in question lives/lived. Diving philosophy based on geography was a common practice and one that is still followed today. However, to think that this is an accurate way of distinguishing between philosophic views would tend to be a mistake. While there are often similar views among people who live in the same area, there is typically a great deal of diversity. Because of this, some thinkers have questioned the value of dividing philosophy by regions. Common regional divisions include: African Philosophy, Eastern Philosophy, American Philosophy and Continental Philosophy. Any geographic area can be used as the basis for division. For example, there could be a Wakulla Philosophy or a Midwest Philosophy.

Gender/Ethnic Based Branches

These branches are often defined based on the gender or ethnicity of the philosopher, but sometimes the classification is based on the subject matter. The best known type of gender based philosophy is feminism. In general terms, this is a branch of philosophy that focuses on women and women's issues. While people often assume that any philosophy done by a woman must be feminism, this is obviously not the case. A woman writing a technical paper on logical deductions is probably not writing feminist philosophy. People often assume that feminism is a single view with a set doctrine that all feminists share. This is a mistake—there are many varieties of feminism ranging from moderate feminism to radical lesbian separatism.

Ethnic based philosophic branches include Hispanic philosophy, African-American philosophy and Native American philosophy. These branches are generally defined in terms of the issues addressed. For example, a philosopher who focuses on Hispanics and Hispanic issues could be considered as doing Hispanic philosophy. There is also a tendency to classify philosophers by their ethnicity. For example, an African American who does philosophy might be seen as doing African American philosophy. This approach can be problematic since it tends to assume that a person's ethnicity is always a defining part of whatever philosophy they might be doing. In some cases this seems rather implausible. For example, it would seem odd to say that a paper on the nature of space-time by a Native American philosopher would thus be a work of Native American philosophy.

Other Content Based Branches

There are many other branches of philosophy that are based on their content. One branch is the history of philosophy which is the examination of historic figures in philosophy. It often focuses on interpreting their views, speculating on the origins of the views, and their impact on other thinkers. Some claim the historical views should be treated the same way as historical scientific views: important as historical steps, but now obsolete. Others claim that historical philosophers should receive the same treatment as contemporary philosophers and should have their works assessed in terms of their philosophical relevance.

One branch of philosophy that is very popular in analytical schools is the philosophy of language. This is the philosophical examination of language and is typically linked to logic. Some problems in this area are the

problem of determining the nature of meaning, the problem of determining the relation between language, thought and the world, and the problem of creating an ideal language that mirrors reality.

One fairly recent branch of philosophy is the philosophy of literature, which is exactly what it sounds like. A much older branch is the philosophy of mathematics. This branch overlaps with logic, so much so that some consider it to simply be a part of logic. Some problems include determining the metaphysical status of numbers, sort out the epistemology of mathematics and determining the relation between mathematics and reality.

Philosophy of mind is often considered a part of metaphysics, but in recent years it has developed enough that some people think it should have its own branch. This is, of course, the philosophical examination of the mind. Two classic problems include determining the nature of the mind and the famous mind-body problem. The mind-body problem involves determining the relation between the mind and the body. This is a special problem for people who are dualists-those who think the mind and body are distinct metaphysical entities.

One branch that was very large in the Middle Ages is the philosophy of religion. It is the philosophical examination of religion and religious issues. It is still an important branch today. Some approaches apply philosophical methods to religious problems and often do so in the context of epistemology and metaphysics. Other approaches regard religion as a social/psychological phenomenon to be studied. Hence, philosophy of religion tends to blend into other areas.

One branch that has grown in popularity in recent years is philosophy of science. This is the philosophical examination of the sciences. It typically focuses on meta-scientific issues as opposed to specific scientific problems. One major problem is that of defining “science” and determining what practices, methods and issues are scientific. The debate over whether creationism is science or not falls within the domain of the philosophy of science (and religion). A somewhat less well known problem is the problem of the methods of science-how should science be practiced?

There are many other possible content branches. As noted above, anything could be a branch of philosophy. Hence, the above discussion is neither complete nor exhaustive.

Popular Misconceptions Regarding Philosophy

Philosophy is subject to many misconceptions. Two of the most common are the view that philosophy is all just a matter of opinion and the view that philosophy is useless.

Misconception: Philosophy is Just a Matter of Opinion

One of the most common misconceptions about philosophy is that philosophical views are just opinions and hence any view is just as good (or bad) as any other.

An opinion is a belief. In common usage, to say “it is my opinion that X” is to say “I believe X.” An opinion is also typically taken as an unsupported opinion. That is, a belief that is not backed up with reasons or evidence. An opinion can become a fact-a belief that is adequately backed up by evidence or reasons.

This particular misconception involves thinking that all philosophical views are just opinions and can never reach the status of being facts. Those who fall victim to this misconception assume that there are no better or worse opinions on philosophical matters. So, any position is as good as any other and there is really no point in discussing it. From this is generally thought that once you have stated your opinion, that is enough and it should be accepted as being as good as anyone else’s opinion.

This misconception typically involves two assumptions: philosophical positions are simply opinions and the assumption that all opinions are equally good. These assumptions are appealing, but mistaken.

In regards to the first assumption, it is true that philosophy begins with an opinion-what a person thinks about a particular issue. However, the practice of philosophy involves reasoning about and arguing for the position in question. A position backed up with arguments is not simply a matter of opinion-the position is now supported with evidence and reasons. Given that logic and reasoning are not simply matters of opinion, these supported positions cannot be dismissed as being simply matters of opinion. If someone wishes to disagree with a supported position, they will need to provide arguments of their own-otherwise there is no reason to accept their opinion over the supported opinion. Thus, supported philosophical positions are not simply opinions.

In regards to the second assumption, it is often assumed that since people are “entitled” to their own opinions, it follows that all opinions are equally good. While this view enjoys some popularity, it seems implausible in. For example, in the case of cancer treatments, the opinion of medical doctor seems quite a bit better than that of a 5 year old. As another example, in regards to designing airplanes, the opinion of an aeronautical engineer is better than that of a 1st year PE major. If all opinions were equally good, then there would no sense in paying such high fees to doctors-you could just ask anyone for medical advice. There would also be no sense in companies hiring engineers-any one should be able to design a plane or determine if a building is safe.

The second assumption is also logically self refuting. If all opinions are equally good, then the opinion that *not all opinions are equally good* is as good as the opinion that *all opinions are equally good*. This is a contradiction that arises from the assumption that all opinions are equally good. Therefore, the claim that all opinions are equally good must be rejected.

While this misconception might seem to have been easily defeated, it is often based on sophisticated views of relativism and subjectivism .Relativism is the view that truth is relative-typically to a particular culture. There are specific types of relativism, such as moral relativism-the view that moral truths are culturally relative and not universal. For the relativist, truth varies from culture to culture. So what is true in Rome need not be true in Newark.

A more extreme view is subjectivism. Subjectivism is the view that truth is completely subjective-it is relative to the specific individual.. There are specific types of subjectivism, such as moral subjectivism-the view that moral truths are entirely dependent on individual opinion. For the subjectivist, truth varies from person to person. So, what is true for you need not be true for someone else?

Some people assume that philosophical issues are all relative or subjective in nature, so philosophy is thus a matter of opinion. While relativism and subjectivism are defensible positions, to simply assume they are correct is to beg the question. Begging the question is a mistake in reasoning in which a person actually assumes what they need to prove. So, while subjectivism or relativism in regards to philosophical matters might be correct, such a position must be argued for and defended. It would be an error to simply assume that philosophic views simply are subjective or relative.

The conflict between an objective view of philosophy and relativism is an old one and dates back before the time of Plato. In his dialogue *Theatetus* Plato agrees that some things are relative. For example, a wind that seems chilly to one might seem pleasant to another. But, he argues that relativism is self-refuting. His specific nemesis in the dialogue is Protagoras, a sophist. Protagoras claims that all opinions are true. This must, of course, include the opinions of his opponents who believe he is wrong. So, his belief is false if those who disagree with him have true beliefs. Plato also points out that Protagoras charged for his teachings and justified this by claiming he was teaching people what they needed to know. But once he claims that his teachings are better than those of others, he has abandoned his relativism. In more general terms, when someone starts arguing for the truth of relativism, they certainly seem to be undermining their own position.

For the purposes of this class the following is assumed (or rather not assumed): First, it cannot simply be assumed that philosophy is just a matter of opinion. Second, it should also not be assumed that every philosophical issue is objective in nature-some things might be relative or subjective. It can be argued that philosophy is just a matter of opinion-but that would require a philosophical argument showing that objectively philosophy is subjective.

Misconception: Philosophy is Useless

A second common misconception about philosophy is that it is useless. It is often assumed that philosophy is useless. Philosophers often help fuel this misconception by creating the impression that they simply split hairs and debate endlessly about meaningless problems. These charges do have some merit-philosophers, like all academics, often get lost in their ivory towers and become needlessly isolated from the world. Because of this, it is not unfair to conclude that at least some of what philosophers do is quite useless. However, it is a mistake to assume that philosophy is useless.

This misconception often rests on how people define “useful.” People who have this misconception often define usefulness in a very narrow and very concrete way such as making money, baking bread, or killing lots of people. Even under these narrow and concrete definitions, philosophy is still useful. As will be shown, philosophers have made many useful contributions. In addition, there are broader definitions of “useful” that seem quite plausible. Under very limited definitions of “useful” most of the sciences would not be useful either, which seems to be an implausible view. In order to make good on these claims it must be shown that philosophers have (as philosophers) made useful contributions. This is easily done.

One major contribution made by philosophy is science. Science originated in philosophy and philosophers were also scientists-in fact, in the past little distinction was made between the two. Science is based on and utilizes philosophical methods. In the past, some types of science were often called “natural philosophy” and even now doctorates in the sciences are still called “philosophy doctorates.” Famous philosopher-scientists include Thales, Descartes, Bacon, Newton.

A second major area of contributions is in the realm of logic and mathematics. Mathematics and logic were developed by philosophers such as Pythagoras, Plato, Aristotle, Descartes, Leibniz, and Pascal. Science, technology, and engineering depend on mathematics and logic. Logic is the basis of computers-ranging from PCs to car chips to digital phones to hand held game systems. In is no exaggeration to say that without philosophy, the modern information economy and technology it is based on would simply not exist. Critical thinking was developed by philosophers and this is quite a useful thing.

A third major area where philosophers made great contributions is in society. Philosophers have laid the foundation for rights, reform and revolution. Aristotle developed political science. Hobbes developed the theoretical justification for the modern state. Locke developed the notion of God-given human rights. Adam Smith laid the theoretical foundations for capitalism. Henry David Thoreau created the concept of civil disobedience. Marx and Engels developed the theory of Marxism. Martin Luther King, Jr. refined and applied the concept of civil disobedience. These are but a few examples. It is quite clear that society has been shaped and influenced in many ways by philosophers.

A final major area is the realm of ethics. Philosophers developed the notion of formal ethics and ethical reasoning is philosophical. Ethics and ethical debates are a critical and unavoidable aspect of life.

Thus, philosophy hardly seems useless. Of course, most of these contributions lie in the past and thus one might ask “what has philosophy done for me lately?” and “what will I get from studying philosophy?” Fortunately, philosophy still has much to offer.

First, the study and practice of philosophy develops essential skills. These include critical thinking, logical thought, problem solving and writing skills.

Second, the study and practice of philosophy broadens the mind. It enables a better understanding and appreciation of your own views. It enables a better understanding and appreciation of other views. It encourages intellectual tolerance. It encourages the development of intellectual imagination.

Of course, studying philosophy is not without risks or side effects. Philosophy can result in some confusion, doubt and distress. These can be natural side effects of thinking and questioning previously held beliefs.

Argument Basics

Defined

While people generally think of an argument as a fight, perhaps involving the hurling of small appliances, this is not the case—at least as the term is used in philosophy. In philosophy, an argument is a set of claims, one of which is supposed to be supported by the others. There are two types of claims in an argument. The first type of claim is the conclusion. This is the claim that is supposed to be supported by the premises. A single argument has one and only one conclusion, although the conclusion of one argument can be used as a premise in another argument (thus forming an extended argument).

The second type of claim is the premise. A premise is a claim given as evidence or a reason for accepting the conclusion. Aside from practical concerns, there is no limit to the number of premises in a single argument.

Varieties

There are two main categories of arguments, three if bad arguments are considered a category. The first is the inductive argument. An inductive argument is an argument in which the premises are intended to provide some degree of support but less than complete support for the conclusion.

The second type is the deductive argument. A deductive argument is an argument in which the premises are intended to provide complete support for the conclusion.

The third “type” of argument is the fallacy. A fallacy is an argument in which the premises fail to provide adequate support for the conclusion.

Examples

Inductive Argument

Premise 1: Most humans have brown eyes.

Premise 2: Bill is a human.

Conclusion: Bill has brown eyes.

Deductive Argument

Premise 1: If pornography has a detrimental effect on one’s character, it would be best to avoid it.

Premise 2: Pornography has a detrimental effect on one’s character.

Conclusion: It would be best to avoid pornography.

Extended Deductive Argument

Argument 1, Premise 1: If pornography has a detrimental effect on one's character, it would be best to regard it as harmful.

Argument 1, Premise 2: Pornography has a detrimental effect on one's character.

Argument 1, Conclusion: It would be best to regard pornography as harmful.

Argument 2, Premise 1: If it is best to regard something as harmful, then the government should protect people from it.

Argument 2, Premise 2: It would be best to regard pornography as harmful.

Argument 3, Conclusion: The government should protect people from pornography.

Fallacy

Premise 1: Dave supports the tax reduction for small businesses and says it will be good for everyone, but he owns a small business.

Conclusion: Dave must be wrong about the tax reduction.

General Assessment

When assessing any argument there are two main factors to consider: the quality of the premises and the quality of the reasoning.

While people often blend the two together, the quality of the reasoning is quite distinct from the quality of the premises. Just as it is possible to build poorly using excellent materials, it is possible to reason badly using good premises. Also, just as it is possible for a skilled builder to assemble crappy material with great skill, it is possible to reason well using poor premises. As another analogy, consider a check book. Doing the math is the same thing as reasoning. The math can be done correctly (good reasoning) but the information entered for the checks (the premises) can be mistaken (for example, entering \$5.00 instead of \$50). It is also possible to enter all the check correctly, but for there to be errors in the mathematics.

Reasoning

When assessing the quality of reasoning, the question to ask is: Do the premises logically support the conclusion? If the premises do not logically support the conclusion, then the argument is flawed and the conclusion should not be accepted based on the premises provided. The conclusion may, in fact, be true, but a flawed argument gives you no logical reason to believe the conclusion because of the argument in question. Hence, it would be a mistake to accept it for those reasons. If the premises do logically support the conclusion, then you would have a good reason to accept the conclusion, on the assumption that the premises are true or at least plausible.

The way the reasoning is assessed depends on whether the argument is deductive or inductive. If the argument is deductive, it is assessed in terms of being valid or invalid. A valid argument is such that if the premises were true then the conclusion must be true. An invalid argument is such that all the premises could be true and the conclusion false at the same time. Validity is tested by formal means, such as truth tables, Venn diagrams and proofs.

If the argument is inductive, it is assessed in terms of being strong or weak. A strong argument is such that if the premises were true, then the conclusion is likely to be true. A weak argument is such that if the premises were true, then the conclusion is not likely to be true. Inductive arguments are assessed primarily in terms of standards specific to the argument in question.

Premises

When assessing the quality of the premises, the question to ask is: are the premises true (or at least plausible)? While the testing of premises can be a rather extensive matter, it is reasonable to accept a premise as plausible if it meets three conditions. First, the premise is consistent with your own observations. Second, the premise is consistent with your background beliefs and experience. Third, the premise is consistent with credible sources, such as experts, standard references and text books. It should be noted that thoroughly and rigorously examining premises can involve going far beyond the three basic standards presented here.

Some Useful General Inductive Arguments

Introduction to Inductive Arguments

Defined

An inductive argument is an argument in which the premises are intended to provide some degree of support, but less than complete support, for the conclusion. In other words, the premises are offered as evidence that the conclusion is likely to be true. This distinguishes them from deductive arguments—they are arguments such that the premises are supposed to provide complete support for the conclusion.

The conclusion of an inductive argument goes beyond the evidence presented in the premises—this is what is known as the inductive leap. A clear example of the leap can be shown by using a basic inductive argument—a generalization of the sort used in surveys. Suppose Bill wants to know what the students in his history class think about a rule that forbids freshmen from parking on campus. He asks twenty students out of the fifty enrolled and 70% of them agree with the rule. If he concludes that 70% of all the students agree with the rule, he is making a leap from what he has observed (the students he questioned) to what he has not observed (the remaining students).

This example also shows why the premises of an inductive argument do not provide complete support for the conclusion. After all, even if it is true that 70% of those asked agree with the rule, Bill cannot be certain that the same is true of those he did not ask. Perhaps many of the thirty students he did not question are freshmen and thus likely to disagree with the rule.

Assessment

Like any argument, inductive arguments are assessed in terms of how strongly the premises support the conclusion. Inductive arguments are generally presented as specific types, such as analogical arguments or generalizations. These arguments are also assessed by standards specific to their type. For example, an analogical argument is assessed in terms of the quality of the analogy.

Strong and Weak Arguments

While deductive arguments are assessed in strict “black and white” terms (valid or invalid, sound or unsound), inductive arguments are assessed in terms of varying degrees of strength.

A strong inductive argument is an argument such that if the premises are true, then the conclusion is likely to be true. A weak inductive argument is an argument such that even if the premises are true, the conclusion is not likely to be true. There are various degrees of strength and weakness which express a somewhat subjective opinion of how well the argument’s premises logically support the conclusion. Such assessments are based on the standards for assessing the specific type of argument and the better the argument succeeds at meeting the standards, the stronger the argument. The worse it fails, the weaker the argument.

Analogical Argument

Introduction

An analogical argument is an argument in which one concludes that two things are alike in a certain respect because they are alike in other respects.

Non-argument analogies are often used in cases in which one thing (X) is understood and another (Y) is not, to conclude something about Y. These are typically called explanatory comparisons/analogies. For example, a person might attempt to explain email by saying that it is like mail sent to a post office box. Just as mail is delivered to the PO box and you go to pick it up, email is delivered to your email in box and your software “goes” and picks it up.

Analogical arguments are often used in cases in which one thing (X) is accepted/seen as plausible and another (Y) is not, to get the audience to accept Y or see it as plausible. For example, a person might start with something everyone accepts, such as the fact that if a person has the blood cut off to her brain for too long, she’ll suffer brain damage. The person could then make an analogy: the education system is like the “brain” of society and money is the blood of this brain. Finally, the person might conclude by claiming that cutting off money to the education system will damage society.

Analogies can range from the very literal, such as drawing an analogy between humans and the rats used to test a new medicine, to the metaphorical, such as the blood and money example given above.

Analogical arguments are extremely common. In addition to being used in everyday life, they are commonly used in law and medicine. For example, when a lawyer argues from precedent, she is most likely using an analogical argument: In case Y the judge made ruling X, my case is like Y, so the judge should make ruling X. Doctors also make extensive use of analogical arguments. For example, they draw analogies between what they observed in medical school and what they are observing in a specific patient: this patient’s condition closely resembles the case of poison ivy I saw in medical school, so she has been exposed to poison ivy.

Strict Form

Strictly presented, an analogy will have three premises and a conclusion. The first two premises establish the analogy by showing that the things in question are similar in certain respects. The third premise establishes the additional fact known about one thing and the conclusion asserts that because the two things are alike in other respects, they are alike in this additional respect as well.

Although people generally present analogical arguments in a fairly informal manner, they have the following logical form:

Premise 1: X has properties P,Q, and R.

Premise 2: Y has properties P,Q, and R.

Premise 3: X has property Z as well.

Conclusion: Y has property Z.

X and Y are variables that stand for whatever is being compared, such as chimpanzees and humans or blood and money. P, Q, R, and Z are also variables, but they stand for properties or qualities, such as having a heart or being essential for survival. The use of P, Q, and R is just for the sake of the illustration-the things being compared might have many more properties in common.

An example of an analogy presented in strict form is as follows:

Premise 1: Rats are mammals and possess a nervous system that includes a developed brain.

Premise 2: Humans are mammals possess a nervous system that includes a developed brain.

Premise 3: When exposed to Nerve Agent 274, 90% of the rats died.

Conclusion: If exposed to Nerve Agent 274, 90% of all humans will die.

Standards of Assessment

The strength of an analogical argument depends on three factors. To the degree that an analogical argument meets these standards it is a strong argument.

First, the more properties X and Y have in common, the better the argument. For example, in the example given above rats and humans have many properties in common. This standard is based on the common sense notion that the more two things are alike in other ways, the more likely it is that they will be alike in some other way. It should be noted that even if the two things are very much alike in many respects, there is still the possibility that they are not alike in regards to Z. This is why analogical arguments are inductive.

Second, the more relevant the shared properties are to property Z, the stronger the argument. A specific property, for example P, is relevant to property Z if the presence or absence of P affects the likelihood that Z will be present. Using the example, above, the shared properties are relevant. After all, since nerve agents work on the nervous system, the presence of a nervous system makes it more likely that something will be killed by such agents. It should be kept in mind that it is possible for X and Y to share relevant properties while Y does not actually have property Z. Again, this is part of the reason why analogical arguments are inductive.

Third, it must be determined whether X and Y have relevant dissimilarities as well as similarities. The more dissimilarities and the more relevant they are, the weaker the argument. In the example above, humans and rats do have dissimilarities, but most of them are probably not particularly relevant to the effects of nerve agents. However, it would be worth considering that the size difference might be relevant-at the dosage the rats received, humans might be less likely to die. Thus, size would be a difference worth considering.

Example

Premise 1: Attacking your next-door neighbors, killing them and taking their property is immoral.

Premise 2: War involves going into a neighboring country, killing people and taking their property.

Conclusion: So, war is immoral.

Assessment

War and violent theft share many properties: intrusion, violence, killing, and taking the property of others. War and violent theft also share relevant properties: violence, killing, and taking of property are relevant to moral assessment.

However, there are relevant dissimilarities. For example, war often takes place between mutual antagonists. This relevant difference can be developed, perhaps ironically, in another analogical argument: it could be argued that while it would be immoral for a person to just randomly attack neighbors, just as a boxing match between two opponents is morally acceptable, a war between two willing opponents would be morally acceptable as well.

Argument from/by Example

Introduction

Not surprisingly, an argument by example is an argument in which a claim is supported by providing examples.

While they are used in academic contexts quite often, arguments by example are also commonly used in “real life.” For example, suppose someone wants to show that another person always mooches pizza without offering to help pay for it. The case could be made by listing examples in which the “pizza mooch” ate pizza but did not contribute any money.

Strict Form

Strictly presented, an analogy will have at least one premise and a conclusion. Each premise is used to support the conclusion by providing an example. The general idea is that the weight of the examples establishes the claim in question.

Although people generally present arguments by example in a fairly informal manner, they have the following logical form:

Premise 1: Example 1 is an example that supports claim P.

Premise n: Example n is an example that supports claim P.

Conclusion: Claim P is true.

In this case n is a variable standing for the number of the premise in question and P is a variable standing for the claim under consideration.

An example of an argument by example presented in strict form is as follows:

Premise 1: Lena ate pizza two months ago and did not contribute any money.

Premise 2: Lena ate pizza a month ago and did not contribute any money.

Premise 3: Lena ate pizza two weeks ago and did not contribute any money.

Premise 4: Lena ate pizza a week ago and did not contribute any money.

Conclusion: Lena is a pizza mooch who eats but does not contribute.

Standards of Assessment

The strength of an analogical argument depends on four factors. First, the more examples, the stronger the argument. For example, if Lena only failed to pay for the pizza she ate once, then the claim that she is a mooch who does not contribute would not be well supported—the argument would be very weak.

Second, the more relevant the examples, the stronger the argument. For example, if it were concluded that Lena was a pizza mooch because she regularly failed to pay for her share of gas money, then the argument would be fairly weak. After all, her failure to pay gas money does not strongly support the claim that she won't help pay for pizza (although it would provide grounds for suspecting she might not pay).

Third, the examples must be specific and clearly identified. Vague and unidentified examples do not provide much in the way of support. For example, if someone claimed that Lena was a pizza mooch because “you know, she didn't pay and stuff on some days...like some time a month or maybe a couple months ago”, then the argument would be extremely weak.

Fourth, counter-examples must be considered. A counter-example is an example that counts against the claim. One way to look at a counter example is that it is an example that supports the denial of the conclusion being argued for. The more counter-examples and the more relevant they are, the weaker the argument. For example, if someone accuses Lena of being a pizza mooch, but other people have examples of times which she did contribute, then these examples would serve as counter-examples against the claim that she is a pizza mooch. As such, counter-examples can be used to build an argument by example that has as its conclusion the claim that the conclusion it counters is false.

Examples

Example #1

Premise 1: The painting Oath of the Horatii shows three brothers ready to take action, while the women are painted as passive observers.

Premise 2: In action films, such as typical Westerns, women are cast as victims that must be protected and saved by men.

Conclusion: Art reinforces gender stereotypes.

Assessment of Example #1

While art is full of stereotypes, more examples should be used. The examples are relevant, but specific Westerns should be named and described. Finally, there are counter-examples, especially in modern films and TV, that need to be considered.

Example #2

Premise 1: The Egyptians believed in an afterlife as shown by their funeral preparations.

Premise 2: Plato's writings indicate that the ancient Greeks believed in an afterlife.

Premise 3: The Chinese practice of ancestor worship indicates they believed in an afterlife.

Conclusion: People of ancient cultures believed in an afterlife.

Assessment of Example #2

More examples should be used, but the mix of diverse cultures strengthens the argument. The examples are relevant. They could be more detailed but are reasonably specific. There are some limited counterexamples, such as periods of doubt about the afterlife in ancient Egypt.

Argument from Authority

Introduction

This is an argument in which the conclusion is supported by citing an authority. Since the argument is based on an appeal to the authority, the strength of the support depends on the quality of the authority in question. Given that no one can be an expert on everything and the fact that people regularly need reliable information, these arguments are very common. In fact, they are used so often that people generally do not even realize they are being used. For example, when a politician cites an economist to justify her policies, she is making an argument from authority. As another example, when a student cites a source stating that a historic event took

place, he is using an argument from authority. As a final example, when people trust a news source (such as CNN, The Daily Show, or Fox News) they are probably relying on an argument from authority—they assume the news source should be trusted because the people involved are supposed to be experts.

Not surprisingly, this argument is used when a person lacks the required knowledge and expertise and therefore needs to rely on another source of information. For example, most lawyers are not experts on DNA testing or ballistics, so they hire experts to testify in court. In effect they are saying that what the expert says about the DNA or gun is true because the expert is an expert. This sort of argument is also used when a person wants to add extra weight to his/her position. For example, an author of a book on dieting might cite other doctors and nutritional experts that agree with her views on dieting.

Like other arguments, an argument from authority can be used to establish its conclusion for use as a premise in another argument. For example, a person who is arguing for the censorship of violence might cite an authority who claims that watching violent television makes children violent.

It should be noted that an argument from authority is not an exceptionally strong argument. After all, in such cases a claim is being accepted as true simply because a person is asserting that it is true. The person may be an expert, but her expertise does not really bear on the actual truth (or falsity) of the claim. This is because the expertise of a person does not actually determine whether the claim is true or false. Hence, arguments that deal directly with evidence relating to the claim itself will tend to be stronger.

Despite the inherent weakness in this argument, a person who is a legitimate expert is more likely to be right than wrong when making considered claims within her area of expertise. In a sense, the claim is being accepted because it is reasonable to believe that the expert has tested the claim and found it to be reliable. So, if the expert has found it to be reliable, then it is reasonable to accept it as being true. Thus, the listener is accepting a claim based on the testimony of the expert. Naturally, the main challenge is determining whether the person in question is a legitimate expert or not.

Strict Form

Strictly presented, an argument from authority will have two premises and a conclusion. The first premise claims the person is an authority on a particular subject. The second presents the claim made by the authority in the subject in question and the conclusion asserts that because an authority made the claim in her area of expertise, it is true.

Although people generally present arguments from authority in a fairly informal manner, they have the following logical form:

Premise 1: Person A is (claimed to be) an authority on subject S.

Premise 2: Person A makes claim C about subject S.

Premise 3: Therefore, C is true.

A is a variable that is replaced with the authority's name, S is a variable that is replaced with the subject and C is a variable that is replaced with the actual claim. For example:

Premise 1: Dr. Michael LaBossiere is an authority on arguments.

Premise 2: Dr. Michael LaBossiere claims in the subject area of arguments, that an argument by example has two premises.

Conclusion: Therefore it is true that an argument by example has two premises.

Standards of Assessment

An argument from authority is assessed in terms of six standards. If an argument meets these standards, then it is an acceptable argument from authority and it is reasonable to accept the conclusion based on the premises. If the argument fails to meet the standards, then it would not be reasonable to accept the conclusion based on the premises. Bad arguments from authority are relatively common and are known as fallacious appeals to authority.

1. The person has sufficient expertise in the subject matter in question.

Claims made by a person who lacks the needed degree of expertise to make a reliable claim will, obviously, not be well supported. In contrast, claims made by a person with the needed degree of expertise will be supported by the person's reliability in the area.

Determining whether or not a person has the needed degree of expertise can often be very difficult. In academic fields (such as philosophy, engineering, history, etc.), the person's formal education, academic performance, publications, membership in professional societies, papers presented, awards won and so forth can all be reliable indicators of expertise. Outside of academic fields, other standards will apply. For example, having sufficient expertise to make a reliable claim about how to tie a shoe lace only requires the ability to tie the shoe lace and impart that information to others. It should be noted that being an expert does not always require having a university degree. Many people have high degrees of expertise in sophisticated subjects without having ever attended a university. Further, it should not be simply assumed that a person with a degree is an expert.

Of course, what is required to be an expert is often a matter of great debate. For example, some people have (and do) claim expertise in certain (even all) areas because of a divine inspiration or a special gift. The followers of such people accept such credentials as establishing the person's expertise while others often see these self-proclaimed experts as deluded or even as charlatans. In other situations, people debate over what sort of education and experience is needed to be an expert. Thus, what one person may take to be a fallacious appeal another person might take to be a well supported line of reasoning. Fortunately, many cases do not involve such debate.

2. The claim being made by the person is within her area(s) of expertise.

If a person makes a claim about some subject outside of his area(s) of expertise, then the person is not an expert in that context. Hence, the claim in question is not backed by the required degree of expertise and is not reliable.

It is very important to remember that because of the vast scope of human knowledge and skill it is simply not possible for one person to be an expert on everything. Hence, experts will only be true experts in respect to certain subject areas. In most other areas they will have little or no expertise. Thus, it is important to determine what subject area a claim falls under.

It is also very important to note that expertise in one area does not automatically confer expertise in another. For example, being an expert physicist does not automatically make a person an expert on morality or politics. Unfortunately, this is often overlooked or intentionally ignored. In fact, a great deal of advertising rests on a violation of this condition. As anyone who watches television knows, it is extremely common to get famous actors and sports heroes to endorse products that they are not qualified to assess. For example, a person may be a great actor, but that does not automatically make him an expert on cars or shaving or underwear or diets or politics.

3. There is an adequate degree of agreement among the other experts in the subject in question.

If there is a significant amount of legitimate dispute among the experts within a subject, then it will fallacious to make an Appeal to Authority using the disputing experts. This is because for almost any claim being made and “supported” by one expert there will be a counterclaim that is made and “supported” by another expert. In such cases an Appeal to Authority would tend to be futile. In such cases, the dispute has to be settled by consideration of the actual issues under dispute. Since either side in such a dispute can invoke experts, the dispute cannot be rationally settled by Appeals to Authority.

There are many fields in which there is a significant amount of legitimate dispute. Economics is a good example of such a disputed field. Anyone who is familiar with economics knows that there are many plausible theories that are incompatible with one another. Because of this, one expert economist could sincerely claim that the deficit is the key factor while another equally qualified individual could assert the exact opposite. Another area where dispute is very common (and well known) is in the area of psychology and psychiatry. As has been demonstrated in various trials, it is possible to find one expert that will assert that an individual is insane and not competent to stand trial and to find another equally qualified expert who will testify, under oath, that the same individual is both sane and competent to stand trial. Obviously, one cannot rely on an Appeal to Authority in such a situation without making a fallacious argument. Such an argument would be fallacious since the evidence would not warrant accepting the conclusion.

It is important to keep in mind that no field has complete agreement, so some degree of dispute is acceptable. How much is acceptable is, of course, a matter of serious debate. It is also important to keep in mind that even a field with a great deal of internal dispute might contain areas of significant agreement. In such cases, an Appeal to Authority could be legitimate.

4. The person in question is not significantly biased.

If an expert is significantly biased then the claims he makes within his area of bias will be less reliable. Since a biased expert will not be reliable, an Argument from Authority based on a biased expert will be fallacious. This is because the evidence will not justify accepting the claim.

Experts, being people, are vulnerable to biases and prejudices. If there is evidence that a person is biased in some manner that would affect the reliability of her claims, then an Argument from Authority based on that person is likely to be fallacious. Even if the claim is actually true, the fact that the expert is biased weakens the argument. This is because there would be reason to believe that the expert might not be making the claim because he has carefully considered it using his expertise. Rather, there would be reason to believe that the claim is being made because of the expert’s bias or prejudice.

It is important to remember that no person is completely objective. At the very least, a person will be favorable towards her own views (otherwise she would probably not hold them). Because of this, some degree of bias must be accepted, provided that the bias is not significant. What counts as a significant degree of bias is open to dispute and can vary a great deal from case to case. For example, many people would probably suspect that doctors who were paid by tobacco companies to research the effects of smoking would be biased while other people might believe (or claim) that they would be able to remain objective.

5. The area of expertise is a legitimate area or discipline.

Certain areas in which a person may claim expertise may have no legitimacy or validity as areas of knowledge or study. Obviously, claims made in such areas will not be very reliable.

What counts as a legitimate area of expertise is sometimes difficult to determine. However, there are cases which are fairly clear cut. For example, if a person claimed to be an expert at something he called “chromabullet therapy” and asserted that firing colorfully painted rifle bullets at a person would cure cancer, it would not be very reasonable to accept his claim based on his “expertise.” After all, his expertise is in an area which is devoid of legitimate content. The general idea is that to be a legitimate expert a person must have mastery over a real field or area of knowledge.

As noted above, determining the legitimacy of a field can often be difficult. In European history, various scientists had to struggle with the Church and established traditions to establish the validity of their disciplines. For example, experts on evolution faced an uphill battle in getting the legitimacy of their area accepted.

A modern example involves psychic phenomenon. Some people claim that they are certified “master psychics” and are experts in the field. Other people contend that their claims of being certified “master psychics” are simply absurd since there is no real content to such an area of expertise. If these people are right, then anyone who accepts the claims of these “master psychics” as true are victims of a fallacious appeal to authority.

6. The authority in question must be identified.

A common variation of the typical fallacious appeal to authority fallacy is an appeal to an unnamed authority. This fallacy is also known as an appeal to an unidentified authority.

This fallacy is committed when a person asserts that a claim is true because an expert or authority makes the claim and the person does not actually identify the expert. Since the expert is not named or identified, there is no way to tell if the person is actually an expert. Unless the person is identified and has his expertise established, there is no reason to accept the claim.

This sort of reasoning is not unusual. Typically, the person making the argument will say things like “I have a book that says...”, or “they say...”, or “the experts say...”, or “scientists believe that...”, or “I read in the paper..” or “I saw on TV...” or some similar statement. In such cases the person is often hoping that the listener(s) will simply accept the unidentified source as a legitimate authority and believe the claim being made. If a person accepts the claim simply because they accept the unidentified source as an expert (without good reason to do so), he has fallen prey to this fallacy.

Examples

Example#1

Premise 1: If violent art has a harmful psychological effect on people, then it should be censored.

Premise 2: However, the study by Loeb and Wombat shows that violent art has little, if any psychological effect on people.

Conclusion: Hence, there is no need to censor violent art to protect people from harm.

Example of Assessment

The source needs to be properly identified. Further, there is a great deal of disagreement among the experts within the field of psychology, especially over the matter of the effects of violent art.

Example # 2

Premise 1: According to medical science, there is no life after death.

Premise 2: Medical science is well established.

Conclusion: It is clear there is no life after death.

Example of Assessment

More information is needed about medical science, such as the exact source of the claim.

The Origin of Western Philosophy

Based on the *Voyage of Discovery* by William F. Lawhead, Wadsworth, 2002.

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The Poets

In ancient Greece, as in many places, the poets were an important part of the culture. Today people tend to think of poetry in terms of rhymes, verse and open microphone readings about angst, but the ancient Greek poets developed and presented history, science and religion. They also dealt with cosmological matters: origins, structure and nature of the universe.

In Greek tradition and mythology, the poets were said to be inspired by supernatural beings known as Muses. In his dialogue *the Ion* Plato uses this view to argue that poets lack knowledge because they are but vessels for the Muses. Some thinkers claim that he attacked the poets because he regarded them as competition. This has some plausibility since the poets were regarded as providing ethical guides to life via their accounts of the gods, demi-gods and heroes in terms of their victories and their defeats.

Like most ancient cultures, the Greeks had a pantheon of gods (as opposed to the monotheism of religions such as Judaism, Islam and Christianity). The stories of these gods were presented in the works of the poets. The Greek gods, like most ancient gods, were presented as being very similar to human beings. Though they excelled humans in power, they suffered from all human moral and emotional failings—they were, for example, often ruled by pride, lust and anger.

As with other ancient pantheons, each Greek god had a specific domain he or she controlled. Poseidon was the god of the sea, Zeus was the god of the sky, Aphrodite was the goddess of love, Apollo was the god of the sun and so forth.

Among the poets, Homer was considered to be the greatest. Of course, there is some doubt if there was a single person who wrote the works attributed to Homer. Many scholars think that Homer himself is a myth and that the works attributed to him were first told by others and then attributed to him by tradition. According to the popular view, he lived in the 8th Century B.C. and wrote the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. These works have proved popular for centuries and are still regarded as masterpieces.

The poetry of this time presented the view that the world has a natural order. The order that occurs in nature was attributed to the actions and goals of the various gods. For example, the daily rising and nightly setting of the sun was attributed to Apollo—he was said to transport the sun in his chariot. But, as noted above, the Greek gods were taken to be a flawed lot who were often driven by their emotions and impulses. These traits explained the disorder of nature. For example, a sea storm might be attributed to the anger of Poseidon.

While the Greek gods exceeded the mortals in power, they were not omnipotent beings. They had limits on their powers and capabilities. Above the gods, at least in most accounts, were the Fates. The Fates were taken to be the ultimate power in the world; but they were mysterious and seemed to act in ways that might be regarded as random.

As noted above, the poets were regarded as moral guides. While individual poets differed in their views, the general tendency was to present the virtues of warriors as the proper virtues. Virtue was presented and defined

in terms of human excellence (as defined in the context of the warrior culture): success, power, honor, wealth, moderation, and security.

The ancient Greeks, like almost all people, were very much concerned with honor and status. Likewise, they saw their gods as being quite concerned with those matters as well. Hence, they tended to see the gods as being primarily motivated by flattery and bribery—as opposed to acting to reward ethical behavior. People served the gods for the same reason they would serve a human ruler—out of fear and self-interest. Interestingly, some poets wrote of Zeus as being occasionally concerned with justice. The poet Hesiod even wrote of him judging actions based on a principle of justice—as opposed to merely judging things based on feelings or self-interest.

In the poets stories, there were four concepts of order. Some events were presented as caused by purposeful agents (humans, gods, and other thinking creatures). Some events were presented as random and without purpose. All events were, of course, subject to the amoral Fates. Finally, the gods were, on occasion, portrayed as acting and judging on the basis of moral principles.

There were clear tensions between these four concepts and thinkers attempted to reconcile them. The notion of Fate later developed into the basis for concepts of the laws of nature. While most people do not believe in Fate today, most scientists believe that the universe is governed by laws, such as the laws of physics and biology. This sort of view is comparable in many ways to the Greek view of the Fates. The occasional concern on the part of the gods about morality provided a foundation for the view that there could be an objective morality. Thus, the poets laid the groundwork in Greece for the emergence of Western science and philosophy.

APOLOGY

By Plato

Translated by Benjamin Jowett

How you, O Athenians, have been affected by my accusers, I cannot tell; but I know that they almost made me forget who I was—so persuasively did they speak; and yet they have hardly uttered a word of truth. But of the many falsehoods told by them, there was one which quite amazed me;—I mean when they said that you should be upon your guard and not allow yourselves to be deceived by the force of my eloquence. To say this, when they were certain to be detected as soon as I opened my lips and proved myself to be anything but a great speaker, did indeed appear to me most shameless—unless by the force of eloquence they mean the force of truth; for is such is their meaning, I admit that I am eloquent. But in how different a way from theirs! Well, as I was saying, they have scarcely spoken the truth at all; but from me you shall hear the whole truth: not, however, delivered after their manner in a set oration duly ornamented with words and phrases. No, by heaven! but I shall use the words and arguments which occur to me at the moment; for I am confident in the justice of my cause (Or, I am certain that I am right in taking this course.): at my time of life I ought not to be appearing before you, O men of Athens, in the character of a juvenile orator—let no one expect it of me. And I must beg of you to grant me a favour:—If I defend myself in my accustomed manner, and you hear me using the words which I have been in the habit of using in the agora, at the tables of the money-changers, or anywhere else, I would ask you not to be surprised, and not to interrupt me on this account. For I am more than seventy years of age, and appearing now for the first time in a court of law, I am quite a stranger to the language of the place; and therefore I would have you regard me as if I were really a stranger, whom you would excuse if he spoke in his native tongue, and after the fashion of his country:—Am I making an unfair request of you? Never mind the manner, which may or may not be good; but think only of the truth of my words, and give heed to that: let the speaker speak truly and the judge decide justly.

And first, I have to reply to the older charges and to my first accusers, and then I will go on to the later ones. For of old I have had many accusers, who have accused me falsely to you during many years; and I am more afraid of them than of Anytus and his associates, who are dangerous, too, in their own way. But far more dangerous are the others, who began when you were children, and took possession of your minds with their falsehoods, telling of one Socrates, a wise man, who speculated about the heaven above, and searched into the earth beneath, and made the worse appear the better cause. The disseminators of this tale are the accusers whom I dread; for their hearers are apt to fancy that such enquirers do not believe in the existence of the gods. And they are many, and their charges against me are of ancient date, and they were made by them in the days when you were more impressible than you are now—in childhood, or it may have been in youth—and the cause when heard went by default, for there was none to answer. And hardest of all, I do not know and cannot tell the names of my accusers; unless in the chance case of a Comic poet. All who from envy and malice have persuaded you—some of them having first convinced themselves—all this class of men are most difficult to deal with; for I cannot have them up here, and cross-examine them, and therefore I must simply fight with shadows in my own defence, and argue when there is no one who answers. I will ask you then to assume with me, as I was saying, that my opponents are of two kinds; one recent, the other ancient: and I hope that you will see the propriety of my answering the latter first, for these accusations you heard long before the others, and much oftener. Well, then, I must make my defence, and endeavour to clear away in a short time, a slander which has lasted a long time. May I succeed, if to succeed be for my good and yours, or likely to avail me in my cause! The task is not an easy one; I quite understand the nature of it. And so leaving the event with God, in obedience to the law I will now make my defence.

I will begin at the beginning, and ask what is the accusation which has given rise to the slander of me, and in fact has encouraged Meletus to prove this charge against me. Well, what do the slanderers say? They shall be my prosecutors, and I will sum up their words in an affidavit:

‘Socrates is an evil-doer, and a curious person, who searches into things under the earth and in heaven, and he makes the worse appear the better cause; and he teaches the aforesaid doctrines to others.’ Such is the nature of the accusation: it is just what you have yourselves seen in the comedy of Aristophanes (Aristoph., *Clouds*), who has introduced a man whom he calls Socrates, going about and saying that he walks in air, and talking a deal of nonsense concerning matters of which I do not pretend to know either much or little—not that I mean to speak disparagingly of any one who is a student of natural philosophy. I should be very sorry if Meletus could bring so grave a charge against me. But the simple truth is, O Athenians, that I have nothing to do with physical speculations. Very many of those here present are witnesses to the truth of this, and to them I appeal. Speak then, you who have heard me, and tell your neighbours whether any of you have ever known me hold forth in few words or in many upon such matters...You hear their answer. And from what they say of this part of the charge you will be able to judge of the truth of the rest.

As little foundation is there for the report that I am a teacher, and take money; this accusation has no more truth in it than the other. Although, if a man were really able to instruct mankind, to receive money for giving instruction would, in my opinion, be an honour to him. There is Gorgias of Leontium, and Prodicus of Ceos, and Hippias of Elis, who go the round of the cities, and are able to persuade the young men to leave their own citizens by whom they might be taught for nothing, and come to them whom they not only pay, but are thankful if they may be allowed to pay them. There is at this time a Parian philosopher residing in Athens, of whom I have heard; and I came to hear of him in this way:--I came across a man who has spent a world of money on the Sophists, Callias, the son of Hipponicus, and knowing that he had sons, I asked him: ‘Callias,’ I said, ‘if your two sons were foals or calves, there would be no difficulty in finding some one to put over them; we should hire a

trainer of horses, or a farmer probably, who would improve and perfect them in their own proper virtue and excellence; but as they are human beings, whom are you thinking of placing over them? Is there any one who understands human and political virtue? You must have thought about the matter, for you have sons; is there any one?' 'There is,' he said. 'Who is he?' said I; 'and of what country? and what does he charge?' 'Evenus the Parian,' he replied; 'he is the man, and his charge is five minae.' Happy is Evenus, I said to myself, if he really has this wisdom, and teaches at such a moderate charge. Had I the same, I should have been very proud and conceited; but the truth is that I have no knowledge of the kind.

I dare say, Athenians, that some one among you will reply, 'Yes, Socrates, but what is the origin of these accusations which are brought against you; there must have been something strange which you have been doing? All these rumours and this talk about you would never have arisen if you had been like other men: tell us, then, what is the cause of them, for we should be sorry to judge hastily of you.' Now I regard this as a fair challenge, and I will endeavour to explain to you the reason why I am called wise and have such an evil fame. Please to attend then. And although some of you may think that I am joking, I declare that I will tell you the entire truth. Men of Athens, this reputation of mine has come of a certain sort of wisdom which I possess. If you ask me what kind of wisdom, I reply, wisdom such as may perhaps be attained by man, for to that extent I am inclined to believe that I am wise; whereas the persons of whom I was speaking have a superhuman wisdom which I may fail to describe, because I have it not myself; and he who says that I have, speaks falsely, and is taking away my character. And here, O men of Athens, I must beg you not to interrupt me, even if I seem to say something extravagant. For the word which I will speak is not mine. I will refer you to a witness who is worthy of credit; that witness shall be the God of Delphi—he will tell you about my wisdom, if I have any, and of what sort it is. You must have known Chaerephon; he was early a friend of mine, and also a friend of yours, for he shared in the recent exile of the people, and returned with you. Well, Chaerephon, as you know, was very impetuous in all his doings, and he went to Delphi and boldly asked the oracle to tell him whether—as I was saying, I must beg you not to interrupt—he asked the oracle to tell him whether anyone was wiser than I was, and the Pythian prophetess answered, that there was no man wiser. Chaerephon is dead himself; but his brother, who is in court, will confirm the truth of what I am saying.

Why do I mention this? Because I am going to explain to you why I have such an evil name. When I heard the answer, I said to myself, What can the god mean? and what is the interpretation of his riddle? for I know that I have no wisdom, small or great. What then can he mean when he says that I am the wisest of men? And yet he is a god, and cannot lie; that would be against his nature. After long consideration, I thought of a method of trying the question. I reflected that if I could only find a man wiser than myself, then I might go to the god with a refutation in my hand. I should say to him, 'Here is a man who is wiser than I am; but you said that I was the wisest.' Accordingly I went to one who had the reputation of wisdom, and observed him—his name I need not mention; he was a politician whom I selected for examination—and the result was as follows: When I began to talk with him, I could not help thinking that he was not really wise, although he was thought wise by many, and still wiser by himself; and thereupon I tried to explain to him that he thought himself wise, but was not really wise; and the consequence was that he hated me, and his enmity was shared by several who were present and heard me. So I left him, saying to myself, as I went away: Well, although I do not suppose that either of us knows anything really beautiful and good, I am better off than he is,—for he knows nothing, and thinks that he knows; I neither know nor think that I know. In this latter particular, then, I seem to have slightly the advantage of him. Then I went to another who had still higher pretensions to wisdom, and my conclusion was exactly the same. Whereupon I made another enemy of him, and of many others besides him.

Then I went to one man after another, being not unconscious of the enmity which I provoked, and I lamented and feared this: but necessity was laid upon me,—the word of God, I thought, ought to be considered first. And I said to myself, Go I must to all who appear to know, and find out the meaning of the oracle. And I swear to you, Athenians, by the dog I swear!

for I must tell you the truth—the result of my mission was just this: I found that the men most in repute were all but the most foolish; and that others less esteemed were really wiser and better. I will tell you the tale of my wanderings and of the ‘Herculean’ labors, as I may call them, which I endured only to find at last the oracle irrefutable. After the politicians, I went to the poets; tragic, dithyrambic, and all sorts. And there, I said to myself, you will be instantly detected; now you will find out that you are more ignorant than they are.

Accordingly, I took them some of the most elaborate passages in their own writings, and asked what was the meaning of them—thinking that they would teach me something. Will you believe me? I am almost ashamed to confess the truth, but I must say that there is hardly a person present who would not have talked better about their poetry than they did themselves. Then I knew that not by wisdom do poets write poetry, but by a sort of genius and inspiration; they are like diviners or soothsayers who also say many fine things, but do not understand the meaning of them. The poets appeared to me to be much in the same case; and I further observed that upon the strength of their poetry they believed themselves to be the wisest of men in other things in which they were not wise. So I departed, conceiving myself to be superior to them for the same reason that I was superior to the politicians.

At last I went to the artisans. I was conscious that I knew nothing at all, as I may say, and I was sure that they knew many fine things; and here I was not mistaken, for they did know many things of which I was ignorant, and in this they certainly were wiser than I was. But I observed that even the good artisans fell into the same error as the poets;—because they were good workmen they thought that they also knew all sorts of high matters, and this defect in them overshadowed their wisdom; and therefore I asked myself on behalf of the oracle, whether I would like to be as I was, neither having their knowledge nor their ignorance, or like them in both; and I made answer to myself and to the oracle that I was better off as I was.

This inquisition has led to my having many enemies of the worst and most dangerous kind, and has given occasion also to many calumnies. And I am called wise, for my hearers always imagine that I myself possess the wisdom which I find wanting in others: but the truth is, O men of Athens, that God only is wise; and by his answer he intends to show that the wisdom of men is worth little or nothing; he is not speaking of Socrates, he is only using my name by way of illustration, as if he said, He, O men, is the wisest, who, like Socrates, knows that his wisdom is in truth worth nothing. And so I go about the world, obedient to the god, and search and make enquiry into the wisdom of any one, whether citizen or stranger, who appears to be wise; and if he is not wise, then in vindication of the oracle I show him that he is not wise; and my occupation quite absorbs me, and I have no time to give either to any public matter of interest or to any concern of my own, but I am in utter poverty by reason of my devotion to the god.

There is another thing;—young men of the richer classes, who have not much to do, come about me of their own accord; they like to hear the pretenders examined, and they often imitate me, and proceed to examine others; there are plenty of persons, as they quickly discover, who think that they know something, but really know little or nothing; and then those who are examined by them instead of being angry with themselves are angry with me:

This confounded Socrates, they say; this villainous misleader of youth!-- and then if somebody asks them, Why, what evil does he practice or teach? they do not know, and cannot tell; but in order that they may not appear to

be at a loss, they repeat the ready-made charges which are used against all philosophers about teaching things up in the clouds and under the earth, and having no gods, and making the worse appear the better cause; for they do not like to confess that their pretence of knowledge has been detected— which is the truth; and as they are numerous and ambitious and energetic, and are drawn up in battle array and have persuasive tongues, they have filled your ears with their loud and inveterate calumnies. And this is the reason why my three accusers, Meletus and Anytus and Lycon, have set upon me; Meletus, who has a quarrel with me on behalf of the poets; Anytus, on behalf of the craftsmen and politicians; Lycon, on behalf of the rhetoricians: and as I said at the beginning, I cannot expect to get rid of such a mass of calumny all in a moment. And this, O men of Athens, is the truth and the whole truth; I have concealed nothing, I have dissembled nothing. And yet, I know that my plainness of speech makes them hate me, and what is their hatred but a proof that I am speaking the truth?--Hence has arisen the prejudice against me; and this is the reason of it, as you will find out either in this or in any future enquiry.

I have said enough in my defense against the first class of my accusers; I turn to the second class. They are headed by Meletus, that good man and true lover of his country, as he calls himself. Against these, too, I must try to make a defense:--Let their affidavit be read: it contains something of this kind: It says that Socrates is a doer of evil, who corrupts the youth; and who does not believe in the gods of the state, but has other new divinities of his own. Such is the charge; and now let us examine the particular counts. He says that I am a doer of evil, and corrupt the youth; but I say, O men of Athens, that Meletus is a doer of evil, in that he pretends to be in earnest when he is only in jest, and is so eager to bring men to trial from a pretended zeal and interest about matters in which he really never had the smallest interest. And the truth of this I will endeavour to prove to you. Come hither, Meletus, and let me ask a question of you. You think a great deal about the improvement of youth?

Yes, I do.

Tell the judges, then, who is their improver; for you must know, as you have taken the pains to discover their corrupter, and are citing and accusing me before them. Speak, then, and tell the judges who their improver is.—Observe, Meletus, that you are silent, and have nothing to say. But is not this rather disgraceful, and a very considerable proof of what I was saying, that you have no interest in the matter? Speak up, friend, and tell us who their improver is.

The laws.

But that, my good sir, is not my meaning. I want to know who the person is, who, in the first place, knows the laws.

The judges, Socrates, who are present in court.

What, do you mean to say, Meletus, that they are able to instruct and improve youth?

Certainly they are.

What, all of them, or some only and not others?

All of them.

By the goddess Here, that is good news! There are plenty of improvers, then. And what do you say of the audience,--do they improve them?

Yes, they do.

And the senators?

Yes, the senators improve them.

But perhaps the members of the assembly corrupt them?--or do they too improve them?

They improve them.

Then every Athenian improves and elevates them; all with the exception of myself; and I alone am their corrupter? Is that what you affirm?

That is what I stoutly affirm.

I am very unfortunate if you are right. But suppose I ask you a question:

How about horses? Does one man do them harm and all the world good? Is not the exact opposite the truth? One man is able to do them good, or at least not many;--the trainer of horses, that is to say, does them good, and others who have to do with them rather injure them? Is not that true, Meletus, of horses, or of any other animals? Most assuredly it is; whether you and Anytus say yes or no. Happy indeed would be the condition of youth if they had one corrupter only, and all the rest of the world were their improvers. But you, Meletus, have sufficiently shown that you never had a thought about the young: your carelessness is seen in your not caring about the very things which you bring against me.

And now, Meletus, I will ask you another question—by Zeus I will: Which is better, to live among bad citizens, or among good ones? Answer, friend, I say; the question is one which may be easily answered. Do not the good do their neighbors good, and the bad do them evil?

Certainly.

And is there anyone who would rather be injured than benefited by those who live with him? Answer, my good friend, the law requires you to answer— does any one like to be injured?

Certainly not.

And when you accuse me of corrupting and deteriorating the youth, do you allege that I corrupt them intentionally or unintentionally?

Intentionally, I say.

But you have just admitted that the good do their neighbors good, and the evil do them evil. Now, is that a truth which your superior wisdom has recognized thus early in life, and am I, at my age, in such darkness and ignorance as not to know that if a man with whom I have to live is corrupted by me, I am very likely to be harmed by him; and yet I corrupt him, and intentionally, too—so you say, although neither I nor any other human being is ever likely to be convinced by you. But either I do not corrupt them, or I corrupt them unintentionally; and on either view of the case you lie. If my offence is unintentional, the law has no cognizance of unintentional offences: you ought to have taken me privately, and warned and admonished me; for if I had been better advised, I should have left off doing what I only did unintentionally—no doubt I should; but you would have nothing to say to me and refused to teach me. And now you bring me up in this court, which is a place not of instruction, but of punishment.

It will be very clear to you, Athenians, as I was saying, that Meletus has no care at all, great or small, about the matter. But still I should like to know, Meletus, in what I am affirmed to corrupt the young. I suppose you mean, as I infer from your indictment, that I teach them not to acknowledge the gods which the state acknowledges, but some other new divinities or spiritual agencies in their stead. These are the lessons by which I corrupt the youth, as you say.

Yes, that I say emphatically.

Then, by the gods, Meletus, of whom we are speaking, tell me and the court, in somewhat plainer terms, what you mean! for I do not as yet understand whether you affirm that I teach other men to acknowledge some gods, and therefore that I do believe in gods, and am not an entire atheist—this you do not lay to my charge,--but only you say that they are not the same gods which the city recognizes—the charge is that they are different gods. Or, do you mean that I am an atheist simply, and a teacher of atheism?

I mean the latter—that you are a complete atheist.

What an extraordinary statement! Why do you think so, Meletus? Do you mean that I do not believe in the godhead of the sun or moon, like other men?

I assure you, judges, that he does not: for he says that the sun is stone, and the moon earth.

Friend Meletus, you think that you are accusing Anaxagoras: and you have but a bad opinion of the judges, if you fancy them illiterate to such a degree as not to know that these doctrines are found in the books of Anaxagoras the Clazomenian, which are full of them. And so, forsooth, the youth are said to be taught them by Socrates, when there are not unfrequently exhibitions of them at the theatre (Probably in allusion to Aristophanes who caricatured, and to Euripides who borrowed the notions of Anaxagoras, as well as to other dramatic poets (price of admission one drachma at the most); and they might pay their money, and laugh at Socrates if he pretends to father these extraordinary views. And so, Meletus, you really think that I do not believe in any god?

I swear by Zeus that you believe absolutely in none at all.

Nobody will believe you, Meletus, and I am pretty sure that you do not believe yourself. I cannot help thinking, men of Athens, that Meletus is reckless and impudent, and that he has written this indictment in a spirit of mere wantonness and youthful bravado. Has he not compounded a riddle, thinking to try me? He said to himself:--I shall see whether the wise Socrates will discover my facetious contradiction, or whether I shall be able to deceive him and the rest of them. For he certainly does appear to me to contradict himself in the indictment as much as if he said that Socrates is guilty of not believing in the gods, and yet of believing in them—but this is not like a person who is in earnest.

I should like you, O men of Athens, to join me in examining what I conceive to be his inconsistency; and do you, Meletus, answer. And I must remind the audience of my request that they would not make a disturbance if I speak in my accustomed manner:

Did ever man, Meletus, believe in the existence of human things, and not of human beings?...I wish, men of Athens, that he would answer, and not be always trying to get up an interruption. Did ever any man believe in horsemanship, and not in horses? or in flute-playing, and not in flute-players? No, my friend; I will answer to you and to the court, as you refuse to answer for yourself. There is no man who ever did. But now please to answer the next question: Can a man believe in spiritual and divine agencies, and not in spirits or demigods? He cannot.

How lucky I am to have extracted that answer, by the assistance of the court! But then you swear in the indictment that I teach and believe in divine or spiritual agencies (new or old, no matter for that); at any rate, I believe in spiritual agencies,--so you say and swear in the affidavit; and yet if I believe in divine beings, how can I help believing in spirits or demigods;--must I not? To be sure I must; and therefore I may assume that your silence gives consent. Now what are spirits or demigods? Are they not either gods or the sons of gods? Certainly they are.

But this is what I call the facetious riddle invented by you: the demigods or spirits are gods, and you say first that I do not believe in gods, and then again that I do believe in gods; that is, if I believe in demigods. For if the demigods are the illegitimate sons of gods, whether by the nymphs or by any other mothers, of whom they are said to be the sons—what human being will ever believe that there are no gods if they are the sons of gods? You might as well affirm the existence of mules, and deny that of horses and asses. Such nonsense, Meletus, could only have been intended by you to make trial of me. You have put this into the indictment because you had nothing real of which to accuse me. But no one who has a particle of understanding will ever be convinced by you that the same men can believe in divine and superhuman things, and yet not believe that there are gods and demigods and heroes.

I have said enough in answer to the charge of Meletus: any elaborate defence is unnecessary, but I know only too well how many are the enmities which I have incurred, and this is what will be my destruction if I am destroyed;--not Meletus, nor yet Anytus, but the envy and detraction of the world, which has been the death of many good men, and will probably be the death of many more; there is no danger of my being the last of them. Some one will say: And are you not ashamed, Socrates, of a course of life which is likely to bring you to an untimely end? To him I may fairly answer: There you are mistaken: a man who is good for anything ought not to calculate the chance of living or dying; he ought only to consider whether in doing anything he is doing right or wrong—acting the part of a good man or of a bad. Whereas, upon your view, the heroes who fell at Troy were not good for much, and the son of Thetis above all, who altogether despised danger in comparison with disgrace; and when he was so eager to slay Hector, his goddess mother said to him, that if he avenged his companion Patroclus, and slew Hector, he would die himself—‘Fate,’ she said, in these or the like words, ‘waits for you next after Hector;’ he, receiving this warning, utterly despised danger and death, and instead of fearing them, feared rather to live in dishonour, and not to avenge his friend. ‘Let me die forthwith,’ he replies, ‘and be avenged of my enemy, rather than abide here by the beaked ships, a laughing-stock and a burden of the earth.’ Had Achilles any thought of death and danger? For wherever a man’s place is, whether the place which he has chosen or that in which he has been placed by a commander, there he ought to remain in the hour of danger; he should not think of death or of anything but of disgrace. And this, O men of Athens, is a true saying. Strange, indeed, would be my conduct, O men of Athens, if I who, when I was ordered by the generals whom you chose to command me at Potidaea and Amphipolis and Delium, remained where they placed me, like any other man, facing death—if now, when, as I conceive and imagine, God orders me to fulfil the philosopher’s mission of searching into myself and other men, I were to desert my post through fear of death, or any other fear; that would indeed be strange, and I might justly be arraigned in court for denying the existence of the gods, if I disobeyed the oracle because I was afraid of death, fancying that I was wise when I was not wise. For the fear of death is indeed the pretence of wisdom, and not real wisdom, being a pretence of knowing the unknown; and no one knows whether death, which men in their fear apprehend to be the greatest evil, may not be the greatest good. Is not this ignorance of a disgraceful sort, the ignorance which is the conceit that a man knows what he does not know? And in this respect only I believe myself to differ from men in general, and may perhaps claim to be wiser than they are:--that whereas I know but little of the world below, I do not suppose that I know: but I do know that injustice and disobedience to a better, whether God or man, is evil and dishonorable, and I will never fear or avoid a possible good rather than a certain evil. And therefore if you let me go now, and are not convinced by Anytus, who said that since I had been prosecuted I must be put to death; (or if not that I ought never to have been prosecuted at all); and that if I escape now, your sons will all be utterly ruined by listening to my words—if you say to me, Socrates, this time we will not mind Anytus, and you shall be let off, but upon one condition, that you are not to enquire and speculate in this way any more, and that if you are caught doing so again you shall die;--if this was the condition on which you let me go, I should reply: Men of Athens, I honor and love you; but I shall obey God rather than you, and while I have life and strength I shall never cease from the practice and teaching of philosophy, exhorting any one whom I meet and saying to him after my manner: You, my friend,--a citizen of the great and mighty and wise city of Athens,--are you not ashamed of heaping up the greatest amount of money and honor and reputation, and caring so little about wisdom and truth and the greatest improvement of the soul, which you never regard or heed at all? And if the person with whom I am arguing, says: Yes, but I do care; then I do not leave him or let him go at once; but I proceed to interrogate and examine and cross-examine him, and if I think that he has no virtue in him, but only says that he has, I reproach him with undervaluing the greater, and overvaluing the less. And I shall repeat the same words to every one

whom I meet, young and old, citizen and alien, but especially to the citizens, inasmuch as they are my brethren. For know that this is the command of God; and I believe that no greater good has ever happened in the state than my service to the God. For I do nothing but go about persuading you all, old and young alike, not to take thought for your persons or your properties, but first and chiefly to care about the greatest improvement of the soul. I tell you that virtue is not given by money, but that from virtue comes money and every other good of man, public as well as private. This is my teaching, and if this is the doctrine which corrupts the youth, I am a mischievous person. But if any one says that this is not my teaching, he is speaking an untruth. Wherefore, O men of Athens, I say to you, do as Anytus bids or not as Anytus bids, and either acquit me or not; but whichever you do, understand that I shall never alter my ways, not even if I have to die many times.

Men of Athens, do not interrupt, but hear me; there was an understanding between us that you should hear me to the end: I have something more to say, at which you may be inclined to cry out; but I believe that to hear me will be good for you, and therefore I beg that you will not cry out. I would have you know, that if you kill such a one as I am, you will injure yourselves more than you will injure me. Nothing will injure me, not Meletus nor yet Anytus—they cannot, for a bad man is not permitted to injure a better than himself. I do not deny that Anytus may, perhaps, kill him, or drive him into exile, or deprive him of civil rights; and he may imagine, and others may imagine, that he is inflicting a great injury upon him: but there I do not agree. For the evil of doing as he is doing—the evil of unjustly taking away the life of another—is greater far.

And now, Athenians, I am not going to argue for my own sake, as you may think, but for yours, that you may not sin against the God by condemning me, who am his gift to you. For if you kill me you will not easily find a successor to me, who, if I may use such a ludicrous figure of speech, am a sort of gadfly, given to the state by God; and the state is a great and noble steed who is tardy in his motions owing to his very size, and requires to be stirred into life. I am that gadfly which God has attached to the state, and all day long and in all places am always fastening upon you, arousing and persuading and reproaching you. You will not easily find another like me, and therefore I would advise you to spare me. I dare say that you may feel out of temper (like a person who is suddenly awakened from sleep), and you think that you might easily strike me dead as Anytus advises, and then you would sleep on for the remainder of your lives, unless God in his care of you sent you another gadfly. When I say that I am given to you by God, the proof of my mission is this:--if I had been like other men, I should not have neglected all my own concerns or patiently seen the neglect of them during all these years, and have been doing yours, coming to you individually like a father or elder brother, exhorting you to regard virtue; such conduct, I say, would be unlike human nature. If I had gained anything, or if my exhortations had been paid, there would have been some sense in my doing so; but now, as you will perceive, not even the impudence of my accusers dares to say that I have ever exacted or sought pay of any one; of that they have no witness. And I have a sufficient witness to the truth of what I say—my poverty.

Some one may wonder why I go about in private giving advice and busying myself with the concerns of others, but do not venture to come forward in public and advise the state. I will tell you why. You have heard me speak at sundry times and in divers places of an oracle or sign which comes to me, and is the divinity which Meletus ridicules in the indictment. This sign, which is a kind of voice, first began to come to me when I was a child; it always forbids but never commands me to do anything which I am going to do. This is what deters me from being a politician. And rightly, as I think. For I am certain, O men of Athens, that if I had engaged in politics, I should have perished long ago, and done no good either to you or to myself. And do not be offended at my telling you the truth: for the truth is, that no man who goes to war with you or any other multitude, honestly striving against the many lawless and unrighteous deeds which are done in a state, will save his life; he who will fight for the right, if he would live even for a brief space, must have a private station and not a public one.

I can give you convincing evidence of what I say, not words only, but what you value far more—actions. Let me relate to you a passage of my own life which will prove to you that I should never have yielded to injustice from any fear of death, and that ‘as I should have refused to yield’ I must have died at once. I will tell you a tale of the courts, not very interesting perhaps, but nevertheless true. The only office of state which I ever held, O men of Athens, was that of senator: the tribe Antiochis, which is my tribe, had the presidency at the trial of the generals who had not taken up the bodies of the slain after the battle of Arginusae; and you proposed to try them in a body, contrary to law, as you all thought afterwards; but at the time I was the only one of the Prytanes who was opposed to the illegality, and I gave my vote against you; and when the orators threatened to impeach and arrest me, and you called and shouted, I made up my mind that I would run the risk, having law and justice with me, rather than take part in your injustice because I feared imprisonment and death. This happened in the days of the democracy. But when the oligarchy of the Thirty was in power, they sent for me and four others into the rotunda, and bade us bring Leon the Salaminian from Salamis, as they wanted to put him to death. This was a specimen of the sort of commands which they were always giving with the view of implicating as many as possible in their crimes; and then I showed, not in word only but in deed, that, if I may be allowed to use such an expression, I cared not a straw for death, and that my great and only care was lest I should do an unrighteous or unholy thing. For the strong arm of that oppressive power did not frighten me into doing wrong; and when we came out of the rotunda the other four went to Salamis and fetched Leon, but I went quietly home. For which I might have lost my life, had not the power of the Thirty shortly afterwards come to an end. And many will witness to my words.

Now do you really imagine that I could have survived all these years, if I had led a public life, supposing that like a good man I had always maintained the right and had made justice, as I ought, the first thing? No indeed, men of Athens, neither I nor any other man. But I have been always the same in all my actions, public as well as private, and never have I yielded any base compliance to those who are slanderously termed my disciples, or to any other. Not that I have any regular disciples. But if any one likes to come and hear me while I am pursuing my mission, whether he be young or old, he is not excluded. Nor do I converse only with those who pay; but any one, whether he be rich or poor, may ask and answer me and listen to my words; and whether he turns out to be a bad man or a good one, neither result can be justly imputed to me; for I never taught or professed to teach him anything. And if any one says that he has ever learned or heard anything from me in private which all the world has not heard, let me tell you that he is lying.

But I shall be asked, Why do people delight in continually conversing with you? I have told you already, Athenians, the whole truth about this matter: they like to hear the cross-examination of the pretenders to wisdom; there is amusement in it. Now this duty of cross-examining other men has been imposed upon me by God; and has been signified to me by oracles, visions, and in every way in which the will of divine power was ever intimated to any one. This is true, O Athenians, or, if not true, would be soon refuted. If I am or have been corrupting the youth, those of them who are now grown up and have become sensible that I gave them bad advice in the days of their youth should come forward as accusers, and take their revenge; or if they do not like to come themselves, some of their relatives, fathers, brothers, or other kinsmen, should say what evil their families have suffered at my hands. Now is their time. Many of them I see in the court. There is Crito, who is of the same age and of the same deme with myself, and there is Critobulus his son, whom I also see. Then again there is Lysanias of Sphettus, who is the father of Aeschines—he is present; and also there is Antiphon of Cephissus, who is the father of Epigenes; and there are the brothers of several who have associated with me. There is Nicostratus the son of Theosdotides, and the brother of Theodotus (now Theodotus himself is dead, and therefore he, at any rate, will not seek to stop him); and there is Paralus the son of Demodocus, who had a

brother Theages; and Adeimantus the son of Ariston, whose brother Plato is present; and Aeantodorus, who is the brother of Apollodorus, whom I also see. I might mention a great many others, some of whom Meletus should have produced as witnesses in the course of his speech; and let him still produce them, if he has forgotten—I will make way for him. And let him say, if he has any testimony of the sort which he can produce. Nay, Athenians, the very opposite is the truth. For all these are ready to witness on behalf of the corrupter, of the injurer of their kindred, as Meletus and Anytus call me; not the corrupted youth only—there might have been a motive for that—but their uncorrupted elder relatives. Why should they too support me with their testimony? Why, indeed, except for the sake of truth and justice, and because they know that I am speaking the truth, and that Meletus is a liar.

Well, Athenians, this and the like of this is all the defense which I have to offer. Yet a word more. Perhaps there may be some one who is offended at me, when he calls to mind how he himself on a similar, or even a less serious occasion, prayed and entreated the judges with many tears, and how he produced his children in court, which was a moving spectacle, together with a host of relations and friends; whereas I, who am probably in danger of my life, will do none of these things. The contrast may occur to his mind, and he may be set against me, and vote in anger because he is displeased at me on this account. Now if there be such a person among you,—mind, I do not say that there is,—to him I may fairly reply: My friend, I am a man, and like other men, a creature of flesh and blood, and not ‘of wood or stone,’ as Homer says; and I have a family, yes, and sons, O Athenians, three in number, one almost a man, and two others who are still young; and yet I will not bring any of them hither in order to petition you for an acquittal. And why not? Not from any self-assertion or want of respect for you. Whether I am or am not afraid of death is another question, of which I will not now speak. But, having regard to public opinion, I feel that such conduct would be discreditable to myself, and to you, and to the whole state. One who has reached my years, and who has a name for wisdom, ought not to demean himself. Whether this opinion of me be deserved or not, at any rate the world has decided that Socrates is in some way superior to other men. And if those among you who are said to be superior in wisdom and courage, and any other virtue, demean themselves in this way, how shameful is their conduct! I have seen men of reputation, when they have been condemned, behaving in the strangest manner: they seemed to fancy that they were going to suffer something dreadful if they died, and that they could be immortal if you only allowed them to live; and I think that such are a dishonor to the state, and that any stranger coming in would have said of them that the most eminent men of Athens, to whom the Athenians themselves give honor and command, are no better than women. And I say that these things ought not to be done by those of us who have a reputation; and if they are done, you ought not to permit them; you ought rather to show that you are far more disposed to condemn the man who gets up a doleful scene and makes the city ridiculous, than him who holds his peace.

But, setting aside the question of public opinion, there seems to be something wrong in asking a favour of a judge, and thus procuring an acquittal, instead of informing and convincing him. For his duty is, not to make a present of justice, but to give judgment; and he has sworn that he will judge according to the laws, and not according to his own good pleasure; and we ought not to encourage you, nor should you allow yourselves to be encouraged, in this habit of perjury—there can be no piety in that. Do not then require me to do what I consider dishonorable and impious and wrong, especially now, when I am being tried for impiety on the indictment of Meletus. For if, O men of Athens, by force of persuasion and entreaty I could overpower your oaths, then I should be teaching you to believe that there are no gods, and in defending should simply convict myself of the charge of not believing in them. But that is not so—far otherwise. For I do believe that there are gods, and in a sense higher than that in which any of my accusers believe in them. And to you and to God I commit my cause, to be determined by you as is best for you and me.

There are many reasons why I am not grieved, O men of Athens, at the vote of condemnation. I expected it, and am only surprised that the votes are so nearly equal; for I had thought that the majority against me would have been far larger; but now, had thirty votes gone over to the other side, I should have been acquitted. And I may say, I think, that I have escaped Meletus. I may say more; for without the assistance of Anytus and Lycon, any one may see that he would not have had a fifth part of the votes, as the law requires, in which case he would have incurred a fine of a thousand drachmae.

And so he proposes death as the penalty. And what shall I propose on my part, O men of Athens? Clearly that which is my due. And what is my due? What return shall be made to the man who has never had the wit to be idle during his whole life; but has been careless of what the many care for— wealth, and family interests, and military offices, and speaking in the assembly, and magistracies, and plots, and parties. Reflecting that I was really too honest a man to be a politician and live, I did not go where I could do no good to you or to myself; but where I could do the greatest good privately to every one of you, thither I went, and sought to persuade every man among you that he must look to himself, and seek virtue and wisdom before he looks to his private interests, and look to the state before he looks to the interests of the state; and that this should be the order which he observes in all his actions. What shall be done to such an one? Doubtless some good thing, O men of Athens, if he has his reward; and the good should be of a kind suitable to him. What would be a reward suitable to a poor man who is your benefactor, and who desires leisure that he may instruct you? There can be no reward so fitting as maintenance in the Prytaneum, O men of Athens, a reward which he deserves far more than the citizen who has won the prize at Olympia in the horse or chariot race, whether the chariots were drawn by two horses or by many. For I am in want, and he has enough; and he only gives you the appearance of happiness, and I give you the reality. And if I am to estimate the penalty fairly, I should say that maintenance in the Prytaneum is the just return.

Perhaps you think that I am braving you in what I am saying now, as in what I said before about the tears and prayers. But this is not so. I speak rather because I am convinced that I never intentionally wronged any one, although I cannot convince you—the time has been too short; if there were a law at Athens, as there is in other cities, that a capital cause should not be decided in one day, then I believe that I should have convinced you. But I cannot in a moment refute great slanders; and, as I am convinced that I never wronged another, I will assuredly not wrong myself. I will not say of myself that I deserve any evil, or propose any penalty. Why should I? because I am afraid of the penalty of death which Meletus proposes? When I do not know whether death is a good or an evil, why should I propose a penalty which would certainly be an evil? Shall I say imprisonment? And why should I live in prison, and be the slave of the magistrates of the year—of the Eleven? Or shall the penalty be a fine, and imprisonment until the fine is paid? There is the same objection. I should have to lie in prison, for money I have none, and cannot pay. And if I say exile (and this may possibly be the penalty which you will affix), I must indeed be blinded by the love of life, if I am so irrational as to expect that when you, who are my own citizens, cannot endure my discourses and words, and have found them so grievous and odious that you will have no more of them, others are likely to endure me. No indeed, men of Athens, that is not very likely. And what a life should I lead, at my age, wandering from city to city, ever changing my place of exile, and always being driven out! For I am quite sure that wherever I go, there, as here, the young men will flock to me; and if I drive them away, their elders will drive me out at their request; and if I let them come, their fathers and friends will drive me out for their sakes.

Some one will say: Yes, Socrates, but cannot you hold your tongue, and then you may go into a foreign city, and no one will interfere with you? Now I have great difficulty in making you understand my answer to this. For if I tell you that to do as you say would be a disobedience to the God, and therefore that I cannot hold my tongue, you will not believe that I am serious; and if I say again that daily to discourse about virtue, and of those other things about which you hear me examining myself and others, is the greatest good of man, and that the unexamined life is not worth living, you are still less likely to believe me. Yet I say what is true, although a thing of which it is hard for me to persuade you. Also, I have never been accustomed to think that I deserve to suffer any harm. Had I money I might have estimated the offence at what I was able to pay, and not have been much the worse. But I have none, and therefore I must ask you to proportion the fine to my means. Well, perhaps I could afford a mina, and therefore I propose that penalty: Plato, Crito, Critobulus, and Apollodorus, my friends here, bid me say thirty minae, and they will be the sureties. Let thirty minae be the penalty; for which sum they will be ample security to you.

Not much time will be gained, O Athenians, in return for the evil name which you will get from the detractors of the city, who will say that you killed Socrates, a wise man; for they will call me wise, even although I am not wise, when they want to reproach you. If you had waited a little while, your desire would have been fulfilled in the course of nature. For I am far advanced in years, as you may perceive, and not far from death. I am speaking now not to all of you, but only to those who have condemned me to death. And I have another thing to say to them: you think that I was convicted because I had no words of the sort which would have procured my acquittal—I mean, if I had thought fit to leave nothing undone or unsaid. Not so; the deficiency which led to my conviction was not of words— certainly not. But I had not the boldness or impudence or inclination to address you as you would have liked me to do, weeping and wailing and lamenting, and saying and doing many things which you have been accustomed to hear from others, and which, as I maintain, are unworthy of me. I thought at the time that I ought not to do anything common or mean when in danger: nor do I now repent of the style of my defense; I would rather die having spoken after my manner, than speak in your manner and live. For neither in war nor yet at law ought I or any man to use every way of escaping death. Often in battle there can be no doubt that if a man will throw away his arms, and fall on his knees before his pursuers, he may escape death; and in other dangers there are other ways of escaping death, if a man is willing to say and do anything. The difficulty, my friends, is not to avoid death, but to avoid unrighteousness; for that runs faster than death. I am old and move slowly, and the slower runner has overtaken me, and my accusers are keen and quick, and the faster runner, who is unrighteousness, has overtaken them. And now I depart hence condemned by you to suffer the penalty of death,—they too go their ways condemned by the truth to suffer the penalty of villainy and wrong; and I must abide by my award—let them abide by theirs. I suppose that these things may be regarded as fated,—and I think that they are well.

And now, O men who have condemned me, I would fain prophesy to you; for I am about to die, and in the hour of death men are gifted with prophetic power. And I prophesy to you who are my murderers, that immediately after my departure punishment far heavier than you have inflicted on me will surely await you. Me you have killed because you wanted to escape the accuser, and not to give an account of your lives. But that will not be as you suppose: far otherwise. For I say that there will be more accusers of you than there are now; accusers whom hitherto I have restrained: and as they are younger they will be more inconsiderate with you, and you will be more offended at them. If you think that by killing men you can prevent some one from censuring your evil lives, you are mistaken; that is not a way of escape which is either possible or honorable; the easiest and the

noblest way is not to be disabling others, but to be improving yourselves. This is the prophecy which I utter before my departure to the judges who have condemned me.

Friends, who would have acquitted me, I would like also to talk with you about the thing which has come to pass, while the magistrates are busy, and before I go to the place at which I must die. Stay then a little, for we may as well talk with one another while there is time. You are my friends, and I should like to show you the meaning of this event which has happened to me. O my judges—for you I may truly call judges—I should like to tell you of a wonderful circumstance. Hitherto the divine faculty of which the internal oracle is the source has constantly been in the habit of opposing me even about trifles, if I was going to make a slip or error in any matter; and now as you see there has come upon me that which may be thought, and is generally believed to be, the last and worst evil. But the oracle made no sign of opposition, either when I was leaving my house in the morning, or when I was on my way to the court, or while I was speaking, at anything which I was going to say; and yet I have often been stopped in the middle of a speech, but now in nothing I either said or did touching the matter in hand has the oracle opposed me. What do I take to be the explanation of this silence? I will tell you. It is an intimation that what has happened to me is a good, and that those of us who think that death is an evil are in error. For the customary sign would surely have opposed me had I been going to evil and not to good. Let us reflect in another way, and we shall see that there is great reason to hope that death is a good; for one of two things—either death is a state of nothingness and utter unconsciousness, or, as men say, there is a change and migration of the soul from this world to another. Now if you suppose that there is no consciousness, but a sleep like the sleep of him who is undisturbed even by dreams, death will be an unspeakable gain. For if a person were to select the night in which his sleep was undisturbed even by dreams, and were to compare with this the other days and nights of his life, and then were to tell us how many days and nights he had passed in the course of his life better and more pleasantly than this one, I think that any man, I will not say a private man, but even the great king will not find many such days or nights, when compared with the others. Now if death be of such a nature, I say that to die is gain; for eternity is then only a single night. But if death is the journey to another place, and there, as men say, all the dead abide, what good, O my friends and judges, can be greater than this? If indeed when the pilgrim arrives in the world below, he is delivered from the professors of justice in this world, and finds the true judges who are said to give judgment there, Minos and Rhadamanthus and Aeacus and Triptolemus, and other sons of God who were righteous in their own life, that pilgrimage will be worth making. What would not a man give if he might converse with Orpheus and Musaeus and Hesiod and Homer? Nay, if this be true, let me die again and again. I myself, too, shall have a wonderful interest in their meeting and conversing with Palamedes, and Ajax the son of Telamon, and any other ancient hero who has suffered death through an unjust judgment; and there will be no small pleasure, as I think, in comparing my own sufferings with theirs. Above all, I shall then be able to continue my search into true and false knowledge; as in this world, so also in the next; and I shall find out who is wise, and who pretends to be wise, and is not. What would not a man give, O judges, to be able to examine the leader of the great Trojan expedition; or Odysseus or Sisyphus, or numberless others, men and women too! What infinite delight would there be in conversing with them and asking them questions! In another world they do not put a man to death for asking questions: assuredly not. For besides being happier than we are, they will be immortal, if what is said is true. Wherefore, O judges, be of good cheer about death, and know of a certainty, that no evil can happen to a good man, either in life or after death. He and his are not neglected by the gods; nor has my own approaching end happened by mere chance. But I see clearly that the time had arrived when it was better for me to die and be released from trouble; wherefore the oracle gave no sign. For which reason, also, I am not angry with my

condemners, or with my accusers; they have done me no harm, although they did not mean to do me any good; and for this I may gently blame them.

Still I have a favor to ask of them. When my sons are grown up, I would ask you, O my friends, to punish them; and I would have you trouble them, as I have troubled you, if they seem to care about riches, or anything, more than about virtue; or if they pretend to be something when they are really nothing,—then reprove them, as I have reproved you, for not caring about that for which they ought to care, and thinking that they are something when they are really nothing. And if you do this, both I and my sons will have received justice at your hands.

The hour of departure has arrived, and we go our ways—I to die, and you to live. Which is better God only knows.

Readings Part Two: Philosophy & Religion

The Ontological Argument

From *Proslogion*, translated by Sidney Norton Deane and published by Open Court in 1903.

-Saint Anselm

The Ontological Argument

... I BEGAN TO ASK MYSELF whether there might be found a single argument which would require no other for its proof than itself alone; and alone would suffice to demonstrate that God truly exists, and that there is a supreme good requiring nothing else, which all other things require for their existence and well-being; and whatever we believe regarding the divine Being.

Although I often and earnestly directed my thought to this end, and at some times that which I sought seemed to be just within my reach, while again it wholly evaded my mental vision, at last in despair I was about to cease, as if from the search for a thing which could not be found. But when I wished to exclude this thought altogether, lest, by busying my mind to no purpose, it should keep me from other thoughts, in which I might be successful; then more and more, though I was unwilling and shunned it, it began to force itself upon me, with a kind of importunity. So, one day, when I was exceedingly wearied with resisting its importunity, in the very conflict of my thoughts, the proof of which I had despaired offered itself, so that I eagerly embraced the thoughts which I was strenuously repelling...

And so Lord, do thou, who dost give understanding to faith, give me, so far as thou knowest it to be profitable, to understand that thou art as we believe; and that thou art that which we believe. And, indeed, we believe that thou art a being than which nothing greater can be conceived. Or is there no such nature, since the fool hath said in his heart, there is no God? But, at any rate, this very fool, when he hears of this being of which I speak—a being than which nothing greater can be conceived—understands what he hears, and what he understands is in his understanding; although he does not understand it to exist.

For, it is one thing for an object to be in the understanding, and another to understand that the object exists. When a painter first conceives of what he will afterwards perform, he has it in his understanding, but he does not yet understand it to be, because he has not yet performed it. But after he has made the painting, he both has it in his understanding, and he understands that it exists, because he has made it. Hence, even the fool is convinced that something exists in the understanding, at least, than which nothing greater can be conceived. For, when he hears of this, he understands it. And whatever is understood, exists in the understanding. And assuredly that, than which nothing greater can be conceived, cannot exist in the understanding alone. For, suppose it exists in the understanding alone: then it can be conceived to exist in reality; which is greater. Therefore, if that, than which nothing greater can be conceived, exists in the understanding alone, the very being, than which nothing greater can be conceived, is one, than which a greater can be conceived. But obviously this is impossible. Hence, there is no doubt that there exists a being, than which nothing greater can be conceived, and it exists both in the understanding and in reality.

And it assuredly exists so truly, that it cannot be conceived not to exist. For, it is possible to conceive of a being which cannot be conceived not to exist, and this is greater than one which can be conceived not to exist. Hence, if that, than which nothing greater can be conceived, can be conceived not to exist, it is not that, than which nothing greater can be conceived. But this is an irreconcilable contradiction. There is, then, so truly a being than which nothing greater can be conceived to exist, that it cannot even be conceived not to exist; and this being thou art, O Lord, our God. So truly, therefore, dost thou exist, O Lord, my God, that thou canst not be conceived not to exist; and rightly. For if a mind could conceive of a being better than thee, the creature would rise above

the Creator; and this is most absurd. And, indeed, whatever else there is, except thee alone, can be conceived not to exist. To thee alone therefore, it belongs to exist more truly than all other beings, and hence in a higher degree than all others. For, whatever else exists does not exist so truly, and hence in a less degree it belongs to it to exist. Why, then, has the fool said in his heart, there is no God, since it is so evident, to a rational mind, that thou dost exist in the highest degree of all? Why, except that he is dull and a fool?

In Behalf of the Fool

An Answer To The Argument Of Anselm

-Gaunilo, A Monk Of Marmoutier

. . if it should be said that a being which cannot be even conceived in terms of any fact, is in the understanding. I do not deny that this being is, accordingly, in my understanding. But since through this fact it can in no wise attain to real existence also, I do not yet concede to it that existence at all, until some certain proof of it shall be given. For he who says that this being exists, because otherwise the being which is greater than all will not be greater than all, does not attend strictly to what he is saying. For I do not yet say, no, I even deny or doubt that this being is greater than any real object. Nor do I concede to it any other existence than this (if it should be called existence) which it has when the mind, according to a word merely heard, tries to form the image of an object absolutely unknown to it.

How, then, is the veritable existence of that being proved to me from the assumption, by hypothesis, that it is greater than all other beings?

For I should still deny this, or doubt your demonstration of it, to this extent, that I should not admit that this being is in my understanding and concept even in the way in which many objects whose real existence is uncertain and doubtful, are in my understanding and concept. For it should be proved first that this being itself really exists somewhere; and then, from the fact that it is greater than all, we shall not hesitate to infer that it also subsists in itself. For example: it is said that somewhere in the ocean is an island, which, because of the difficulty, or rather the impossibility, of discovering what does not exist, is called the lost island. And they say that this island has an inestimable wealth of all manner of riches and delicacies in greater abundance than is told of the Islands of the Blest; and that having no owner or inhabitant, it is more excellent than all other countries, which are inhabited by mankind, in the abundance with which it is stored.

Now if someone should tell me that there is such an island, I should easily understand his words, in which there is no difficulty. But suppose that he went on to say, as if by a logical inference: "You can no longer doubt that this island which is more excellent than all lands exists somewhere, since you have no doubt that it is in your understanding. And since it is more excellent not to be in the understanding alone, but to exist both in the understanding and in reality, for this reason it must exist. For if it does not exist, any land which really exists will be more excellent than it; and so the island already understood by you to be more excellent will not be more excellent."

If a man should try to prove to me by such reasoning that this island truly exists, and that its existence should no longer be doubted, either I should believe that he was jesting, or I know not which I ought to regard as the greater fool: myself, supposing that I should allow this proof, or him, if he should suppose that he had established with any certainty the existence of this island. For he ought to show first that the hypothetical excellence of this island exists as a real and indubitable fact, and in no wise as any unreal object, or one whose existence is uncertain, in my understanding.

Anselm's Reply

But, you say, it is as if one should suppose an island in the ocean, which surpasses all lands in its fertility, and which, because of the difficulty, or rather the impossibility, of discovering what does not exist, is called a lost island; and should say that there can be no doubt that this island truly exists in reality, for this reason, that one who hears it described easily understands what he hears.

Now I promise confidently that if any man shall devise anything existing either in reality or in concept alone (except that than which a greater cannot be conceived) to which he can adapt the sequence of my reasoning, I will discover that thing, and will give him his lost island, not to be lost again.

But it now appears that this being than which a greater is inconceivable cannot be conceived not to be, because it exists on so assured a ground of truth; for otherwise it would not exist at all.

Hence, if any one says that he conceives this being not to exist, I say that at the time when he conceives of this either he conceives of a being than which a greater is inconceivable, or he does not conceive at all. If he does not conceive, he does not conceive of the nonexistence of that of which he does not conceive. But if he does conceive, he certainly conceives of a being which cannot be even conceived not to exist. For if it could be conceived not to exist, it could be conceived to have a beginning and an end. But this is impossible.

He, then, who conceives of this being conceives of a being which cannot be even conceived not to exist; but he who conceives of this being does not conceive that it does not exist; else he conceives what is inconceivable. The nonexistence, then, of that than which a greater cannot be conceived is inconceivable.

The Five Ways and the Doctrine of Analogy

-THOMAS AQUINAS (1225-1274)

THE EXISTENCE OF GOD can be proved in five ways.

The first and more manifest way is the argument from motion. It is certain, and evident to our senses, that in the world some things are in motion. Now whatever is moved is moved by another, for nothing can be moved except it is in potentiality to that towards which it is moved; whereas a thing moves inasmuch as it is in act. For motion is nothing else than the reduction of something from potentiality to actuality. But nothing can be reduced from potentiality to actuality, except by something in a state of actuality. Thus that which is actually hot, as fire, makes wood, which is potentially hot, to be actually hot, and thereby moves and changes it. Now it is not possible that the same thing should be at once in actuality and potentiality in the same respect, but only in different respects. For what is actually hot cannot simultaneously be potentially hot; but it is simultaneously potentially cold. It is therefore impossible that in the same respect and in the same way a thing should be both mover and moved, i.e., that it should move itself. Therefore, whatever is moved must be moved by another. If that by which it is moved be itself moved, then this also must needs be moved by another, and that by another again. But this cannot go on to infinity, because then there would be no first mover, and consequently no other mover, seeing that subsequent movers move only inasmuch as they are moved by the first mover; as the staff moves only because it is moved by the hand. Therefore it is necessary to arrive at a first mover, moved by no other; and this everyone understands to be God.

The second way is from the nature of efficient cause. In the world of sensible things we find there is an order of efficient causes. There is no case known (neither is it, indeed, possible) in which a thing is found to be the efficient cause of itself; for so it would be prior to itself, which is impossible. Now in efficient causes it is not possible to go on to infinity, because in all efficient causes following in order, the first is the cause of the

intermediate cause, and the intermediate is the cause of the ultimate cause, whether the intermediate cause be several, or one only. Now to take away the cause is to take away the effect. Therefore, if there be no first cause among efficient causes, there will be no ultimate, nor any intermediate, cause. But if in efficient causes it is possible to go on to infinity, there will be no first efficient cause, neither will there be an ultimate effect, nor any intermediate efficient causes; all of which is plainly false. Therefore it is necessary to admit a first efficient cause, to which everyone gives the name of God.

The third way is taken from possibility and necessity, and runs thus. We find in nature things that are possible to be and not to be, since they are found to be generated, and to be corrupted, and consequently, it is possible for them to be and not to be. But it is impossible for these always to exist, for that which can not-be at some time is not. Therefore, if everything can not-be, then at one time there was nothing in existence. Now if this were true, even now there would be nothing in existence, because that which does not exist begins to exist only through something already existing. Therefore, if at one time nothing was in existence, it would have been impossible for anything to have begun to exist; and thus even now nothing would be in existence-which is absurd. Therefore, not all beings are merely possible, but there must exist something the existence of which is necessary. But every necessary thing either has its necessity caused by another, or not. Now it is impossible to go on to infinity in necessary things which have their necessity caused by another, as has been already proved in regard to efficient causes. Therefore we cannot but admit the existence of some being having of itself its own necessity, and not receiving it from another, but rather causing in others their necessity. This all men speak of as God.

The fourth way is taken from the gradation to be found in things. Among beings there are some more and some less good, true, noble, and the like. But more and less are predicated of different things according as they resemble in their different ways something which is the maximum, as a thing is said to be hotter according as it more nearly resembles that which is hottest; so that there is something which is truest, something best, something noblest, and, consequently, something which is most in being, for those things that are greatest in truth are greatest in being. . . . Now the maximum in any genus is the cause of all in that genus, as fire, which is the maximum of heat, is the cause of all hot things, as is said in the same book. Therefore there must also be something which is to all beings the cause of their being, goodness, and every other perfection; and this we call God.

The fifth way is taken from the governance of the world. We see that things which lack knowledge, such as natural bodies, act for an end, and this is evident from their acting always, or nearly always, in the same way, so as to obtain the best result. Hence it is plain that they achieve their end, not fortuitously, but designedly. Now whatever lacks knowledge cannot move towards an end, unless it be directed by some being endowed with knowledge and intelligence; as the arrow is directed by the archer. Therefore some intelligent being exists by whom all natural things are directed to their end; and this being we call God.

Proofs of God's Existence

From *The Monadology* (1714).

-G. W F von Leibniz

31. Our reasons are founded on two great principles, that of contradiction, in virtue of which we judge that to be false which involves contradiction, and that true, which is opposed or contradictory to the false.

32. And that of sufficient reason, in virtue of which we hold that no fact can be real or existent, no statement true, unless there be a sufficient reason why it is so and not otherwise, although most often these reasons cannot

be known to us.

33. There are also two kinds of truths, those of reasoning and those of fact. Truths of reasoning are necessary and their opposite is impossible, and those of fact are contingent and their opposite is possible. When a truth is necessary its reason can be found by analysis, resolving it into more simple ideas and truths until we reach those which are primitive....

36. But there must also be a sufficient reason for contingent truths, or those of fact, - that is, for the series of things diffused through the universe of created objects-where the resolution into Particular reason might run into a detail without limits, on account of the immense variety of objects and the division of bodies ad infinitum.

37. And as all this detail only involves other contingents, anterior or more detailed, each one of which needs a like analysis for its explanation, we make no advance: and the sufficient or final reason must be outside of the sequence or series of this detail of contingencies, however infinite it may be.

38. And thus it is that the final reason of things must be found in a necessary Substance, in which the detail of changes exists only eminently, as in their source; and this it is which we call God.

39. Now this substance, being the sufficient reason of all this detail, which also is linked together throughout, there is but one God, and this God suffices.

40. We may also conclude that this supreme substance, which is unique, universal and necessary, having nothing outside of itself which is independent of it, and being a pure consequence of possible being, must be incapable of limitations and must contain as much of reality as is possible.

41. Whence it follows that God is absolutely perfect, perfection being only the magnitude of positive reality taken in its strictest meaning, setting aside the limits or bounds in things which have them. And where there are no limits, that is, in God, perfection is absolutely infinite.

42. It follows also that the creatures have their perfections from the influence of God, but that their imperfections arise from their own nature, incapable of existing without limits. For it is by this that they are distinguished from God.

43. It is also true that in God is the source not only of existences but also of essences, so far as they are real, or of that which is real in the possible. This is because the understanding of God is the region of eternal truths, or of the ideas on which they depend, and because, without him, there would be nothing real in the possibilities, and not only nothing existing but also nothing possible.

44. For, if there is a reality in essences or possibilities or indeed in the eternal truths, this reality must be founded in something existing and actual, and consequently in the existence of the necessary being, in whom essence involves existence, or with whom it is sufficient to be possible in order to be actual.

45. Hence God alone (or the necessary being) has this prerogative, that he must exist if he is possible. And since nothing can hinder the possibility of that which possesses no limitations, no negation, and, consequently, no contradiction, this alone is sufficient to establish the existence of God a priori. We have also proved it by the reality of the eternal truths. But we have a little while ago [SS36-39] proved it also a posteriori, since contingent beings exist, which can only have their final or sufficient reason in a necessary being who has the reason of his existence in himself...

53. Now, as there is an infinity of possible universes in the ideas of God, and as only one of them can exist, there must be a sufficient reason for the choice of God, which determines him to select one rather than another.

54. And this reason can only be found in the fitness, or in the degrees of perfection, which these worlds contain, each possible world having a right to claim existence according to the measure of perfection which it possesses.

55. And this is the cause of the existence of the Best; namely, that his wisdom makes it known to God, his goodness makes him choose it, and his power makes him produce it.

56. Now this connection, or this adaptation, of all created things to each and of each to all, brings it about that each simple substance has relations which express all the others, and that, consequently, it is a perpetual living mirror of the universe....

Evil as privation

From Theodicy, #20)

-Leibniz

But it is necessary also to meet the more speculative and metaphysical difficulties which have been mentioned, and which concern the cause of evil. The question is asked first of all, whence does evil come? Si Deus est, unde malum? Si non est, unde bonum? The ancients attributed the cause of evil to matter, which they believed uncreate and independent of God: but we, who derive all being from God, where shall we find the source of evil? The answer is, that it must be sought in the ideal nature of the creature, in so far as this nature is contained in the eternal verities which are in the understanding of God, independently of his will. For we must consider that there is an original imperfection in the creature before sin, because the creature is limited in its essence; whence ensues that it cannot know all, and that it can deceive itself and commit other errors. Plato said in Timaeus that the world originated in Understanding united to Necessity. Others have united God and Nature. This can be given a reasonable meaning. God will be the Understanding; and the Necessity, that is, the essential nature of things, will be the object of the understanding, in so far as this object consists in the eternal verities. But his object is inward and abides in the divine understanding. And therein is found not only the primitive form of good, but also the origin of evil: the Region of the Eternal Verities must be substituted for matter when we are concerned with seeking out the source of things.

This region is the ideal cause of evil (as it were) as well as of good: but, properly speaking, the formal character of evil has no efficient cause, for it consists in privation, as we shall see, namely, in that which the efficient cause does not bring about. That is why the Schoolmen are wont to call the cause of evil deficient.

The Analogy of the Boat (from Theodicy, #30-1) Let us suppose that the current of one and the same river carried along with it various boats, which differ among themselves only in the cargo, some being laden with wood, others with stone, and some more, the others less. That being so, it will come about that the boats most heavily laden will go more slowly than the others, provided it be assumed that the wind or the oar, or some other similar means, assist them not at all. It is not, properly speaking, weight which is the cause of this retardation, since the boats are going down and not upwards; but it is the same cause which also increases the weight in bodies that have greater density, which are, that is to say, less porous and more charged with matter that is proper to them: for the matter which passes through the pores, not receiving the same movement, must not be taken into account. It is therefore matter itself which originally is inclined to slowness or privation of speed; not indeed of itself to lessen this speed, having once received it, since that would be action, but to moderate by its receptivity the effect of the impression when it is to receive it. Consequently, since more matter is moved by the same force of the current when the boat is more laden, it is necessary that it go more slowly; and experiments on the impact of bodies, as well as reason, show that twice as much force must be employed to give equal speed to a body of the same matter but of twice the size. But that indeed would not be necessary if the matter were absolutely indifferent to repose and to movement, and if it had not this natural inertia whereof we have just spoken to give it a kind of repugnance to being moved. Let us now compare the force which the current exercises on boats, and communicates to them, with the action

of God, who produces and conserves whatever is positive in creatures, and gives them perfection, being and force: let us compare, I say, the inertia of matter with the natural imperfection of creatures, and the slowness of the laden boat with the defects to be found in the qualities and the action of the creature; and we shall find that there is nothing so just as this comparison. The current is the cause of the boat's movement but not of its retardation; God is the cause of perfection in the nature and the actions of the creature, but the limitation of the receptivity of the creature is the cause of the defects there are in its action. Thus the Platonists, St. Augustine and the Schoolmen were right to say that God is the cause of the material element of evil which lies in the positive, and not of the formal element, which lies in privation. Even so one may say that the current is the cause of the material element of the retardation, but not of the formal; that is, it is the cause of the boat's speed without being the cause of the limits to this speed. And God is no more the cause of sin than the river's current is the cause of the retardation of the boat.

There is, then, a wholly similar relation between such and such an action of God, and such and such a passion or reception of the creature, which in the ordinary course of things is perfected only in proportion to its 'receptivity,' such is the term used. And when it is said that the creature depends upon God in so far as it exists and in so far as it acts, and even that conservation is a continual creation, this is true in that God gives ever to the creature and produces continually all that in it is positive, good and perfect, every perfect gift coming from the Father of lights. The imperfections, on the other hand, and the defects in operations spring from the original limitation that the creature could not but receive with the first beginning of its being, through the ideal reasons which restrict it. For God could not give the creature all without making of it a God; therefore there must needs be different degrees in the perfection of things, and limitations also of every kind.

No Better World Possible

From Theodicy, #193-5.

-Leibniz

Up to now I have shown that the Will of God is not independent of the rules of Wisdom, although indeed it is a matter for surprise that one should have been constrained to argue about it, and to do battle for a truth so great and so well established. But it is hardly less surprising that there should be people who believe that God only half observes these rules, and does not choose the best, although his wisdom causes him to recognize it; and, in a word, that there should be writers who hold that God could have done better. ...

Yet philosophers and theologians dare to support dogmatically such a belief; and I have many times wondered that gifted and pious persons should have been capable of setting bounds to the goodness and the perfection of God. For to assert that he knows what is best, that he can do it and that he does it not, is to avow that it rested with his will only to make the world better than it is; but that is what one calls lacking goodness. It is acting against that axiom already quoted: *Minus bonum habet rationem mali*. If some adduce experience to prove that God could have done better, they set themselves up as ridiculous critics of his works. To such will be given the answer given to all those who criticize God's course of action, and who from this same assumption, that is, the alleged defects of the world, would infer that there is an evil God, or at least a God neutral between good and evil. And if we hold the same opinion ... we shall, I say, receive this answer: You have known the world only since the day before yesterday, you see scarce farther than your nose, and you carp at the world. Wait until you know more of the world and consider therein especially the parts which present a complete whole (as do organic bodies); and you will find there a contrivance and a beauty transcending all imagination. Let us thence draw conclusions as to the wisdom and the goodness of the author of things, even in things that we know not. We find in the universe

some things which are not pleasing to us; but let us be aware that it is not made for us alone. It is nevertheless made for us if we are wise: it will serve us if we use it for our service; we shall be happy in it if we wish to be.

Someone will say that it is impossible to produce the best, because there is no perfect creature, and that it is always possible to produce one which would be more perfect. I answer that what can be said of a creature or of a particular substance, which can always be surpassed by another, is not to be applied to the universe, which, since it must extend through all future eternity, is an infinity. Moreover, there is an infinite number of creatures in the smallest particle of matter, because of the actual division of the continuum to infinity. And infinity, that is to say, the accumulation of an infinite number of substances, is, properly speaking, not a whole any more than the infinite number itself, whereof one cannot say whether it is even or uneven. That is just what serves to confute those who make of the world a God, or who think of God as the Soul of the world; for the world or the universe cannot be regarded as an animal or a substance.

God and Evil

-David Hume

IT IS MY OPINION, I own replied Demea that each man feels, in a manner, the truth of religion within his own breast, and, from a consciousness of his imbecility and misery rather than from any reasoning, is led to seek protection from that Being on whom he and all nature is dependent. So anxious or so tedious are even the best scenes of life that futurity is still the object of all our hopes and fears. We incessantly look forward and endeavor by prayers, adoration, and sacrifice, to appease those unknown powers whom we find, by experience, so able to afflict and oppress us. Wretched creatures that we are! What resource for us amidst the innumerable ills of life did not religion suggest some methods of atonement, and appease those terrors with which we are incessantly agitated and tormented?

I am indeed persuaded, said Philo that the best and indeed the only method of bringing everyone to a due sense of religion is by just representations of the misery and wickedness of men. And for that purpose a talent of eloquence and strong imagery is more requisite than that of reasoning and argument. For is it necessary to prove what everyone feels within himself? It is only necessary to make us feel it, if possible, more intimately and sensibly.

The people, indeed, replied Demea are sufficiently convinced of this great and melancholy truth. The miseries of life, the unhappiness of man, the general corruptions of our nature, the unsatisfactory enjoyment of pleasures, riches, honours-these phrases have become almost proverbial in all languages. And who can doubt of what all men declare from their own immediate feeling and experience?

In this point, said Philo the learned are perfectly agreed with the vulgar; and in all letters, sacred and profane, the topic of human misery has been insisted on with the most pathetic eloquence that sorrow and melancholy could inspire. The poets, who speak from sentiment, without a system, and whose testimony has therefore the more authority, abound in images of this nature. From Homer down to Dr. Young, the whole inspired tribe have ever been sensible that no other representation of things would suit the feeling and observation of each individual.

As to authorities, replied Demea you need not seek them. Look round this library of Cleanthes I shall venture to affirm that, except authors of particular sciences, such as chemistry or botany, who have no occasion to treat of human life, there is scarce one of those innumerable writers from whom the sense of human misery has not, in some passage or other, extorted a complaint and confession of it. At least, the chance is entirely on that side; and no one author has ever, so far as I can recollect, been so extravagant as to deny it.

There you must excuse me, said Philo: Leibnitz has denied it, and is perhaps the first who ventured upon so bold and paradoxical an opinion; at least, the first who made it essential to his philosophical system.

And by being the first, replied Demea might he not have been sensible of his error? For is this a subject in which philosophers can propose to make discoveries especially in so late an age? And can any man hope by a simple denial (for the subject scarcely admits of reasoning) to bear down the united testimony-of mankind, founded on sense and consciousness?

And why should man, added he, pretend to an exemption from the lot of all other animals? The whole earth, believe me, Philo is cursed and polluted. A perpetual war is kindled amongst all living creatures. Necessity, hunger, want stimulate the strong and courageous; fear, anxiety, terror agitate the weak and infirm. The first entrance into life gives anguish to the new-born infant and to its wretched parent; weakness, impotence, distress attend each stage of that life, and it is, at last, finished in agony and horror.

Observe, too, says Philo the curious artifices of nature in order to embitter the life of every living being. The stronger prey upon the weaker and keep them in perpetual terror and anxiety. The weaker, too, in their turn, often prey upon the stronger, and vex and molest them without relaxation. Consider that innumerable race of insects, which either are bred on the body of each animal or, flying about, infix their stings in him. These insects have others still less than themselves which torment them. And thus on each hand, before and behind above and below, every animal is surrounded with enemies which incessantly seek his misery and destruction.

Man alone, said Demea seems to be, in part, an exception to this rule. For by combination in society he can easily master lions, tigers, and bears, whose greater strength and agility naturally enable them to prey upon him.

On the contrary, it is here chiefly, cried Philo that the uniform and equal maxims of nature are most apparent. Man, it is true, can, by combination, surmount all his real enemies and become master of the whole animal creation; but does he not immediately raise up to himself imaginary enemies, the demons of his fancy, who haunt him with superstitious terrors and blast every enjoyment of life? His pleasure, as he imagines, becomes in their eyes a crime; his food and repose give them umbrage and offence; his very sleep and dreams furnish new materials to anxious fear; and even death, his refuge from every other ill, presents only the dread of endless and innumerable woes. Nor does the wolf molest more the timid flock than superstition does the anxious breast of wretched mortals.

Besides, consider, Demea, this very society by which we surmount those wild beasts, our natural enemies, what new enemies does it not raise to us? What woe and misery does it not occasion? Man is the greatest enemy of man. Oppression, injustice, contempt, contumely, violence, sedition, war, calumny, treachery, fraud-by these they mutually torment each other, and they would soon dissolve that society which they had formed were it not for the dread of still greater ills which must attend their separation.

But though these external insults, said Demea from animals, from men, from all the elements, which assault us form a frightful catalogue of woes, they are nothing in comparison of those which arise within ourselves, from the distempered condition of our mind and body. How many lie under the lingering torment of diseases? Hear the pathetic enumeration of the great poet.

Intestine stone and ulcer, colic-pangs, Demoniac frenzy, moping melancholy, And moon-struck madness, pining atrophy, Marasmus, and wide-wasting pestilence.

Dire was the tossing, deep the groans: Despair Tended the sick, busiest from couch to couch, And over them triumphant Death his dart Shook: but delayed to strike, though oft invoked

With vows, as their chief good and final hope.

The disorders of the mind, continued Demea though more secret, are not perhaps less dismal and vexatious. Remorse, shame, anguish, rage, disappointment, anxiety, fear, dejection, despair who has ever passed through

life without cruel inroads from these tormentors? How many have scarcely ever felt any better sensations? Labour and poverty, so abhorred by everyone, are the certain lot of the far greater number; and those few privileged persons who enjoy ease and opulence never reach contentment or true felicity. All the goods of life united would not make a very happy man, but all the ills united would make a wretch indeed; and any one of them almost (and who can be free from every one?), nay, often the absence of one good (and who can possess all?) is sufficient to render life ineligible.

Were a stranger to drop on a sudden into this world, I would show him, as a specimen of its ills, an hospital full of diseases, a prison crowded with malefactors and debtors, a field of battle strewn with caresses, a fleet foundering in the ocean, a nation languishing under tyranny, famine, or pestilence. To turn the gay side of life to him and give him a notion of its pleasures -whither should I conduct him? To a ball, to an opera, to court? He might just think that I was only showing him a diversity of distress and sorrow.

There is no evading such striking instances, said Philo, but by apologies which still further aggravate the charge. Why have all men, I ask, in all ages, complained incessantly of the miseries of life? ... They have no just reason, says one: these complaints proceed only from their discontented, repining, anxious disposition.... And can there possibly, I reply, be a more certain foundation of misery than such a wretched temper?

But if they were really as unhappy as they pretend, says my antagonist, why do they remain in life? ...

Not satisfied with life, afraid of death this is the secret chain, say I, that holds us. We are terrified, not bribed to the continuance of our existence.

It is only a false delicacy, he may insist, which a few refined spirits indulge, and which has spread these complaints among the whole race of mankind.... And what is this delicacy, I ask, which you blame? Is it anything but a greater sensibility to all the pleasures and pains of life? And if the man of a delicate, refined temper, by being so much more alive than the rest of the world, is only so much more unhappy, what judgment must we form in general of human life?

Let men remain at rest, says our adversary, and they will be easy. They are willing artificers of their own misery... No! reply I: an anxious languor follows their repose; disappointment, vexation, trouble, their activity and ambition.

I can observe something like what you mention in some others, replied Cleanthes but I confess I feel little or nothing of it in myself, and hope that it is not so common as you represent it.

If you feel not human misery yourself, cried Demea I congratulate you on so happy a singularity. Others, seemingly the most prosperous, have not been ashamed to vent their complaints in the most melancholy strains. Let us attend to the great, the fortunate emperor, Charles V, when, tired with human grandeur, he resigned all his existent dominions into the hands of his son. In the last harangue which he made on that memorable occasion, he publicly avowed that the greatest prosperities which he had ever enjoyed had been mixed with so many adversities that he might truly say he had never enjoyed any satisfaction or contentment. But did the retired life in which he sought for shelter afford him any greater happiness? If we may credit his son's account, his repentance commenced the very day of his resignation.

Cicero's fortune, from small beginnings, rose to the greatest lustre and renown; yet what pathetic complaints of the ills of life do his familiar letters, as well as philosophical discourses, contain? And suitably to his own experience, he introduces Cato, the great, the fortunate Cato protesting in his old age that had he a new life in his offer he would reject the present.

Ask yourself, ask any of your acquaintance, whether they would live over again the last ten or twenty years of their life. No! but the next twenty, they say, will be better: And from the dregs of life, hope to receive What the first sprightly running could not give.

Thus, at last, they find (such is the greatness of human misery, it reconciles even contradictions) that they complain at once of the shortness of life and of its vanity and sorrow.

And is it possible, Cleanthes, said Philo, that after all these reflections, and infinitely more which might be suggested, you can still persevere in your anthropomorphism, and assert the moral attributes of the Deity, his justice, benevolence mercy, and rectitude, to be of the same nature with these virtues in human creatures? His power, we allow, is infinite; whatever he wills is executed; but neither man nor my other animal is happy; therefore, he does not will their happiness. His wisdom is infinite; he is never mistaken in choosing the means to my end; but the course of nature tends not to human or animal felicity; therefore, it is not established for that purpose. Through the whole compass of human knowledge there are no inferences more certain and infallible than these. In what respect, then, do his benevolence and mercy resemble the benevolence and mercy of men?

Epicurus' old questions are yet unanswered. Is he willing to prevent evil, but not able? then is he impotent. Is he able, but not willing? Then is he malevolent. Is he both able and willing whence then is evil?

You ascribe, Cleanthes, (and I believe justly) a purpose and intention to nature. But what, I beseech you, is the object of that curious artifice and machinery which she has displayed in all animals-the preservation alone of individuals, and propagation of the species? It seems enough for her purpose, if such a rank be barely upheld in the universe, without any care or concern for the happiness of the members that compose it. No resource for this purpose: no machinery in order merely to give pleasure or ease; no fund of pure joy and contentment; no indulgence without some want or necessity accompanying it. At least, the few phenomena of this nature are overbalanced by opposite phenomena of still greater importance.

Our sense of music, harmony, and indeed beauty of all kinds, gives satisfaction, without being absolutely necessary to the preservation and propagation of the species. But what racking pains, on the other hand, arise from gout, gravels, meargisms, toothaches, rheumatisms, where the injury to the animal machinery is either small or incurable? Mirth, laughter, play, frolic seem gratuitous satisfactions which have no further tendency; spleen, melancholy, discontent, superstition are pains of the same nature. How then does the Divine benevolence display itself, in the sense of you anthropomorphites? None but we mystics, as you were pleased to call us, can account for this strange mixture of phenomena, by deriving it from attributes infinitely perfect but incomprehensible.

And have you, at last, said Cleanthes smiling, betrayed your intentions, Philo? Your long agreement with Demea did indeed a little surprise me, but I find you were all the while erecting a concealed battery against me. And I must confess that you have now fallen upon a subject worthy of your noble spirit of opposition and controversy. If you can make out the present point, and prove mankind to be unhappy or corrupted, there is an end at once of all religion. For to what purpose establish the natural attributes of the Deity, while the moral are still doubtful and uncertain?

You take umbrage very easily, replied Demea, at opinions the most innocent and the most generally received, even amongst the religious and devout themselves; and nothing can be more surprising than to find a topic like this-concerning the wickedness and misery of man-charged with no less than atheism and profaneness. Have not all pious divines and preachers who have indulged their rhetoric on so fertile a subject, have they not easily, I say, given a solution of any difficulties which may attend it? This world is but a point in comparison of the universe; this life but a moment in comparison of eternity. The present evil phenomena, therefore, are rectified in other regions, and in some future period of existence. And the eyes of men, being then opened to larger views of things, see the whole connection of general laws, and trace, with adoration, the benevolence and rectitude of the Deity through all the mazes and intricacies of his providence.

No! replied Cleanthes, no! These arbitrary suppositions can never be admitted, contrary to matter of facts, visible and uncontroverted. Whence can any cause be known but from its known effects? Whence can any hypothesis be proved but from the apparent phenomena? To establish one hypothesis upon another is building entirely in the air; and the utmost we ever attain by these conjectures and fictions is to ascertain the bare possibility of our opinion, but never can we, upon such terms, establish its reality.

The only method of supporting Divine benevolence-and it is what I willingly embrace-is to deny absolutely the misery and wickedness of man. Your representations are exaggerated; your melancholy views mostly fictitious; your inferences contrary to fact and experience. Health is more common than sickness; pleasure than pain; happiness than misery. And for one vexation which we meet with, we attain, upon computation, a hundred enjoyments.

Admitting your position, replied Philo, which yet is extremely doubtful, you must at the same time allow that, if pain be less frequent than pleasure, it is infinitely more violent and durable. One hour of it is often able to outweigh a day, a week, a month of our common insipid enjoyments; and how many days, weeks, and months are passed by several in the most acute torments? Pleasure, scarcely in one instance, is ever able to reach ecstasy and rapture; and in no one instance can it continue for any time at its highest pitch and altitude. The spirits evaporate, the nerves relax, the fabric is disordered, and the enjoyment quickly degenerates into fatigue and uneasiness. But pain often, good God, how often it rises to torture and agony; and the longer it continues, it becomes still more genuine agony and torture. Patience is exhausted, courage languishes, melancholy seizes us, and nothing terminates our misery but the removal of its cause or another event which is the sole cure of all evil, but which, from our natural folly, we regard with still greater horror and consternation.

But not to insist upon these topics, continued Philo, though most obvious, certain, and important, I must use the freedom to admonish you, Cleanthes, that you have put the controversy upon a most dangerous issue, and are unawares introducing a total scepticism into the most essential articles of natural and revealed theology. What! no method of fixing a just foundation for religion unless we allow the happiness of human life, and maintain a continued existence even in this world, with all our present pains, infirmities, vexations, and follies, to be eligible and desirable! But this is contrary to everyone's feeling and experience; it is contrary to an authority so established as nothing can subvert. No decisive proofs can ever be produced against this authority; nor is it possible for you to compute, estimate, and compare all the pains and all the pleasures. in the lives of all men and all animals; and thus, by your resting the whole system of religion on a point which, from its very nature, must forever be uncertain, you tacitly confess that that system is equally uncertain.

But allowing you what never will be believed, at least, what you never possibly can prove, that animal or, at least, human happiness in this life exceeds its misery, you have yet done nothing; for this is not, by any means, what we expect from infinite power, infinite wisdom, and infinite goodness. Why is there any misery at all in the world? Not by chance, surely. From some cause then. Is it from the intention of the Deity? But he is perfectly benevolent, Is it contrary to his intention? But he is almighty. Nothing can shake the solidity of this reasoning, so short, so clear, so decisive, except we assert that these subjects exceed all human capacity, and that our common measures of truth and falsehood are not applicable to them -a topic which I have all along insisted on, but which you have, from the beginning, rejected with scorn and indignation.

But I will be contented to retire still from this entrenchment, for I deny that you can ever force me in it. I will allow that pain or misery in man is compatible with infinite power and goodness in the Deity, even in your sense of these attributes: what are you advanced by all these concessions? A mere possible compatibility is not sufficient. You must prove these pure, unmixed, and uncontrollable attributes from the present mixed and confused phenomena, and from these alone. A hopeful undertaking! Were the phenomena ever so pure and

unmixed, yet, being finite, they would be insufficient for that purpose. How much more, where they are also so jarring and discordant!

Here, Cleanthes, I find myself at ease in my argument. Here I triumph. Formerly, when we argued concerning the natural attributes of intelligence and design, I needed all my sceptical and metaphysical subtilty to elude your grasp. In many views of the universe and of its parts, particularly the latter, the beauty and fitness of final causes strike us with such irresistible force that all objections appear (what I believe they really are) mere cavils and sophisms; nor can we then imagine how it was ever possible for us to repose any weight on them. But there is no view of human life or of the condition of mankind from which, without the greatest violence we can infer the moral attributes or learn that infinite benevolence, conjoined with infinite power and infinite wisdom, which we must discover by the eyes of faith alone. It is your turn now to tug the labouring oar, and to support your philosophical subtleties against the dictates of plain reason and experience.

The Immortality of the Soul

Unpublished prior to Hume's Death

-David Hume

BY THE MERE LIGHT OF REASON IT seems difficult to prove the Immortality of the Soul. The arguments for it are commonly derived either from metaphysical topics, or moral, or physical. But in reality, it is the gospel, and the gospel alone, that has brought life and immortality to light.

I. Metaphysical topics suppose that the soul is immaterial, and that it is impossible for thought to belong to a material substance.

But just metaphysics teach us, that the notion of substance is wholly confused and imperfect, and that we have no other idea of any substance, than as an aggregate of particular qualities inhering in an unknown something. Matter, therefore, and spirit, are at bottom equally unknown; and we cannot determine what qualities inhere in the one or in the other.

They likewise teach us, that nothing can be decided a priori concerning any cause or effect; and that experience, being the only source of our judgments of this nature, we cannot know from any other principle, whether matter, by its structure or arrangement, may not be the cause of thought. Abstract reasoning cannot decide any question of fact or existence.

But admitting a spiritual substance to be dispersed throughout the universe, like the ethereal fire of the Stoics, and to be the only inherent subject of thought, we have reason to conclude from analogy, that nature uses it after the manner she does the other substance, matter. She employs it as a kind of paste or clay; modifies it into a variety of forms and existences; dissolves after a time each modification, and from its substance erects a new form. As the same material substance may successively compose the bodies of all animals, the same spiritual substance may compose their minds: their consciousness, or that system of thought, which they formed during life, may be continually dissolved by death; and nothing interests them in the new modification. The most positive assertors of the mortality of the soul, never denied the immortality of its substance. And that an immaterial substance, as well as a material, may lose its memory or consciousness, appears, in part, from experience, if the soul be immaterial.

Reasoning from the common course of nature, and without supposing any new interposition of the Supreme Cause, which ought always to be excluded from philosophy; what is incorruptible must also be ingenerable. The

soul, therefore, if immortal, existed before our birth: And if the former existence noways concerned us, neither will the latter.

Animals undoubtedly feel, think, love, hate, will, and even reason, though in a more imperfect manner than man. Are their souls also immaterial and immortal?

11. Let us now consider the moral arguments, chiefly those derived from the justice of God, which is supposed to be further interested in the further punishment of the vicious and reward of the virtuous.

But these arguments are grounded on the supposition that God has attributes beyond what he has exerted in this universe, with which alone we are acquainted. Whence do we infer the existence of these attributes?

'Tis very safe for us to affirm, that, whatever we know the Deity to have actually done, is best; but it is very dangerous to affirm, that he must always do what to us seems best. In many instances would this reasoning fail us with regard to the present world.

But, if any purpose of nature be clear, we may affirm, that the whole scope and intention of man's creation, so far as we can judge by natural reason, is limited to the present life. With how weak a concern, from the original, inherent structure of the mind and passions, does he ever look further? What comparison either for steadiness or efficacy, betwixt so floating an idea, and the most doubtful persuasion of any matter of fact, that occurs in common life?

There arise, indeed, in some minds, some unaccountable terrors with regard to futurity: But these would quickly vanish, were they not artificially fostered by precept and education. And those, who foster them: what is their motive? Only to gain a livelihood, and to acquire power and riches in this world. Their very zeal and industry, therefore, are an argument against them.

What cruelty, what iniquity, what injustice in nature, to confine thus all our concern, as well as all our knowledge, to the present life, if there be another scene still waiting us, of infinitely greater consequence? Ought this barbarous deceit to be ascribed to a beneficent and wise Being?

Observe with what exact proportion the task to be performed, and the performing powers, are adjusted throughout all nature. If the reason of man gives him a great superiority above other animals, his necessities are proportionably multiplied upon him. His whole time, his whole capacity, activity, courage, passion, find sufficient employment, in fencing against the miseries of his present condition. And frequently, nay almost always, are too slender for the business assigned them.

A pair of shoes, perhaps, was never yet wrought to the highest degree of perfection, which that commodity is capable of attaining. Yet it is necessary, at least very useful, that there should be some politicians and moralists, even some geometers, poets, and philosophers among mankind.

The powers of men are no more superior to their wants, considered merely in this life, than those of foxes and hares are, compared to their wants and their period of existence. The inference from parity of reason is therefore obvious.

On the theory of the soul's mortality, the inferiority of women's capacity is easily accounted for: Their domestic life requires no higher faculties either of mind or body. This circumstance vanishes and becomes absolutely insignificant, on the religious theory: The one sex has an equal task to perform as the other: Their powers of reason and resolution ought also to have been equal, and both of them infinitely greater than at present.

As every effect implies a cause, and that another, till we reach the first cause of all, which is the Deity everything that happens, is ordained by Him; and nothing can be the object of His punishment or vengeance.

By what rule are punishments and rewards distributed? What is the Divine standard of merit and demerit? Shall we suppose, that human sentiments have place in the Deity? However bold that hypothesis, we have no conception of any other sentiments.

According to human sentiments, sense, courage, good manners, industry, prudence, genius, etc., are essential parts of personal merits. Shall we therefore erect an elysium for poets and heroes, like that of the ancient mythology? Why confine all rewards to one species of virtue?

Punishment, without any proper end or purpose, is inconsistent with our ideas of goodness and justice; and no end can be served by it after the whole scene is closed.

Punishment, according to our conception, should bear some proportion to the offence. Why then eternal punishment for the temporary offences of so frail a creature as man? Can any one approve of Alexander's rage, who intended to exterminate a whole nation, because they had seized his favourite horse, Bucephalus?

Heaven and hell suppose two distinct species of men, the good and the bad. But the greatest part of mankind float betwixt vice and virtue.

Were one to go round the world with an intention of giving a good supper to the righteous and a sound drubbing to the wicked, he would frequently be embarrassed in his choice, and would find, that the merits and demerits of most men and women scarcely amount to the value of either.

To suppose measures of approbation and blame, different from the human, confounds every thing. Whence do we learn, that there is such a thing as moral distinctions, but from our own sentiments?

What man, who has not met with personal provocation (or what good-natur'd man who has), could inflict on crimes, from the sense of blame alone, even the common, legal, frivolous punishments? And does anything steel the breast of judges and juries against the sentiments of humanity but reflections on necessity and public interest?

By the Roman law, those who had been guilty of parricide, and confessed their crime, were put into a sack, along with an ape, a dog, and a serpent; and thrown into the river: Death alone was the punishment of those, who denied their guilt, however fully proved. A criminal was tried before Augustus, and condemned after a full conviction: but the humane emperor, when he put the last interrogatory, gave it such a turn as to lead the wretch into a denial of his guilt. "You surely, said the prince, did not kill your father?" This lenity suits our natural ideas of RIGHT, even towards the greatest of all criminals, and even though it prevents so inconsiderable a sufferance. Nay, even the most bigoted priest would naturally, without reflection, approve of it; provided the crime was not heresy or infidelity. For as these crimes hurt himself in his temporal interest and advantages; perhaps he may not be altogether so indulgent to them.

The chief source of moral ideas is the reflection on the interests of human society. Ought these interests, so short, so frivolous, to be guarded by punishments, eternal and infinite? The damnation of one man is an infinitely greater evil in the universe, than the subversion of a thousand millions of kingdoms.

Nature has rendered human infancy peculiarly frail and mortal; as it were on purpose to refute the notion of a probationary state. The half of mankind die before they are rational creatures.

III. The physical arguments from the analogy of nature are strong for the mortality of the soul: and these are really the only philosophical arguments, which ought to be admitted with regard to this question, or indeed any question of fact.

Where any two objects are so closely connected, that all alterations, which we have seen in the one, are attended with proportionable alterations in the other: we ought to conclude, by all rules of analogy, that when there are still greater alterations produced in the former, and it is totally dissolved, there follows a total dissolution of the latter.

Sleep, a very small effect on the body, is attended with a temporary extinction: at least, a great confusion in the soul.

The weakness of the body and that of the mind in infancy are exactly proportioned; their vigour in manhood, their sympathetic disorder in sickness, their common gradual decay in old age. The step further seems unavoidable; their common dissolution in death.

The last symptoms, which the mind discovers, are disorder, weakness, insensibility, and stupidity; the forerunners of its annihilation. The further progress of the same causes, increasing the same effects, totally extinguish it.

Judging by the usual analogy of nature, no form can continue, when transferred to a condition of life very different from the original one, in which it was placed. Trees perish in the water; fishes in the air; animals in the earth. Even so small a difference

as that of climate is often fatal. What reason then to imagine, that an immense alteration, such as is made on the soul by the dissolution of its body, and all its organs of thought and sensation, can be effected without the dissolution of the whole?

Everything is in common betwixt soul and body. The organs of the one are all of them the organs of the other. The existence therefore of the one must be dependent on the other.

The souls of animals are allowed to be mortal: and these bear so near a resemblance to the souls of men, that the analogy from one to the other forms a very strong argument. Their bodies are not more resembling: yet no one rejects the argument drawn from comparative anatomy. The Metempsychosis is therefore the only system of this kind, that philosophy can hearken to.

Nothing in this world is perpetual; Everything, however seemingly firm, is in continual flux and change: The world itself gives symptoms of frailty and dissolution: How contrary to analogy, therefore, to imagine, that one single form, seeming the frailest of any, and subject to the greatest disorders is immortal and indissoluble! What a daring theory is that! How lightly, not to say how rashly, entertained!

How to dispose of the infinite number of posthumous existences ought also to embarrass the religious theory. Every planet, in every solar system, we are at liberty to imagine peopled with intelligent, mortal beings: At least we can fix on no other supposition. For these, then, a new universe must, every generation, be created beyond the bounds of the present universe: or one must have been created at first so prodigiously wide as to admit of this continual influx of beings. Ought such bold suppositions to be received by philosophy: and that merely on the pretext of a bare possibility?

When it is asked, whether Agamemnon, Ther-sites, Hannibal, Nero, and every stupid clown, that ever existed in Italy, Scythia, Bactria, or Guinea, are now alive; can any man think, that a scrutiny of nature will furnish arguments strong enough to answer so strange a question in the affirmative? The want of argument, without revelation, sufficiently establishes the negative. *Quanto facilius, says Pliny, certiusque sibi quemque credere, ac specimen accuritatis antegenitali sumere experimento**.

Our insensibility, before the composition of the body, seems to natural reason a proof of a like state after dissolution.

Were our horrors of annihilation an original passion, not the effect of our general love of happiness, it would rather prove the mortality of the soul: For as nature does nothing in vain, she would never give us a horror against an impossible event. She may give us a horror against an unavoidable event, provided our endeavours, as in the present case, may often remove it to some distance. Death is in the end unavoidable; yet the human species could not be preserved, had not nature inspired us with an aversion towards it. All doctrines are to be suspected which are favoured by our passions. And the hopes and fears which give rise to this doctrine, are very obvious.

'Tis an infinite advantage in every controversy, to defend the negative. If the question be out of the common experienced course of nature, this circumstance is almost, if not altogether, decisive. By what arguments or

analogies can we prove any state of existence, which no one ever saw, and which no way resembles any that ever was seen? Who will repose such trust in any pretended philosophy, as to admit upon its testimony the reality of so marvelous a scene? Some new species of logic is requisite for that purpose; and some new faculties of the mind, that they may enable us to comprehend that logic.

Nothing could set in a fuller light the infinite obligations which mankind have to Divine revelation; since we find, that no other medium could ascertain this great and important truth.

NOTE

* From Pliny's Natural History, Book VII, Section 55: "All men are in the same state from their last day onward as they were before their first day, and neither body nor mind possesses any sensation after death, any more than it did before birth-for the same vanity prolongs itself also into the future and fabricates for itself a life lasting even into the period of death, sometimes bestowing on the soul immortality, sometimes transfiguration, sometimes giving sensation to those below, and worshipping ghosts and making a god of one who has already ceased to be even a man-just as if man's mode of breathing were in any way different from that of the other animals, or as if there were not many animals found of greater longevity, for which nobody prophesies a similar immortality! But what is the substance of the soul taken by itself? What is its material? Where is its thought located? How does it see and hear, and with what does it touch? What use does it get from these senses, so what good can it experience without them? Next, what is the abode, or how great is the multitude of the souls or shadows in all these ages? These are fictions of childish absurdity and belong to a mortality greedy for life unceasing.... What repose are the generations ever to have if the soul retains permanent sensation in the upper world and the ghost in the lower? Assuredly this sweet but credulous fancy ruins nature's chief blessing, death, and doubles the sorrow of one about to die by the thought of sorrow to come hereafter also.... But how much easier and safer for each to trust in himself, and for us to derive our idea of future tranquillity from our experience of it before birth!"

Refutation of the Ontological Argument

From Critique of Pure Reason

- Immanuel Kant

Now [the argument proceeds] 'all reality' includes existence; existence is therefore contained in the concept of a thing that is possible. If, then, this thing is rejected, the internal possibility of the thing is rejected -- which is self-contradictory. My answer is as follows. There is already a contradiction in introducing the concept of existence -- no matter under what title it may be disguised -- into the concept of a thing which we profess to be thinking solely in reference to its possibility. If that be allowed as legitimate, a seeming victory has been won . . . but in actual fact nothing at all is said: the assertion is a mere tautology. We must ask: Is the proposition that this or that thing (which, whatever it may be, is allowed as possible) exists, an analytic or a synthetic proposition? If it is analytic, the assertion of the existence of the thing adds nothing to the thought of the thing; but in that case either the thought, which is in us, is the thing itself, or we have presupposed an existence as belonging to the realm of the possible, and have then, on that pretext, inferred its existence from its internal possibility -- which is nothing but a miserable tautology. The word 'reality', which in the concept of the thing sounds other than the word 'existence' in the concept of the predicate, is of no avail in meeting this objection. For if all positing (no matter what it may be that is posited) is entitled reality, the thing with all its predicates is already posited in the concept of the subject, and is assumed as actual; and in the predicate this is merely repeated. But if, on the other hand, we admit, as every reasonable person must, that all existential propositions are synthetic, how can we profess to maintain that the predicate of existence cannot be rejected without

contradiction? This is a feature which is found only in analytic propositions, and is indeed precisely what constitutes their analytic character.

I should have hoped to put an end to these idle and fruitless disputations in a direct manner, by an accurate determination of the concept of existence, had I not found that the illusion which is caused by the confusion of a logical with a real predicate (that is, with a predicate which determines a thing) is almost beyond correction. Anything we please can be made to serve as a logical predicate; the subject can even be predicated of itself; for logic abstracts from all content. But a determining predicate is a predicate which is added to the concept of the subject and enlarges it. Consequently, it must not be already contained in the concept.

'Being' is obviously not a real predicate; that is, it is not a concept of something which could be added to the concept of a thing. It is merely the positing of a thing, or of certain determinations, as existing in themselves. Logically, it is merely the copula of a judgment. The proposition, 'God is omnipotent', contains two concepts, each of which has its object -- God and omnipotence. The small word 'is' adds no new predicate, but only serves to posit the predicate in its relation to the subject. If, now, we take the subject (God) with all its predicates (among which is omnipotence), and say 'God is', or 'There is a God', we attach no new predicate to the concept of God, but only posit the subject in itself with all its predicates, and indeed posit it as being an object that stands in relation to my concept. The content of both must be one and the same; nothing can have been added to the concept, which expresses merely what is possible, by my thinking its object (through the expression 'it is') as given absolutely. Otherwise stated, the real contains no more than the merely possible. A hundred real thalers do not contain the least coin more than a hundred possible thalers. For as the latter signify the concept, and the former the object and the positing of the object, should the former contain more than the latter, my concept would not, in that case, express the whole object, and would not therefore be an adequate concept of it. My financial position is, however, affected very differently by a hundred real thalers than it is by the mere concept of them (that is, of their possibility). For the object, as it actually exists, is not analytically contained in my concept, but is added to my concept (which is a determination of my state) synthetically; and yet the conceived hundred thalers are not themselves in the least increased through thus acquiring existence outside my concept...

When, therefore, I think a being as the supreme reality, without any defect, the question still remains whether it exists or not. For though, in my concept, nothing may be lacking of the possible real content of a thing in general, something is still lacking in its relation to my whole state of thought, namely, [in so far as I am unable to assert] that knowledge of this object is also possible a posteriori. And here we find the source of our present difficulty. Were we dealing with an object of the senses, we could not confound the existence of the thing with the mere concept of it. For through the concept the object is thought only as conforming to the universal conditions of possible empirical knowledge in general, whereas through its existence it is thought as belonging to the context of experience as a whole. In being thus connected with the content of experience as a whole, the concept of the object is not, however, in the least enlarged; all that has happened is that our thought has thereby obtained an additional possible perception. It is not, therefore, surprising that, if we attempt to think existence through the pure category alone, we cannot specify a single mark distinguishing it from mere possibility. . . .

The attempt to establish the existence of a supreme being by means of the famous ontological argument of Descartes is therefore merely so much labour and effort lost; we can no more extend our stock of [theoretical] insight by mere ideas, than a merchant can better his position by adding a few noughts to his cash account.

Pascal's Wager

-Blaise Pascal

We know neither the existence nor the nature of God, because He has neither extension nor limits.

But by faith we know His existence; in glory we shall know His nature. Now, I have already shown that we may well know the existence of a thing, without knowing its nature.

Let us now speak according to natural lights. If there is a God, He is infinitely incomprehensible, since, having neither parts nor limits, He has no affinity to us. We are then incapable of knowing either what He is or if He is. This being so, who will dare to undertake the decision of the question? Not we, who have no affinity to Him. Who then will blame Christians for not being able to give a reason for their belief since they profess a religion for which they cannot give a reason? They declare, in expounding it to the world, that it is a foolishness, stultitiam; and then you Complain that they do not prove it! If they proved it, they would not keep their words; it is in lacking proofs, that they are not lacking in sense. "Yes, but although this excuses those who offer it as such, and take away from them the blame of putting it forward without reason, it does not excuse those who receive it." Let us then examine this point, and say, "God is, or He is not" But to which side shall we incline? Reason can decide nothing here. There is an infinite chaos which separates us. A game is being played at the extremity of this infinite distance where heads or tails will turn up. What will you wager? According to reason, you can do neither the one thing nor the other; according to reason, you can defend neither of the propositions. Do not then reprove for error those who have made a choice; for you know nothing about it. "No, but I blame them for having made, not this choice, but a choice; for again both he who chooses heads and he who chooses tails are equally at fault, they are both in the wrong. The true course is not to wager at all."

Yes; but you must wager. It is not optional. You are embarked. Which will you choose then; Let us see. Since you must choose, let us see which interests you least. You have two things to lose, the true and the good; and two things to stake, your reason and your will, your knowledge and your happiness; and your nature has two things to shun, error and misery. Your reason is no more shocked in choosing one rather than the other, since you must of necessity choose. This is one point settled. But your happiness? Let us weigh the gain and the loss in wagering that God is. Let us estimate these two chances. If you gain, you gain all; if you lose, you lose nothing. Wager them without hesitation that He is. - "That is very fine. Yes, I must wager; but I may perhaps wager too much." - Let us see. Since there is an equal risk of gain and of loss, if you had only to gain two lives, instead of one, you might still wager. But if there were three lives to gain, you would have to play (since you are under the necessity of playing), and you would be imprudent, when you are forced to play, not to chance your life to gain three at a game where there is an equal risk of loss and gain. But there is an eternity of life and happiness. And this being so, if there were an infinity of chances, of which one only would be for you, you would still be right in wagering one to win two, and you would act stupidly, being obliged to play, by refusing to stake one life against three at a game in which out of an infinity of chances there is one for you, if there were an infinity of an infinitely happy life to gain. But there is here an infinity of an infinitely happy life to gain, a chance of gain against a finite number of chances of loss, and what you stake is finite. It is all divided; wherever the infinite is and there is not an infinity of chances of loss against that of gain, there is no time to hesitate, you must give all. And thus, when one is forced to play, he must renounce reason to preserve his life, rather than risk it for infinite gain, as likely to happen as the loss of nothingness.

For it is no use to say it is uncertain if we will gain, and it is certain that we risk, and that the infinite distance between the certainty of what is staked and the uncertainty of what will be gained, equals the finite good which is certainly staked against the uncertain infinite. It is not so, as every player stakes a certainty to gain an uncertainty, and yet he stakes a finite certainty to gain a finite uncertainty, without transgressing against reason. There is not an infinite distance between the certainty staked and the uncertainty of the gain; that is untrue. In

truth, there is an infinity between the certainty of gain and the certainty of loss. But the uncertainty of the gain is proportioned to the certainty of the stake according to the proportion of the chances of gain and loss. Hence it comes that, if there are as many risks on one side as on the other, the course is to play even; and then the certainty of the stake is equal to the uncertainty of the gain, so far is it from the fact that there is an infinite distance between them. And so our proposition is of infinite force, when there is the finite to stake in a game were there are equal risks of gain and of loss, and the infinite to gain. This is demonstrable; and if men are capable of any truths, this is one. "I confess it, I admit it. But still is there no means of seeing the faces of the cards?" - Yes, Scripture and the rest, &c.- "Yes, but I have my hands tied and my mouth closed; I am forced to wager, and am not free. I am not released, and am so made that I cannot believe. What then would you have me do?" "True. But at least learn your inability to believe, since reason brings you to this, and you cannot believe. Endeavor then to convince yourself, not by increase of proofs of God, but by the abatement of your passions. You would like to attain faith, and do not know the way; you would like to cure yourself of unbelief, and ask the remedy for it. Learn of those who have been bound like you, and who now stake all their possessions. These are people who know the way which you would follow, and who are cured of an ill of which you would be cured. Follow the way by which they began; by acting as if they believe, taking the holy water, having masses said, &c. Even this will naturally make you believe, and deaden your acuteness. - "But this is what I am afraid of" - And why? What have you to lose? But to show you that this leads you there, it is this which will lessen the passions, which are your stumbling-blocks.

Part Three: Epistemology & Metaphysics

The Lovers of Opinion, The Lovers of Wisdom

From *The Republic*

-Plato

GL.: Who then are the true philosophers?

soc.: Those who are lovers of the vision of truth.

GL.: That is also good; but I should like to know what you mean?

soc.: To another I might have a difficulty in explaining; but I am sure that you will admit a proposition which I am about to make.

GL.: What is the proposition?

soc.: That since beauty is the opposite of ugliness, they are two?

GL.: Certainly.

soc.: And inasmuch as they are two, each of them is one?

GL.: True again.

soc.: And of just and unjust, good and evil, and of every other class, the same remark holds; taken singly, each of them is one; but from the various combinations of them with actions and things and with one another, they are seen in all sorts of lights and appear many?

GL.: Very true.

soc.: And this is the distinction which I draw between the sight-loving, art-loving, practical class and those of whom I am speaking, and who are alone worthy of the name of philosophers.

GL.: How do you distinguish them?

soc.: The lovers of sounds and sights are, as I conceive, fond of tones and colors and forms and all the artificial products that are made out of them, but their mind is incapable of seeing or loving absolute beauty.

GL.: True.

soc.: Few are they who are able to attain to the sight of this. And the man who believes in beautiful things but does not believe in absolute beauty, nor is able to follow if one lead him to an understanding of it-do you think

that his life is real or a dream? Is it not a dream? For whether a man be asleep or awake is it not dream-like to mistake the image for the real thing?

GL.: I should certainly say that such an one was dreaming.

soc.: But take the case of the other, who recognizes the existence of absolute beauty and is able to distinguish the idea from the objects which participate in the idea, neither putting the objects in the place of the idea nor the idea in the place of the objects-is he a dreamer, or is he awake?

GL.: He is wide awake.

soc.: And may we not say that the mind of the one who knows has knowledge and that the mind of the other, who opines only, has opinion?

GL.: Certainly.

soc.: But suppose that the latter should quarrel with us and dispute our statement, can we administer any soothing cordial or advice to him, without revealing to him that there is sad disorder in his wit?

GL.: We must certainly offer him some good advice.

soc.: Come, then, and let us think of something to say to him. Shall we begin by assuring him that he is welcome to any knowledge which he may have, and that we rejoice at his having it? But we should like to ask him a question: Does he who has knowledge know something or nothing?

GL.: I answer that he knows something.

soc.: Something that is or is not?*

GL.: Something that is; for how can that which is not ever be known?

soc.: And are we assured, after looking at the matter from many points of view, that absolute being is or may be absolutely known, but that the utterly non-existent is utterly unknown?

GL.: Nothing can be more certain.

soc.: Good. But if there be anything which is of such a nature as to be and not to be, that will have a place intermediate between pure being and the absolute negation of being?

GL.: Yes, between them.

soc.: And, as knowledge corresponds to being and ignorance of necessity to not-being, we must find something intermediate between ignorance and knowledge for that which lies between them, if there is such a thing.

GL.: Yes.

soc.: Would you admit the existence of opinion?

GL.: No question.

soc.: Is opinion the same faculty as knowledge or is it a different faculty?

GL.: A different faculty.

SOC.: Then opinion and knowledge have to do with different kinds of matter corresponding to this difference of faculties?

GL.: Yes.

soc.: And knowledge is relative to being and knows being. But before I proceed further I will make a division. I will begin by placing faculties in a class by themselves: they are powers in us, and in all other things, by which we do as we do. Sight and hearing, for example, I should call faculties. Have I clearly explained the class which I mean?

GL.: Yes, I quite understand.

soc.: Then let me tell you my view about them. I do not see the faculties, and therefore the distinctions of shape, color, and the like, which enable me to discern the differences of some things, do not apply to them. In speaking of a faculty I think only of its sphere and its result; and that which has the same sphere and the same result I call the same faculty, but that which has another sphere and another result I call different. Would that be your way of speaking?

GL.: Yes.

soc.: Would you say that knowledge is a faculty, or in what class would you place it?

GL.: Certainly knowledge is a faculty, and the mightiest of all faculties.

soc.: And is opinion also a faculty?

GL.: Certainly; for opinion is that with which we are able to form an opinion.

soc.: And yet you were acknowledging a little while ago that knowledge is not the same as opinion?

GL.: Why, yes; how can any reasonable being ever identify that which is infallible with that which errs?

soc.: An excellent answer, proving that we are quite conscious of a distinction between them.

GL.: Yes.

soc.: Then knowledge and opinion having distinct powers have also distinct spheres or subject matters?

GL.: That is certain.

soc.: Being is the sphere or subject-matter of knowledge, and knowledge is to know the nature of being?

GL.: Yes.

soc.: And opinion is to have an opinion?

GL.: Yes.

soc.: And do we know what we opine? or is the subject-matter of opinion the same as the subject matter of knowledge?

GL.: Nay, that has been already disproven; if difference in faculty implies difference in the sphere or subject-matter, and if, as we were saying, opinion and knowledge are distinct faculties, then the sphere of knowledge and of opinion can not be the same.

soc.: Then if being is the subject-matter of knowledge, something else must be the subject matter of opinion?

GL.: Yes, something else.

soc.: Well then, is not-being the subject-matter of opinion? or, rather, how can there be an opinion at all about not-being? Reflect: when a man has an opinion, has he not an opinion about something? Can he have an opinion which is an opinion about nothing?

GL.: Impossible.

soc.: He who has an opinion has an opinion about some one thing?

GL.: Yes.

soc.: And not-being is not one thing but, properly speaking, nothing?

GL.: True.

soc.: Of not-being, ignorance was assumed to be the necessary correlative; of being, knowledge?

GL.: True.

soc.: Then opinion is not concerned either with being or with not-being?

GL.: Not with either.

soc.: And can therefore neither be ignorance nor knowledge?

GL.: That seems to be true.

soc.: But is opinion to be sought without and beyond either of them, in a greater clearness than knowledge, or in a greater darkness than ignorance?

GL.: In neither.

soc.: Then I suppose that opinion appears to you to be darker than knowledge, but lighter than ignorance?

GL.: Both; and in no small degree.

soc.: And also to be within and between them?

GL.: Yes.

soc.: Then you would infer that opinion is intermediate?

GL.: No question.

soc.: But were we not saying before, that if anything appeared to be a sort which is and is not at the same time, that sort of thing would appear also to be in the interval between pure being and absolute not-being; and that the corresponding faculty is neither knowledge nor ignorance, but will be found in the interval between them?

GL.: True.

soc.: And in that interval there has now been discovered something which we call opinion?

GL.: There has.

soc.: Then what remains to be discovered is the object which partakes equally of the nature of being and not-being, and can not rightly be termed either, pure and simple; this unknown term, when discovered, we may truly call the subject of opinion, and assign each to their proper faculty,-the extremes to the faculties of the extremes and the mean to the faculty of the mean.

GL.: True.

soc.: This being premised, I would ask the gentleman who is of opinion that there is no absolute or unchangeable idea of beauty-in whose opinion the beautiful is the manifold-he, I say, your lover of beautiful sights, who can not bear to be told that the beautiful is one, and the just is one, or that anything is one-to him I would appeal, saying, Will you be so very kind, sit, as to tell us whether, of all these beautiful things, there is one which will not be found ugly; or of the just, which will not be found unjust; or of the holy, which will not also be unholy?

GL.: No; the beautiful will in some point of view be found ugly; and the same is true of the rest.

soc.: And may not the many which are doubles be also halves?-doubles, that is, of one thing, and halves of another?

GL.: Quite true.

soc.: And things great and small, heavy and light,

as they are termed, will not be denoted by these any more than by the opposite names?

GL.: True; both these and the opposite names will always attach to all of them.

soc.: And can any one of those many things which are called by particular names be said to be this rather than not to be this?

GL.: They are like the punning riddles which are asked at feasts or the children's puzzle about the eunuch aiming at the bat, with what he hit him, as they say in the puzzle, and upon what the bat was sitting. The individual objects of which I am speaking are also a riddle, and have a double sense: nor can you fix them in your mind, either as being or not-being, or both, or neither.

soc.: Then what will you do with them? Can they have a better place than between being and not-being? For they are clearly not in greater darkness or negation than not-being, or more full of light and existence than being.

GL.: That is quite true.

soc.: Thus then we seem to have discovered that the many ideas which the multitude entertain about the beautiful and about all other things are tossed about in some region which is half-way between pure being and pure not-being?

GL.: We have.

soc.: Yes; and we had before agreed that anything of this kind which we might find was to be described as matter of opinion, and not as matter of knowledge; being the intermediate flux which is caught and detained by the intermediate faculty.

GL.: Quite true.

soc.: Then those who see the many beautiful, and who yet neither see absolute beauty, nor can follow any guide who points the way thither; who see the many just, and not absolute justice, and the like-such persons may be said to have opinion but not knowledge?

GL.: That is certain.

soc.: But those who see the absolute and eternal and immutable may be said to know, and not to have opinion only?

GL.: Neither can that be denied.

soc.: The one love and embrace the subjects of knowledge, the other those of opinion? The latter are the same, as I dare say you will remember, who listened to sweet sounds and gazed upon fair colors, but would not tolerate the existence of absolute beauty.

GL.: Yes, I remember.

soc.: Shall we then be guilty of any impropriety in calling them lovers of opinion rather than lovers of wisdom, and will they be very angry with us for thus describing them?

GL.: I shall tell them not to be angry; no man should be angry at what is true.

soc.: But those who love the truth in each thing are to be called lovers of wisdom and not lovers of opinion.

GL.: Assuredly.

The Objects of Knowledge

From *The Republic*

-Plato

Soc.: ... I must first come to an understanding with you, and remind you of what I have mentioned in the course of this discussion, and at many other times.

GL.: What?

soc.: The old story, that there is a many beautiful and a many good, and so of other things which we describe and define; to all of them the term "many" is applied.

GL.: True.

soc.: And there is an absolute beauty and an absolute good, and of other things to which the term "many" is applied there is an absolute; for they may be brought under a single idea, which is called the essence of each.

GL.: Very true.

soc.: The many, as we say, are seen but not known, and the ideas are known but not seen.

GL.: Exactly.

soc.: And what is the organ with which we see the visible things?

GL.: The sight.

soc.: And with the hearing, we hear, and with the other senses perceive the other objects of sense?

GL.: True.

soc.: But have you noticed that sight is by far the most costly and complex piece of workmanship which the artificer of the senses ever contrived?

GL.: No, I never have.

soc.: Then reflect: has the ear or voice need of any third or additional nature in order that the one may be able to hear and the other to be heard?

GL.: Nothing of the sort.

soc.: No, indeed, and the same is true of most, if not all, the other senses-you would not say that any of them requires such an addition?

GL.: Certainly not.

soc.: But you see that without the addition of some other nature there is no seeing or being seen?

GL.: How do you mean?

soc.: Sight being, as I conceive, in the eyes, and he who has eyes wanting to see; color being also present in them, still unless there be a third nature specially adapted to the purpose, the owner of the eyes will see nothing and the colors will be invisible.

GL.: Of what nature are you speaking?

soc.: Of that which you term light.

GL.: True.

soc.: Noble, then, is the bond which links together sight and visibility, and great beyond other bonds by no small difference of nature; for light is their bond, and light is no ignoble thing?

GL.: Nay, the reverse of ignoble.

soc.: And which of the gods in heaven would you say was the lord of this element? Whose is that light which makes the eye to see perfectly and the visible to appear?

GL.: You mean the sun, as you and all mankind say.

soc.: May not the relation of sight to this deity be described as follows?

GL.: How?

soc.: Neither sight nor the eye in which sight resides is the sun?

GL.: L.: No.

soc.: Yet of all the organs of sense the eye is the most like the sun?

GL.: By far the most like.

soc.: And the power which the eye possesses is a sort of effluence which is dispensed from the sun?

GL.: Exactly.

soc.: Then the sun is not sight, but the author of sight who is recognized by sight?

GL.: True.

soc.: And this is he whom I call the child of the good, whom the good begat in his own likeness, to be in the visible world, in relation to sight and the things of sight, what the good is in the intellectual world in relation to mind and the things of mind.

GL.: Will you be a little more explicit?

soc.: Why, you know, that the eyes, when a person directs them towards objects on which the light of day is no longer shining, but the moon and stars only, see dimly and are nearly blind; they seem to have no clearness of vision in them?

GL.: Very true.

soc.: But when they are directed towards objects on which the sun shines, they see clearly and there is sight in them?

GL.: Certainly.

soc.: And the soul is like the eye: when resting upon that on which truth and being shine, the soul perceives and understands, and is radiant with intelligence; but when turned towards the twilight of becoming and perishing, then she has opinion only, and goes blinking about, and is first of one opinion and then of another, and seems to have no intelligence?

GL.: just so.

soc.: Now, that which imparts truth to the known and the power of knowing to the knower is what I would have you term the idea of good, and this you will deem to be the cause of science, and of truth in so far as the latter

becomes the subject of knowledge; beautiful too, as are both truth and knowledge, you will be right in esteeming this other nature as more beautiful than

either; and, as in the previous instance, light and sight may be truly said to be like the sun, and yet not to be the sun, so in this other sphere, science and truth may be deemed to be like the good, but not the good; the good has a place of honor yet higher.

GL.: What a wonder of beauty that must be, which is the author of science and truth, and yet surpasses them in beauty; for you surely can not mean to say that pleasure is the good?

soc.: God forbid; but may I ask you to consider the image in another point of view?

GL.: In what point of view?

soc.: You would say, would you not, that the sun is not only the author of visibility in all visible things, but of generation and nourishment and growth, though he himself is not generation?

GL.: Certainly.

soc.: In like manner the good may be said to be not only the author of knowledge to all things known, but of their being and essence, and yet the good is not essence, but far exceeds essence in dignity and power.

GL.: (With a ludicrous earnestness) By the light of heaven, how amazing!

The Four Levels of Knowledge: The Line

soc.: You have to imagine that there are two ruling powers, and that one of them, the good, is set over the intellectual world, the other, the Sun, over the visible world. May I suppose that you have this distinction of the visible and the intelligible fixed in your mind?

GL.: I have.

soc.: Now take a line which has been cut into two unequal parts, and divide each of them again in the same proportion, and suppose the two main divisions to answer, one to the visible and the other to the intelligible, and then compare the subdivisions in respect to their clearness and want of clearness, and you will find that the first section (A) in the sphere of the visible consists of images. And by images I mean, in the first place, shadows, and in the second place, reflections in water and in solid, smooth and polished bodies and the like. Do you understand?

GL.: Yes, I understand.

soc.: Imagine now, the other section (B), of which this is only the resemblance, to include the animals which we see, and everything that grows or is made. Would you not admit that both the sections of this division have

different degrees of truth, and that the copy is to the original as the sphere of opinion is to the sphere of knowledge?

GL.: Most undoubtedly.

soc.: Next we proceed to consider the manner in which the sphere of the intellectual is to be divided. There are two subdivisions, in the lower (C) of which the soul uses the figures given by the former division as images; the inquiry can only be hypothetical and instead of going upwards to a principle descends to the other end; in the higher of the two (D), the soul passes out of hypotheses, and goes up to a principle which is above hypotheses, making no use of images as in the former case, but proceeding only in and through the ideas themselves.

GL.: I do not quite understand your meaning.

soc.: Then I will try again; you will understand me better when I have made some preliminary remarks. [Regarding C], you are aware that students of geometry, arithmetic, and the kindred sciences assume the odd and the even and the figures and three kinds of angles and the like in their several branches of science; these are their hypotheses, which they and everybody are supposed to know, and therefore they do not deign to give any account of them either to themselves or others; but they begin with them, and go on until they arrive at last, and in a consistent manner, at their conclusion.

GL.: Yes, I know.

soc.: And do you not know also that although they make use of the visible forms and reason about them, they are thinking not of these, but of the ideals which they resemble; not of the figures which they draw, but of the absolute square and the absolute diameter, and so on. The forms which they draw or make are actual things, which have shadows and reflections in water of their own, but now they serve in turn as images, but the soul is really seeking to behold the things themselves, which can only be seen with the eye of the mind.

GL.: That is true.

Soc.: And of this I spoke as the intelligible (C), although in the search after it the soul is compelled to use hypotheses; not ascending to a first principle, because she is unable to rise above the region of hypothesis, but employing the objects of which the shadows below are resemblances in their turn as images, they having in relation to the shadows and reflections of them a greater distinctness, and therefore a higher value.

GL.: I understand, that you are speaking of the province of geometry and the sister arts.

SOC.: When I speak of the other division of the intelligible (D), you will understand me to speak of that other sort of knowledge which reason herself attains by the power of dialectic, using the hypotheses not as first principles, but only as hypotheses that is to say, as steps and points of departure into a world which is above hypotheses, in order that she may soar beyond them to the first principle of the whole; and clinging to this and

then to that which depends on this, by successive steps she descends again without the aid of any sensible object, from ideas, through ideas, and in ideas she ends.

GL.: I understand you. Not perfectly, for you seem to me to be describing a task which is really tremendous; but at any rate, I understand you to say that knowledge and being, which the science of dialectic contemplates, are clearer than the notions of the arts, as they are termed, which proceed from hypotheses only. These are also contemplated by the understanding, and not by the senses: yet, because they start from hypotheses and do not ascend to a principle, those who contemplate them appear to you not to exercise the higher reason upon them, although when a first principle is added to them they are cognizable by the higher reason. And the habit which is concerned with geometry and the cognate sciences I suppose that you would term understanding and not reason, as being intermediate between opinion and reason.

soc.: You have quite conceived my meaning; and now, corresponding to these four divisions, let there be four faculties in the soul-Reason answering to the highest (D), Understanding to the second (C), Belief (or conviction) to the third (B), and Imaging (or perception of shadows) to the last (A). And let us suppose that the several faculties have clearness in the same degree that their objects have truth.

GL.: I understand and give my assent, and accept this arrangement of the matter.

The Allegory of the Cave

From *The Republic*

-Plato

soc.: And now, let me show in a figure how far our nature is enlightened or unenlightened:

Behold! human beings living in an underground den, which has a mouth open towards the light and reaching all along the den; here they have been from their childhood, and have their legs and necks chained so that they can not move, and can only see before them, being prevented by the chains from turning round their heads. Above and behind them a fire is blazing at a distance, and between the fire and the prisoners there is a raised way; and you will see, if you look, a low wall built along the way, like the screen which marionette players have in front of them, over which they show the puppets.

GL.: I see.

soc.: And do you see men passing along the wall carrying all sorts of vessels, and statues and figures of animals made of wood and stone and various materials, which appear over the wall? Some of them are talking, others silent.

GL.: You have shown me a strange image, and they are strange prisoners.

soc.: Like ourselves; and they see only their own shadows, or the shadows of one another, which the fire throws on the opposite wall of the cave?

GL.: True; how could they see anything but the shadows if they were never allowed to move their heads?

soc.: And of the objects which are being carried in like manner they would only see the shadows?

GL.: Yes.

soc.: And if they were able to converse with one another, would they not suppose that they were naming what was actually before them?

GL.: Very true.

soc.: And suppose further that the prison had an echo which came from the other side, would they not be sure to fancy when one of the passers-by spoke that the voice which they heard came from the passing shadow?

GL.: No question.

soc.: To them, the truth would be literally nothing but the shadows of the images.

GL.: That is certain.

soc.: And now look again, and see what will naturally follow if the prisoners are released and disabused of their error. At first, when any of them is liberated and compelled suddenly to stand up and turn his neck round and walk and look towards the light, he will suffer sharp pains; the glare will distress him, and he will be unable to see the realities of which in his former state he had seen the shadows; and then conceive some one saying to him, that what he saw before was an illusion, but that now, when he is approaching nearer to being and his eye is turned towards more real existence, he has a clearer vision-what will be his reply? And you may further imagine that his instructor is pointing to the objects as they pass and requiring him to name them,--will he not be perplexed? Will he not fancy that the shadows which he formerly saw are truer than the objects which are now shown to him?

GL.: Far truer.

soc.: And if he is compelled to look straight at the light, will he not have a pain in his eyes which will make him turn away to take refuge in the objects of vision which he can see, and which he will conceive to be in reality clearer than the things which are now being shown to him?

GL.: True.

soc.: And suppose once more, that he is reluctantly dragged up a steep and rugged ascent, and held fast until he is forced into the presence of the sun himself, is he not likely to be pained and irritated? When he approaches the light his eyes will be dazzled, and he will not be able to see anything at all of what are now called realities.

soc.: He will require to grow accustomed to the sight of the upper world. And first he will see the shadows best, next the reflections of men and other objects in the water, and then the objects themselves; then he will gaze upon the light of the moon and the stars and the spangled heaven; and he will see the sky and the stars by night better than the sun or the light of the sun by day?

GL.: Certainly.

soc.: Last of all he will be able to see the sun, and not mere reflections of him in the water, but he will see him in his own proper place, and not in another; and he will contemplate him as he is.

GL.: Certainly.

soc.: He will then proceed to argue that this is he who gives the season and the years, and is the guardian of all that is in the visible world, and in a certain way the cause of all things which he and his fellows have been accustomed to behold?

GL.: Clearly, he would first see the sun and then reason about him.

soc.: And when he remembered his old habitation, and the wisdom of the den and his fellowprisoners, do you not suppose that he would felicitate himself on the change, and pity them?

GL.: Certainly, he would.

soc.: And if they were in the habit of conferring honors among themselves on those who were quickest to observe the passing shadows and to remark which of them went before, and which followed after, and which were together; and who were therefore best able to draw conclusions as to the future, do you think that he would care for such honors and glories, or envy the possessors of them? Would he not say with Homer, *Better to be the poor servant of a poor master*, and to endure anything, rather than think as they do and live after their manner?

GL.: Yes, I think that he would rather suffer anything than entertain these false notions and live in this miserable manner.

soc.: Imagine once more, such an one coming suddenly out of the sun to be replaced in his old situation; would he not be certain to have his eyes full of darkness?

GL.: To be sure.

soc.: And if there were a contest, and he had to compete in measuring the shadows with the prisoners who had never moved out of the den, while his sight was still weak, and before his eyes had become steady (and the time

which would be needed to acquire this new habit of sight might be very considerable), would he not be ridiculous? Men would say of him that up he went and down he came without his eyes; and that it was better not even to think of ascending; and if any one tried to loose another and lead him up to the light, let them only catch the offender, and they would put him to death.

GL.: No question.

soc.: This entire allegory you may now append, dear Glaucon, to the previous argument; the prison-house is the world of sight, the light of the fire is the sun, and you will not misapprehend me if you interpret the journey upwards to be the ascent of the soul into the intellectual world according to my poor belief, which, at your desire, I have expressed—whether rightly or wrongly God knows. But, whether true or false, my opinion is that in the world of knowledge the idea of good appears last of all, and is seen only with an effort; and, when seen, is also inferred to be the universal author of all things beautiful and right, parent of light and of the lord of light in this visible world, and the immediate source of reason and truth in the intellectual; and that this is the power upon which he who would act rationally either in public or private life must have his eye fixed.

GL.: I agree, as far as I am able to understand you.

SOC.: Moreover, you must not wonder that those who attain to this beatific vision are unwilling to descend to human affairs; for their souls are ever hastening into the upper world where they desire to dwell; which desire of theirs is very natural, if our allegory may be trusted.

GL.: Yes, very natural.

soc.: And is there anything surprising in one who passes from divine contemplations to the evil state of man, misbehaving himself in a ridiculous manner; if, while his eyes are blinking and before he has become accustomed to the surrounding darkness, he is compelled to fight in courts of law, or in other places, about the images or the shadows of images of justice, and is endeavoring to meet the conceptions of those who have never yet seen absolute justice?

GL.: Anything but surprising.

soc.: Any one who has common sense will remember that the bewilderments of the eyes are of two kinds, and arise from the two causes, either from coming out of the light or from going into the light, which is true of the mind's eye, quite as much as of the bodily eye; and he who remembers

this when he sees any one whose vision is perplexed and weak, will not be too ready to laugh; he will first ask whether that soul of man has come out of the brighter life, and is unable to see because unaccustomed to the dark, or having turned from darkness to the day is dazzled by excess of light. And he will count the one happy in his condition and state of being, and he will pity the other; or, if he have a mind to laugh at the soul which comes from below into the light, there will be more reason in this than in the laugh which greets him who returns from above out of the light into the den.

GL.: That is a very just distinction.

soc.: But then, if I am right, certain professors of education must be wrong when they say that they can put a knowledge into the soul which was not there before, like sight into blind eyes.

GL.: They undoubtedly say this.

soc.: Whereas, our argument shows that the power and capacity of learning exists in the soul already; and that just as the eye was unable to turn from darkness to light without the whole body, so too the instrument of knowledge can only by the movement of the whole soul be turned from the world of becoming into that of being, and learn by degrees to endure the sight of being, and of the brightest and best of being, or in other words, of the good.

GL.: Very true.

soc.: And must there not be some art which will effect conversion in the easiest and quickest manner; not implanting the faculty of sight, for that exists already, but has been turned in the wrong direction, and is looking away from the truth?

GL.: Yes, such an art may be presumed.

soc.: And whereas the other so-called virtues of the soul seem to be akin to bodily qualities, for even when they are not originally innate they can be implanted later by habit and exercise, the virtue of wisdom more than anything else contains a divine element which always remains, and by this conversion is rendered useful and profitable; or, on the other hand, hurtful and useless. Did you never observe the narrow intelligence flashing from the keen eye of a clever rogue-how eager he is, how clearly his paltry soul sees the way to his end; he is the reverse of blind, but his keen eye-sight is forced into the service of evil, and he is mischievous in proportion to his cleverness?.

Meditations on First Philosophy

-Rene Descartes

First Meditation

Of the Things Which May Be Brought Within the Sphere of the Doubtful

It is now some years since I detected how many were the false beliefs that I had from my earliest youth admitted as true, and how doubtful was everything I had since constructed on this basis; and from that time I was convinced that I must once for all seriously undertake to rid myself of all the opinions which I had formerly accepted, and commence to build anew from the foundation, if I wanted to establish any firm and permanent structure in the sciences. But as this enterprise appeared to be a very great one, I waited until I had attained an age so mature that I could not hope that at any later date I should be better fitted to execute my design. This reason caused me to delay so long that I should feel that I was doing wrong were I to occupy in deliberation the time that yet remains to me for action. Today, then, since very opportunely for the plan I have in view I have delivered my mind from

every care [and am happily agitated by no passions] and since I have procured for myself an assured leisure in a peaceable retirement, I shall at last seriously and freely address myself to the general upheaval of all my former opinions.

Now for this object it is not necessary that I should show that aft of these are False-I shall perhaps never arrive at this end. But inasmuch as reason already persuades me that I ought no less carefully to withhold my assent from matters which are not entirely certain and indubitable than from those which appear to me manifestly to be false, if I am able to find in each one some reason to doubt, this will suffice to justify my rejecting the whole. And for that end it will not be requisite that I should examine each in particular, which would be an endless undertaking; for owing to the fact that the destruction of the foundations of necessity brings with it the downfall of the rest of the edifice, I shall only in the first place attack those principles upon which all my former opinions rested.

All that up to the present time I have accepted as most true and certain I have learned either from the senses or through the senses; but it is sometimes proved to me that these senses are deceptive, and it is wiser not to trust entirely to any thing by which we have once been deceived.

But it may be that although the senses sometimes deceive us concerning things which are hardly perceptible, or very far away, there are yet many others to be met with as to which we cannot reasonably have any doubt, although we recognize them by their means. For example, there is the fact that I am here, seated by the fire, attired in a dressing gown, having this paper in my hands and other similar matters. And how could I deny that these hands and this body are mine, were it not perhaps that I compare myself to certain persons, devoid of sense, whose cerebella are so troubled and clouded by the violent vapours of black bile, that they constantly assure us that they think they are kings when they are really quite poor, or that they are clothed in purple when they are really without covering, or who imagine that they have an earthenware head or are nothing but pumpkins or are made of glass. But they are mad, and I should not be any the less insane were I to follow examples so extravagant.

At the same time I must remember that I am a man, and that consequently I am in the habit of sleeping, and in my dreams representing to myself the same things or sometimes even less probable things, than do those who are insane in their waking moments. How often has it happened to me that in the night I dreamt that I found myself in this particular place, that I was dressed and seated near the fire, whilst in reality I was lying undressed in bed! At this moment it does indeed seem to me that it is with eyes awake that I am looking at this paper; that this head which I move is not asleep, that it is deliberately and of set purpose that I extend my hand and perceive it; what happens in sleep does not appear so clear nor so distinct as does all this. But in thinking over this I remind myself that on many occasions I have in sleep been deceived by similar illusions, and in dwelling carefully on this reflection I see so manifestly that there are no certain indications by which we may clearly distinguish wakefulness from sleep that I am lost in astonishment. And my astonishment is such that it is almost capable of persuading me that I now dream.

Now let us assume that we are asleep and that all these particulars, e.g. that we open our eyes, shake our head, extend our hands, and so on, are but false delusions; and let us reflect that possibly neither our hands nor our whole body are such as they appear to us to be. At the same time we must at least confess that the things which are represented to us in sleep are like painted representations which can only have been formed as the counterparts of something real and true, and that in this way those general things at least, i.e. eyes, a head, hands, and a whole body, are not imaginary things, but things really existent. For, as a matter of fact, painters, even when they study with the greatest skill to represent sirens and satyrs by forms the most strange and extraordinary, cannot give them natures which are entirely new, but merely make a certain medley of the members of different animals; or if their imagination is extravagant enough to invent something so novel that nothing similar has ever

before been seen, and that then their work represents a thing purely fictitious and absolutely false, it is certain all the same that the colours of which this is composed are necessarily real. And for the same reason, although these general things, to wit, [a body], eyes, a head, hands, and such like, may be imaginary, we are bound at the same time to confess that there are at least some other objects yet more simple and more universal, which are real and true; and of these just in the same way as with certain real colours, all these images of things which dwell in our thoughts, whether true and real or false and fantastic, are formed.

To such a class of things pertains corporeal nature in general, and its extension, the figure of extended things, their quantity or magnitude and number, as also the place in which they are, the time which measures their duration, and so on.

That is possibly why our reasoning is not unjust when we conclude from this that Physics, Astronomy, Medicine and all other sciences which have as their end the consideration of composite things, are very dubious and uncertain; but that Arithmetic, Geometry and other sciences of that kind which only treat of things that are very simple and very general, without taking great trouble to ascertain whether they are actually existent or not, contain some measure of certainty and an element of the indubitable. For whether I am awake or asleep, two and three together always form five, and the square can never have more than four sides, and it does not seem possible that truths so clear and apparent can be suspected of any falsity [or uncertainty].

Nevertheless I have long had fixed in my mind the belief that an all-powerful God existed by whom I have been created such as I am. But how do I know that He has not brought it to pass that there is no earth, no heaven, no extended body, no magnitude, no place, and that nevertheless [I possess the perceptions of all these things and that] they seem to me to exist just exactly as I now see them? And, besides, as I sometimes imagine that others deceive themselves in the things which they think they know best, how do I know that I am not deceived every time that I add two and three, or count the sides of a square, or judge of things yet simpler, if anything simpler can be imagined? But possibly God has not desired that I should be thus deceived, for He is said to be supremely good. If, however, it is contrary to His goodness to have made me such that I constantly deceive myself, it would also appear to be contrary to His goodness to permit me to be sometimes deceived, and nevertheless I cannot doubt that He does permit this.

There may indeed be those who would prefer to deny the existence of a God so powerful, rather than believe that all other things are uncertain. But let us not oppose them for the present, and grant that all that is here said of a God is a fable; nevertheless in whatever way they suppose that I have arrived at the state of being that I have reached-whether they attribute it to fate or to accident, or make out that it is by a continual succession of antecedents, or by some other method-since to err and deceive oneself is a defect, it is clear that the greater will be the probability of my being so imperfect as to deceive myself ever, as is the Author to whom they assign my origin the less powerful. To these reasons I have certainly nothing to reply, but at the end I feel constrained to confess that there is nothing in all that I formerly believed to be true, of which I cannot in some measure doubt, and that not merely through want of thought or through levity, but for reasons which are very powerful and maturely considered; so that henceforth I ought not the less carefully to refrain from giving credence to these opinions than to that which is manifestly false, if I desire to arrive at any certainty (in the sciences).

But it is not sufficient to have made these remarks, we must also be careful to keep them in mind. For these ancient and commonly held opinions still revert frequently to my mind, long and familiar custom having given them the right to occupy my mind against my inclination and rendered them almost masters of my belief; nor will I ever lose the habit of deferring to them or of placing my confidence in them, so long as I consider them as they really are, i.e. opinions in some measure doubtful, as I have just shown, and at the same time highly probable, so that there is much more reason to believe in than to deny them. That is why I consider that I shall not be acting

amiss, if, taking of set purpose a contrary belief, I allow myself to be deceived, and for a certain time pretend that all these opinions are entirely false and imaginary, until at last, having thus balanced my former prejudices with my latter [so that they cannot divert my opinions more to one side than to the other], my judgment will no longer be dominated by bad usage or turned away from the right knowledge of the truth. For I am assured that there can be neither peril nor error in this course, and that I cannot at present yield too much to distrust, since I am not considering the question of action, but only of knowledge.

I shall then suppose, not that God who is supremely good and the fountain of truth, but some evil genius not less powerful than deceitful has employed his whole energies in deceiving me; I shall consider that the heavens, the earth, colours, figures, sound, and all other external things are nought but the illusions and dreams of which this genius has availed himself in order to lay traps for my credulity; I shall consider myself as having no hands, no eyes, no flesh, no blood, nor any senses, yet falsely believing myself to possess all these things; I shall remain obstinately attached to this idea, and if by this means it is not in my power to arrive at the knowledge of any truth, I may at least do what is in my power [i.e. suspend my judgment], and with firm purpose avoid giving credence to any false thing, or being imposed upon by this arch deceiver, however powerful and deceptive he may be. But this task is a laborious one, and insensibly a certain lassitude leads me into the course of my ordinary life. And just as a captive who in sleep enjoys an imaginary liberty, when he begins to suspect that his liberty is but a dream, fears to awaken, and conspires with these agreeable illusions that the deception may be prolonged, so insensibly of my own accord I fall back into my former opinions, and I dread awakening from this slumber, lest the laborious wakefulness which would follow the tranquility of this repose should have to be spent not in daylight, but in the excessive darkness of the difficulties which have just been discussed.

Metaphysics

Personal Identity

From Essay Concerning Human Understanding (1690,1694)

-John Locke

CORPOREAL AND SPIRITUAL SUBSTANCES

WHEN WE TALK OR THINK of any particular sort of corporeal substances, as horse, stone, etc., though the idea we have of either of them be but the complication or collection of those several simple ideas of sensible qualities, which we used to find united in the thing called horse or stone; yet, because we cannot conceive how they should subsist alone, nor one in another, we suppose them existing in and supported by some common subject; which support we denote by the name substance, though it be certain we have no clear or distinct idea of that thing we suppose a support.

The same thing happens concerning the operations of the mind, viz. thinking, reasoning, fearing, etc., which we concluding not to subsist of themselves, nor apprehending how they can belong to body, or be produced by it, we are apt to think these the actions of some other substance, which we call spirit; whereby yet it is evident that, having no other idea of notion of matter, but something wherein those many sensible qualities which affect our senses do subsist; by supposing a substance wherein thinking, knowing, doubting, and a power of moving, etc., do subsist, we have as clear a notion of the substance of spirit, as we have of body; the one being supposed to be (without knowing what it is) the substratum to those simple ideas we

have from without; and the other supposed (with a like ignorance of what it is) to be the substratum to those operations we experiment in ourselves within. It is plain then, that the idea of corporeal substance in matter is as remote from our conceptions and apprehensions, as that of spiritual substance, or spirit: and therefore, from our not having any notion of the substance of spirit, we can no more conclude its non-existence, than we can, for the same reason, deny the existence of body; it being as rational to affirm there is no body, because we have no clear and distinct idea of the substance of matter, as to say there is no spirit, because we have no clear and distinct idea of the substance of a spirit....

So that, in short, the idea we have of spirit, compared with the idea we have of body, stands thus: the substance of spirits is unknown to us; and so is the substance of body equally unknown to us. Two primary qualities or properties of body, viz. solid coherent parts and impulse, we have distinct clear ideas of so likewise we know, and have distinct [and] clear ideas, of two primary qualities or properties of spirit, viz. thinking, and a power of action; i.e. a power of beginning or stopping several thoughts or motions. We have also the ideas of several qualities inherent in bodies, and have the clear distinct ideas of them; which qualities are but the various modifications of the extension of cohering solid parts, and their motion. We have likewise the ideas of the several modes of thinking viz. believing, doubting, intending, fearing, hoping; all which are but the several modes of thinking. We have also the ideas of willing, and moving the body consequent to it, and with the body itself too; for, as has been shown, spirit is capable of motion.

... If this notion of immaterial spirit may have, perhaps, some difficulties in it not easily to be explained, we have therefore no more reason to deny or doubt the existence of such spirits, than we have to deny or doubt the existence of body....

THE IDENTITY OF LIVING THINGS

In the state of living creatures, their identity depends not on a mass of the same particles, but on something else. For in them the variation of great parcels of matter alters not the identity: an oak growing from a plant to a great tree, and then lopped, is still the same oak; and a colt grown up to a horse, sometimes fat, sometimes lean, is all the while the same horse: though, in both these cases, there may be a manifest change of the parts; so that truly they are not either of them the same masses of matter, though they be truly one of them the same oak, and the other the same horse. The reason whereof is, that, in these two cases, a mass of matter, and a living body, identity is not applied to the same thing.

VEGETABLES

We must therefore consider wherein an oak differs from a mass of matter, and that seems to me to be in this, that the one is only the cohesion of particles of matter any how united, the other such a disposition of them as constitutes the parts of an oak; and such an organization of those parts as is fit to receive and distribute nourishment, so as to continue and frame the wood, bark, and leaves, etc., of an oak, in which consists the vegetable life. That being the one plant which has such an organization of parts in one coherent body, partaking of one common life, it continues to be the same plant as long as it partakes of the same life, though that life be communicated to new particles of matter vitally united to the living plant, in a like continued organization conformable to that sort of plants.

For this organization being at any one instant in any one collection of matter, is in that particular concrete distinguished from all other, and is that individual life, which existing constantly from that moment both forwards and backwards, in the same continuity of insensibly succeeding parts united to the living body of the plant, it has

that identity which makes the same plant, and all the parts of it, parts of the same plant, during all the time that they exist united in that continued organization, which is fit to convey that common life to all the parts so united.

ANIMALS

The case is not so much different in brutes, but that any one may hence see what makes an animal and continues it the same. Something we have like this in machines, and may serve to illustrate it. For example, what is a watch?: It is plain it is nothing but a fit organization or construction of parts to a certain end, which, when a sufficient force is added to it, it is capable to attain. If we would suppose this machine one continued body, all whose organized parts were repaired, increased, or diminished by a constant addition or separation of insensible parts, with one common life, we should have something very much like the body of an animal; with this difference, that, in an animal the fitness of the organization, and the motion wherein life consists, begin together, the motion coming from within; but in machines, the force coming sensibly from without, is often away when the organ is in order, and well fitted to receive it.

PEOPLE

This also shows wherein the identity of the same man consists; viz., in nothing but a participation of the same continued life, by constantly fleeting particles of matter, in succession vitally united to the same organized body. He that shall place the identity of man in anything else, but like that of other animals, in one fitly organized body, taken in any one instant, and from thence continued, under one organization of life, in several successively fleeting particles of matter united to it, will find it hard to make an embryo, one of years, mad and sober, the same man, by any supposition, that will not make it possible for Seth, Ismael, Socrates, Pilate, Saint Austin, and Caesar Borgia, to be the same man. For, if the identity of soul alone makes the same man, and there be nothing in the nature of matter why the same individual spirit may not be united to different bodies, it will be possible that those men living in distant ages, and of different tempers, may have been the same man: which way of speaking must be, from a very strange use of the word man, applied to an idea, out of which body and shape are excluded. And that way of speaking would agree yet worse with the notions of those philosophers who allow of transmigration, and are of opinion that the souls of men may, for their miscarriages, be detrued into the bodies of beasts, as fit habitations, with organs suited to the satisfaction of their brutal inclinations. But yet I think nobody, could he be sure that the souls of Heliogabalus were in one of his hogs, would yet say that hog were a man or Heliogabalus.

It is not therefore unity of substances that comprehends all sorts of identity, or will determine it in every case; but to conceive and judge of it aright, we must consider what idea the word it is applied to stands for: it being one thing to be the same substance, another the same man, and a third the same person, if person, man, and substance, are three names standing for three different ideas; for such as is the idea belonging to that name, such must be the identity; which, if it had been a little more carefully attended to, would possibly have prevented a great deal of that confusion which often occurs about this matter, with no small seeming difficulties, especially concerning personal identity, which therefore we shall in the next place a little consider.

SAME MAN

An animal is living organized body; and consequently the same animal, as we have observed, is the same continued life communicated to different particles of matter, as they happen successively to be united to that organized living body. And whatever is talked of other definitions, ingenious observation puts it past doubt, that the idea in our minds, of which the sound man in our mouths is

the sign, is nothing else but of an animal of such a certain form: since I think I may be confident, that, whoever should see a creature of his own shape or make, though it had no more reason all its life than a cat or a parrot, would call him still a man; or whoever should hear a cat or a parrot discourse, reason, and philosophize, would call or think it nothing but a cat or a parrot; and say, the one was a dull irrational man, and the other a very intelligent rational parrot....

I presume it is not the idea of a thinking or rational being alone that makes the idea of a man in most people's sense, but of a body, so and so shaped, joined to it; and if that be the idea of a man, the same successive body not shifted all at once, must, as well as the same immaterial spirit, go to the making of the same man.

CONSCIOUSNESS AND PERSONAL IDENTITY PERSONAL IDENTITY This being premised, to find wherein personal identity consists, we must consider what person stands for; which, I think, is a thinking intelligent being, that has reason and reflection, and can consider itself as itself, the same thinking thing, in different times and places; which it does only by that consciousness which is inseparable from thinking, and, as it seems to me, essential to it: it being impossible for any one to perceive without perceiving that he does perceive. When we see, hear, smell, taste, feel, meditate, or will anything, we know that we do so. Thus it is always as to our present sensations and perceptions: and by this every one is to himself that which he calls self; it not being considered, in this case, whether the same self be continued in the same or divers substances. For, since consciousness always accompanies thinking, and it is that which makes every one to be what he calls self, and thereby distinguishes himself from all other thinking things: in this alone consists personal identity, i.e., the sameness of a rational being; and as far as this consciousness can be extended backwards to any past action or thought, so far reaches the identity of that person; it is the same self now it was then; and it is by the same self with this present one that now reflects on it, that that action was done.

CONSCIOUSNESS MAKES PERSONAL IDENTITY

But it is further inquired, whether it be the same identical substance? This, few would think they had reason to doubt of, if these perceptions, with their consciousness, always remained present in the mind, whereby the same thinking thing would be always consciously present, and, as would be thought, evidently the same to itself. But that which seems to make the difficulty is this, that this consciousness being interrupted always by forgetfulness, there being no moment of our lives wherein we have the whole train of all our past actions before our eyes in one view, but even the best memories losing the sight of one part whilst they are viewing another; and we sometimes, and that the greatest part of our lives, not reflecting on our past selves, being intent on our present thoughts, and in sound sleep having no thoughts at all, or at least none with that consciousness which remarks our waking thoughts; I say, in all these cases, our consciousness being interrupted, and we losing the sight of our past selves, doubts are raised whether we are the same thinking thing, i.e., the same substance or no. Which, however reasonable or unreasonable, concerns not personal identity at all: the question being, what makes the same person, and not whether it be the same identical substance, which always thinks in the same person; which in this case, matters not at all: different substances, by the same consciousness (where they do partake in it) being united into one person, as well as different bodies by the same life are united into one animal, whose identity is preserved in that change of substances by the unity of one continued life. For it being the same consciousness that makes a man be himself to himself, personal identity depends on that only, whether it be annexed solely to one individual substance, or can be continued in a succession of several substances. For as far as any intelligent being can repeat the idea of any past action with the same consciousness it had of it at first, and with the same consciousness it has of any present action; so far it is the same personal self. For it is by the consciousness it has of its present thoughts and actions, that it is self to itself now, and so will be the same self, as far as the same consciousness can extend to

actions past or to come; and would be by distance of time, or change of substance, no more two persons, than a man be two men by wearing other clothes today than he did yesterday, with a long or a short sleep between: the same consciousness uniting those distant actions into the same person, whatever substances contributed to their production.

PERSONAL IDENTITY IN CHANGE OF SUBSTANCES

That this is so, we have some kind of evidence in our very bodies, all whose particles, whilst vitally united to this same thinking conscious self, so that we feel when they are touched, and are affected by, and conscious of good or harm that happens to them, are a part of ourselves; i.e., of our thinking conscious self. Thus, the limbs of his body are to every one a part of himself; he sympathizes and is concerned for them. Cut off a hand, and thereby separate it from that consciousness he had of its heat, cold, and other affections, and it is then no longer a part of that which is himself, any more than the remotest part of matter. Thus, we see the substance whereof personal self consisted at one time may be varied at another, without the change of personal identity; there being no question about the same person, though the limbs which but now were a part of it, be cut off...

PERSONAL IDENTITY AND IMMATERIAL SUBSTANCE But next, as to the first part of the question, "Whether if the same thinking substance (supposing immaterial substances only to think) be changed, it can be the same person?" I answer, that cannot be resolved, but by those who know what kind of substances they are that do think, and whether the consciousness of past actions can be transferred from one thinking substance to another. I grant, were the same consciousness the same individual action, it could not: but it being a present representation of a past action, why it may not be possible that that may be represented to the mind to have been, which really never was, will remain to be shown. And therefore how far the consciousness of past actions is annexed to any individual agent, so that another cannot possibly have it, will be hard for us to determine, till we know what kind of action it is that cannot be done without a reflex act of perception accompanying it, and how performed by thinking substances, who cannot think without being conscious of it. But that which we call the same consciousness, not being the same individual act, why one intellectual substance may not have represented to it, as done by itself, what it never did, and was perhaps done by some other agent; why, I say, such a representation may not possibly be without reality of matter of fact, as well as several representations in dreams are, which yet whilst dreaming we take for true, will be difficult to conclude from the nature of things. And that it never is so, will by us, till we have clearer views of the nature of thinking substances, be best resolved into the goodness of God, who, as far as the happiness or misery of any of his sensible creatures is concerned in it, will not, by a fatal error of theirs, transfer from one to another that consciousness which draws reward or punishment with it. How far this may be an argument against those who would place thinking in a system of fleeting animal spirits, I leave to be considered. But yet, to return to the question before us, it must be allowed, that, if the same consciousness (which, as has been shown, is quite a different thing from the same numerical figure or motion of body) can be transferred from one thinking substance to another, it will be possible that two thinking substances may make but one person. For the same consciousness being preserved, whether in the same or different substances, the personal identity is preserved.

As to the second part of the question, "Whether the same immaterial substance remaining, there may be two distinct persons?" which question seems to me to be built on this, whether the same immaterial being, being conscious of the action of its past existence, and lose it beyond the power of ever retrieving it again; and so as it were beginning a new account from a new period, have a consciousness that cannot reach beyond this new state. All those who hold preexistence are evidently of this mind, since they allow the soul to have no remaining

consciousness of what it did in that preexistent state, either wholly separate from body, or informing any other body; and if they should not, it is plain experience would be against them. So that personal identity reaching no further than consciousness reaches, a preexistent spirit not having continued so many ages in a state of silence, must needs make different persons. Suppose a Christian Platonist or a Pythagorean should, upon God's having ended all his works of creation the seventh day, think his soul hath existed ever since; and would imagine it has revolved in several human bodies, as I once met with one, who was persuaded his had been the soul of Socrates; (how reasonably I will not dispute; this I know, that in the post he filled, which was no inconsiderable one, he passed for a very rational man, and the press has shown that he wanted not parts or learning;) would any one say, that he, being not conscious of any of Socrates' actions or thoughts, could be the same person with Socrates? Let any one reflect upon himself, and conclude that he has in himself an immaterial spirit, which is that which thinks in him, and, in the constant change of his body keeps him the same: and is that which he calls himself let him also suppose it to be the same soul that was in Nestor or Thersites, at the siege of Troy (for souls being, as far as we know anything of them, in their nature indifferent to any parcel of matter, the supposition has no apparent absurdity in it), which it may have been, as well as it is now the soul of any other man: but lie now having no consciousness of any of the actions either of Nestor or Thersites, does or can he conceive himself the same person with either of them? Can he be concerned in either of their actions? Attribute them to himself, or think them his own, more than the actions of any other men that ever existed? So that this consciousness not reaching to any of the actions of either of those men, he is no more one self with either of them, than if the soul or immaterial spirit that now informs him had been created, and began to exist, when it began to inform his present body, though it were ever so true, that the same spirit that informed Nestor's or Thersites' body were numerically the same that now informs his.

For this would no more make him the same person with Nestor, than if some of the particles of matter that were once a part of Nestor, were now a part of this man; the same immaterial substance, without the same consciousness, no more making the same person by being united to any body, than the same particle of matter, without consciousness united to any body, makes the same person. But let him once find himself conscious of any of the actions of Nestor, he then finds himself the same person with Nestor.

MEMORY AND PERSONAL IDENTITY

And thus may we be able, without any difficulty, to conceive the same person at the resurrection, though in a body not exactly in make or parts the same which he had here, the same consciousness going along with the soul that inhabits it. But yet the soul alone, in the change of bodies, would scarce to any one but to him that makes the soul the man, be enough to make the same man. For should the soul of a prince, carrying with it the consciousness of the prince's past life, enter and inform the body of a cobbler, as soon as deserted by his own soul, every one sees he would be the same person with the prince, accountable only for the prince's actions: but who would say it was the same man? The body too goes to the making the man, and would, I guess, to everybody determine the man in this case; wherein the soul, with all its princely thoughts about it, would not make another man: but he would be the same cobbler to every one besides himself. I know that, in the ordinary way of speaking, the same person, and the same man, stand for one and the same thing. And indeed every one will always have a liberty to speak as he pleases, and to apply what articulate sounds to what ideas he thinks fit, and change them as often as he pleases. But yet, when we will inquire what makes the same spirit, man, or person, we must fix the ideas of spirit, man, or person in our minds, and having resolved with ourselves what we mean by them, it will not be hard to determine in either of them, or the like, when it is the same, and when not.

CONSCIOUSNESS MAKES THE SAME PERSON

But though the same immaterial substance or soul does not alone, wherever it be, and in whatsoever state, make the same man; yet it is plain, consciousness, as far as ever it can be extended, should it be to ages past, unites existences and actions, very remote in time into the same person, as well as it does the existences and actions of the immediately preceding moment: so that whatever has the consciousness of present and past actions, is the same person to whom they both belong. Had I the same consciousness that I saw the ark and Noah's flood, as that I saw an overflowing of the Thames last winter, or as that I write now; I could no more doubt that I who write this now, that saw the Thames overflowed last winter, and that viewed the flood at the general deluge, was the same self, place that self in what substance you please, than that I who write this am the same myself now whilst I write (whether I consist of all the same substance, material or immaterial, or no) that I was yesterday; for as to this point of being the same self, it matters not whether this present self be made up of the same or other substances; I being as much concerned, and as justly accountable for any action that was done a thousand years since, appropriated to me now by this self-consciousness, as I am for what I did the last moment.

SELF DEPENDS ON CONSCIOUSNESS

Self is that conscious thinking thing, whatever substance made up of (whether spiritual or material, simple or compounded, it matters not), which is sensible or conscious of pleasure and pain, capable of happiness or misery, and so is concerned for itself, as far as that consciousness extends. Thus every one finds, that, whilst comprehended under that consciousness, the little finger is as much a part of himself as what is most so. Upon separation of this little finger, should this consciousness go along with the little finger, and leave the rest of the body, it is evident the little finger would be the person, the same person, and self then would have nothing to do with the rest of the body. As in this case it is the consciousness that goes along with the substance, when one part is separate from another, which makes the same person, and constitutes this inseparable self; so it is in reference to substances remote in time. That with which the consciousness of this present thinking thing can join itself, makes the same person, and is one self with it, and with nothing else; and so attributes to itself, and owns all the actions of that thing as its own, as far as that consciousness reaches, and no further; as every one who reflects will perceive.

REWARD AND PUNISHMENT

In this personal identity is founded all the right and justice of reward and punishment; happiness and misery being that for which every one is concerned for himself, and not mattering what becomes of any substance not joined to, or affected with that consciousness. For as it is evident in the instance I gave but now, if the consciousness went along with the little finger when it was cut off, that would be the same self which was concerned for the whole body yesterday, as making part of itself, whose actions then it cannot but admit as its own now. Though, if the same body should still live, and immediately from the separation of the little finger have its own peculiar consciousness, whereof the little finger knew nothing; it would not at all be concerned for it, as a part of itself, or could own any of its actions, or have any of them imputed to him.

This may show us wherein personal identity consists: not in the identity of substance, but, as I have said, in the identity of consciousness; wherein if Socrates and the present mayor of Queenborough agree, they are the same person: if the same Socrates waking and sleeping do not partake of the same consciousness. Socrates waking and sleeping is not the same person. And to punish Socrates waking for what sleeping Socrates thought, and waking Socrates was never conscious of, would be no more of right, than to punish one twin for what his brother-

twin did, whereof he knew nothing, because their outsides were so like, that they could not be distinguished; for such twins have been seen.

But yet possibly it will still be objected, suppose I wholly lose the memory of some parts of my life, beyond a possibility of retrieving them, so that perhaps I shall never be conscious of them again; yet am I not the same person that did those actions, had those thoughts that I once was conscious of, though I have now forgot them? To which I answer, that we must here take notice what the word I is applied to; which, in this case, is the man only. And the same man being presumed to be the same person, I is easily here supposed to stand also for the same person. But if it be possible for the same man to have distinct incommunicable consciousness at different times, it is past doubt the same man would at different times make different persons; which, we see, is the sense of mankind in the solemnest declaration of their opinions; human laws not punishing the mad man for the sober man's actions, nor the sober man for what the mad man did, thereby making them two persons: which is somewhat explained by our way of speaking in English, when we say such an one is not himself, or is beside himself; in which phrases it is insinuated, as if those who now, or at least first used them, thought that self was changed, the selfsame person was no longer in that man....

A PROBLEM ABOUT PUNISHMENT

But is not a man drunk and sober the same person? Why else is he punished for the act he commits when drunk, though he be never afterwards conscious of it? Just as much the same person as a man that walks, and does other things in his sleep, is the same person, and is answerable for any mischief he shall do in it. Human laws punish both, with a justice suitable to their way of knowledge; because, in these cases, they cannot distinguish certainly what is real, what counterfeit: and so the ignorance in drunkenness or sleep is not admitted as a plea. For, though punishment be annexed to personality, and personality to consciousness, and the drunkard perhaps be not conscious of what he did, yet human judicatures justly punish him, because the fact is proved against him, but want of consciousness cannot be proved for him. But in the great day, wherein the secrets of all hearts shall be laid open, it may be reasonable to think, no one shall be made to answer for what he knows nothing of; but shall receive his doom, his conscience accusing or excusing him.

CONSCIOUSNESS ALONE MAKES SELF

Nothing but consciousness can unite remote existences into the same person: the identity of substance will not do it; for whatever substance there is, however framed, without consciousness there is no person: and a carcass may be a person, as well as any sort of substance be so without consciousness.

Could we suppose two distinct incommunicable consciousnesses acting in the same body, the one constantly by day, the other by night; and, on the other side, the same consciousness, acting by intervals, two distinct bodies; I ask, in the first case, whether the day and the night man would not be two as distinct persons as Socrates and Plato? And whether, in the second case, there would not be one person in two distinct bodies, as much as one man is the same in two distinct clothings? Nor is it at all material to say, that this same, and this distinct consciousness, in the cases above mentioned, is owing to the same and distinct immaterial substances, bringing it with them to those bodies; which, whether true or no, alters not the case; since it is evident the personal identity would equally be determined by the consciousness, whether that consciousness were annexed to some individual immaterial substance or no. For, granting that the thinking substance in man must be necessarily supposed immaterial, it is evident that immaterial thinking thing may sometimes part with its past consciousness, and be restored to it again, as appears in the forgetfulness men often have of their past actions: and the mind many times recovers the memory of a past consciousness, which it had lost for twenty years together. Make these intervals of

memory and forgetfulness to take their turns regularly by day and night, and you have two persons with the same immaterial spirit, as much as in the former instance two persons with the same body. So that self is not determined by identity or diversity or substance, which it cannot be sure of, but only by identity of consciousness....

Personal Identity

-David Hume

THERE ARE SOME PHILOSOPHERS, who imagine we are every moment intimately conscious of what we call our Self that we feel its existence and its continuance in existence; and are certain, beyond the evidence of a demonstration, both of its perfect identity and simplicity. . . . For my part, when I enter most intimately into what I call myself, I always stumble on some particular perception or other, of heat or cold, light or shade, love or hatred, pain or pleasure. I never can catch myself at any time without a perception, and never can observe any thing but the perception. When my perceptions are remov'd for any time, as by sound sleep; so long am I insensible of myself, and may truly be said not to exist. And were all my perceptions remov'd by death, and cou'd I neither think, nor feel, nor see, nor love, nor hate after the dissolution of my body, I shou'd be entirely annihilated, nor do I conceive what is farther requisite to make me a perfect nonentity. If any one upon serious and unprejudic'd reflexion, thinks he has a different notion of himself, I must confess I can reason no longer with him. All I can allow him is, that he may be in the right as well as I, and that we are essentially different in this particular. He may, perhaps, perceive something simple and continu'd, which he calls himself, tho' I am certain there is no such principle in me.

But setting aside some metaphysicians of this kind, I may venture to affirm of the rest of mankind, that they are nothing but a bundle or collection of different perceptions, which succeed each other with an inconceivable rapidity, and are in a perpetual flux and movement. Our eyes cannot turn in their sockets without varying our perceptions. Our thought is still more variable than our sight; and all our other senses and faculties contribute to this change; nor is there any single power of the soul, which remains unalterably the same, perhaps for one moment. The mind is a kind of theatre, where several perceptions successively make their appearance; pass, re-pass, glide away, and mingle in an infinite variety of postures and situations. There is properly no simplicity in it at one time, nor identity in different; whatever natural propension we may have to imagine that simplicity and identity. The comparison of the theatre must not mislead us. They are the successive perceptions only, that constitute the mind; nor have we the most distant notion of the place, where these scenes are represented, or of the materials, of which it is compos'd.

What then gives us so great a propension to ascribe an identity to these successive perceptions, and to suppose ourselves possess of an invariable and uninterrupted existence thro' the whole course of our lives? ... every distinct perception, which enters into the composition of the mind, is a distinct existence, and is different, and distinguishable, and separable from every other perception, either contemporary or successive. But, as, notwithstanding this distinction and separability, we suppose the whole train of perceptions to be united by identity, a question naturally arises concerning this relation of identity; whether it be something that really binds our several perceptions together, or only associates their ideas in the imagination. That is, in other words, whether in pronouncing concerning the identity of a person, we observe some real bond among his perceptions, or only feel one among the ideas we form of them. This question we might easily de-

cide, if we wou'd recollect what has been already prov'd at large, that the understanding never observes any real connexion among objects, and that even the union of cause and effect, when strictly examin'd, resolves itself into a customary association of ideas. For from thence it evidently follows, that identity is nothing really belonging to

these different perceptions, and uniting them together; but is merely a quality, which we attribute to them, because of the union of their ideas in the imagination, when we reflect upon them. Now the only qualities, which can give ideas an union in the imagination, are these three relations above-mention'd. These are the uniting principles in the ideal world, and without them every distinct object is separable by the mind, and may be separately consider'd, and appears not to have any more connexion with any other object, than if disjoin'd by the greatest difference and remoteness. 'Tis, therefore, on some of these three relations of resemblance, contiguity and causation, that identity depends; and as the very essence of these relations consists in their producing an easy transition of ideas; it follows, that our notions of personal identity, proceed entirely from the smooth and uninterrupted progress of the thought along a train of connected ideas, according to the principles above -explain'd.

The only question, therefore, which remains, is, by what relations this uninterrupted progress of our thought is produc'd, when we consider the successive existence of a mind or thinking person. And here 'tis evident we must confine ourselves to resemblance and causation, and must drop contiguity, which has little or no influence in the present case.

To begin with resemblance; suppose we cou'd see clearly into the breast of another, and observe that succession of perceptions, which constitutes his mind or thinking principle, and suppose that he always preserves the memory of a considerable part of past perceptions; 'tis evident that nothing cou'd more contribute to the bestowing a relation on this succession amidst all its variations. For what is the memory but a faculty, by which we raise up the images of past perceptions? And as an image necessarily resembles its object, must not the frequent placing of these resembling perceptions in the chain of thought, convey the imagination more easily from one link to another, and make the whole seem like the continuance of one object? In this particular, then, the memory not only discovers the identity, but also contributes to its production, by producing the relation of resemblance among the perceptions. The case is the same whether we consider ourselves or others.

As to causation; we may observe, that the true idea of the human mind, is to consider it as a system of different perceptions or different existences, which are link'd together by the relation of cause and effect, and mutually produce, destroy, influence, and modify each other. Our impressions give rise to their correspondent ideas; and these ideas in their turn produce other impressions. One thought chases another, and draws after it a third, by which it is expell'd in its turn. In this respect, I cannot compare the soul more properly to any thing than to a republic or commonwealth, in which the several members are united by the reciprocal ties of government and subordination, and give rise to other persons, who propagate the same republic in the incessant changes of its parts. And as the same individual republic may not only change its members, but also its laws and constitutions; in like manner the same person may vary his character and disposition, as well as his imprcssions and ideas, without losing his identity. Whatever changes he endures, his several parts are still connected by the relation of causation. And in this view our identity with regard to the passions serves to corroborate that with regard to the imagination, by the making our distant perceptions influence each other, and by giving us a present concern for our past or future pains or pleasures.

As memory alone acquaints us with the continuance and extent of this succession of perceptions, 'tis to be consider'd, upon that account chiefly, as the source of personal identity. Had we no memory, we never shou'd have any notion of causation, nor consequently of that chain of causes and effects, which constitute our self or person. But having once acquir'd this notion of causation from the memory, we can extend the same chain of causes, and consequently the identity of our persons beyond our memory, and can comprehend times, and circumstances, and actions, which we have entirely forgot, but suppose in general to have existed. For how few of our past actions are there, of which we have any memory? Who can tell me, for instance, what were his thoughts and actions on the first of January 1715, the 1 1 th of March 1719, and the 3d of August 1733? Or will he affirm,

because he has entirely forgot the incidents of these days, that the present self is not the same person with the self of that time; and by that means overturn all the most establish'd notions of personal identity? In this view, therefore, memory does not so much produce as discover personal identity, by showing us the relation of cause and effect among our different perceptions. 'Twill be incumbent On those, who affirm that memory produces entirely our personal identity, to give a reason why we can thus extend our identity beyond our memory.

The whole of this doctrine leads us to a conclusion, which is of great importance in the present affair, viz. that all the nice and subtle questions concerning personal identity can never possibly be decided, and are to be regarded rather as grammatical than as philosophical difficulties. Identity depends on the relations of ideas; and these relations produce identity, by means of that easy transition they occasion. But as the relations, and the easiness of the transition may diminish by insensible degrees we have no just standard, by which we can decide any dispute concerning the time, when they acquire or lose a title to the name of identity. All the disputes concerning the identity of connected objects are merely verbal, except so far as the relation of parts gives rise to some fiction or imaginary principle of union, as we have already observ'd.

Buddha's No Self Doctrine

-Buddha

"YOUR MAJESTY, I AM CALLED Nagasena; my fellow-priests, your . majesty, address me as Nagasena: but whether parents give one the name Nagasena, or Surasena, or Virasena, or Sihasena, it is, nevertheless, your majesty, but a way of counting, a term, an appellation, a convenient designation, a mere name, this Nagasena; for there is no Self here to be found." . . .

"Bhante Nagasena, if there is no Self to be found, who is it then furnishes you priests with the priestly requisites- robes, food, bedding, and medicine, the reliance of the sick? who is it makes use of the same? who is it keeps the precepts? who

is it applies himself to meditation? ... who is it commits immorality? who is it tells lies? ...

In that case, there is no merit; there is no demerit; there is no one who does or causes to be done meritorious or demeritorious deeds; neither good nor evil deeds can have any fruit or result. Bhante Nagasena, neither is he a murderer who kills a priest, nor can you priests, bhante Nagasena, have any teacher, preceptor, or ordination. When you say, 'My fellow-priests, your majesty, address me as Nagasena,' what then is this Nagasena? Pray, bhante, is the hair of the head Nagasena?"

"Nay, verily, your majesty."

"Is the hair of the body Nagasena?"

"Nay, verily, your majesty."

"Arc nails ... teeth ... skin ... flesh ... sinew
... bones ... marrow of the bones ... kidneys . .
heart ... liver ... blood ... sweat ... fat . .
tears ... saliva ... snot ... urine ... brain of the,
head Nagasena?"

"Nay, verily, your majesty."

"Is now, bhante, form Nagasena?" "Nay, verily, your majesty." "Is sensation Nagasena?" "Is consciousness Nagasena?"

"Nay, verily, your majesty."

"Are, then, bhante, form, sensation, perception, the predispositions, and consciousness unitedly Nagasena?"

"Nay, verily, your majesty."

"Is it, then, bhante, something besides form, sensation, perception, the predispositions, and consciousness, which is Nagasena?"

"Nay, verily, your majesty."

"Bhante, although I question you very closely, I fail to discover any Nagasena. Verily, now, bhante, Nagasena is a mere empty sound. What Nagasena is there here? Bhante, you speak a falsehood, a lie: there is no Nagasena." .. .

"How, bhante Nagasena, does rebirth take place without anything transmigrating? Give an illustration."

"Suppose, your majesty, a man were to light a light from another light; pray, would the one light have passed over [transmigrated] to the other light?"

"Nay, verily, bhante."

"In exactly the same way, your majesty, does rebirth take place without anything transmigrating." "Give another illustration."

"Do you remember, your majesty, having learnt, when you were a boy, some verse or other from your professor of poetry? ... did the verse pass over [transmigrate] to you from your teacher?"

"Nay, verily, bhante."

"In exactly the same way, your majesty, does rebirth take place without anything transmigrating." "You are an able man, bhante Nagasena."

Ghosts and Minds

-Michael C. LaBossiere

And this corporeal element, my friend, is heavy and weighty and earthy, and that element of sight by which a soul is depressed and dragged down again into the visible world, because she is afraid of the invisible and of the world below-prowling about tombs and sepulchres, near which, as they tell us, are seen certain ghostly apparitions of souls which have not departed pure, but are cloyed with sight and therefore visible.

-*Phaedo*, by Plato.

Everyone has heard of ghosts. Many people believe in them. However, there has not been a great deal of serious philosophical speculation on ghosts. This is not to say that there has been none, since the philosophical issue of ghosts was first discussed in Plato's *Phaedo*. The purpose of this essay is to consider the issue of the existence of ghosts within the context of modern philosophy of mind.

Before it can be decided whether ghosts can exist or not, one must be clear on what it is to be a ghost. For the purpose of this essay, a ghost is a mind which has become disembodied through the death of its original body, yet still has the capacity to interact with the physical world in some manner. This interaction might be that the

ghost can be sensed by others or that the ghost can actually manipulate its physical environment or perhaps some other capacity for interaction.

It should be noted that it has not been assumed that a ghost must be an immaterial entity. This is because assuming that ghosts must be immaterial would beg the question at hand. Thus, the possibility that ghosts could be material entities (of a special sort) must be kept open.

There are a variety of philosophic theories which attempt to explain the mind. Some of the more popular and famous ones include the identity theory, substance dualism, property dualism and functionalism. The implications of these theories will be considered in turn.

Identity theory is a materialist theory of mind, which is to say that it is view that takes the mind to be composed of matter. More specifically, those who accept the identity theory assert that each mental state is identical to a state of the central nervous system. Thus, the mind is equivalent to the central nervous system and its states. Given the nature of identity theory, it is clear that if it is correct, then there are no ghosts. This is because the death of the central nervous system would be the death and end of the mind, because they are identical.

Substance dualism is the view that reality contains at least two fundamental types of entities: material entities and immaterial entities. On this view, which was most famously presented by Descartes, the mind is an immaterial substance which enjoys a special sort of causal relation with its body. This rather mysterious relation enables the mind to control and receive information from the body and allows the body to affect the mind in some respects. Not surprisingly, on this view ghosts are a real possibility. Since the mind is taken to be a separate substance, the death of the body need not result in the death of the mind. Since the mind is a distinct substance and substances are entities that are capable of independent existence, the mind could, in theory, continue to exist. Further, since the mind is assumed to be able to interact with its original body, it is also possible that the mind could continue to interact with the physical world even in its bodiless state. Presumably, the lack of a physical body could limit what the mind was capable of, which might explain why ghosts are often taken to be limited in their capabilities. For example, it is typically believed that ghosts are often limited to making faint noises, moving small objects, or creating annoying thumping and banging noises.

A second type of dualism is sometimes referred to as property dualism. On this view, the mind and body are not distinct substances. Instead, the mind is composed (at least in part) of mental properties that are not identical with physical properties. For example, the property of *being a painful feeling* could not be reduced to a particular physical property of the brain, such as the states of certain neurons. Thus, the mind and body are distinct, but are not different substances.

Property dualism has a long history and, not surprisingly, there are many varieties of this view, two of which will be considered here. One of these versions is consistent with the existence of ghosts and the other is not.

Property dualism splits, roughly, into two main camps, epiphenomenalism and interactionism.

Epiphenomenalism is the view that there is a one way relation between the mental and physical properties. On this view, the non-physical mental properties are caused by, but do not in turn cause, the physical properties of the body. On this view, the mind is causally inert and is, crudely speaking, a by-product of the physical processes of the body. Because the mental properties are causally dependent on the physical properties, the death of the body will result in an end to the mental properties. Hence, if epiphenomenalism is correct, then there are no ghosts.

Interactionism is, in this context, the view that the mental properties of the mind and physical properties of the body interact. On this view mental properties can bring about changes in the physical properties of the body and vice versa. Unlike Epiphenomenalism, interactionism does not require that the mental properties be

entirely causally dependent on the physical properties of the original body. Because of this, the mental properties that compose the mind could, in theory, survive the death of the original body. These mental properties might be capable of existing as a bundle of properties. In this case, a ghost would be a bundle of mental properties that form a mind without any physical body. The mental properties might require some substance or body to support them. In this case, a ghost would be a mind that consists of mental properties that are supported by something other than its original body. For example, the mental properties might inhere in an object or place. This might explain the fact that ghosts are typically said to haunt particular places. If their minds inhere in these places, this would explain why ghosts rarely, if ever travel about the world. As another possibility, the mental properties might take control of a new body. This might explain cases that purportedly involve possession. In any case, since the mental properties are supposed to be capable of interaction with physical properties, it would be possible for the mind to continue to interact with the physical world, despite the death of its original body.

One last view to be considered is functionalism. There are many varieties of functionalism, but they all share a common basis. This basis is that mental states are defined in functional terms. Roughly put, a functional definition of a mental state defines that mental state in terms of its role or function in a mental system of inputs and outputs. To be a bit more specific, a mental state, such as being in pain, is defined in terms of the causal relations that it holds to external influences on the body, other mental states, and the behavior of the body.

Functionalism is typically regarded as a materialist view of the mind. This is because the systems in which the mental states take place are taken to be physical systems. While the identity theory and functionalism are both materialist theories of mind, they differ in one key respect. According to the identity theorists, a specific mental state, such as being in pain, is identical to a specific physical state, such the state of neurons in a particular part of the brain. So, for two mental states to be the same, the physical states must be identical. Thus, if mental states are particular states of neurons in a certain part of the human nervous system then anything that does not have that sort of nervous cannot have a mind. According to the functionalist, a specific mental state, such as being in pain, is not defined in terms of a particular physical state. Instead, while the functionalist believes that every mental state is a physical state of some kind, for two mental states to be the same they need only be functionally identical, not physically identical. Thus, if mental states are defined functionally, then anything that can exhibit these functions, can have a mind.

As odd as it might sound, if functionalism is the correct theory of mind, then it is still possible for ghosts to exist. This is the case even if it is assumed that functionalism must be a materialist theory of mind. As noted above, functionalism is committed to the view that any system that performs the proper functions is a mind, regardless of how that system is constituted. Given this, it seem possible that a mind could suffer the loss of its original physical system, yet still retain the same or adequately similar functions after this loss. Since the mind is, on the functionalist account, a physical system, there would be no special problem with it interacting with the physical world, even after it has a new physical system. The new physical system might be a structure, place or a new body. For example, a person might die in a house and, consistent with many ghost stories, the mind of the person might survive in the house. In functionalist terms, the mind that was once a set of functions instantiated in a human body would now be a set of functions instantiated in a house or parts of a house. As long as the functions are preserved, the mind would continue to exist as a ghost. Since ghosts are typically said to be confined to particular places, even particular rooms, the functionalist account of ghosts has a certain plausibility.

While the issue of the actual existence or non-existence of ghosts has not ben settled, this essay has addressed the issue of the existence of ghosts within the context of modern philosophy of mind. If dualism, property

dualism or functionalism is correct, then ghosts can exist. However, if identity theory is correct, then there can be no ghosts.

Meeting Yourself

-Michael C. LaBossiere

A gust of air whirled round me as I opened the door, and from within came the sound of broken glass falling on the floor. The Time Traveler was not there. I seemed to see a ghostly, indistinct figure sitting in a whirling mass of black and brass for a moment--a figure so transparent that the bench behind with its sheets of drawings was absolutely distinct; but this phantasm vanished as I rubbed my eyes. The Time Machine had gone. Save for a subsiding stir of dust, the further end of the laboratory was empty.

-*The Time Machine*, by H. G. Wells, 1898.

Travel, of any kind, involves journeying from one point to another point. In the case of spatial travel, this involves journeying from one location in space to another location. This sort of traveling happens all the time. For example, millions of people make the trip from the fridge to the couch each day. Time travel, being a form of travel, also involves journeying from one point to another. However, in the case of time travel, the journey is made from one point in time to another point in time. While it might seem an odd sort of thing to say, time travel is happening all the time. In fact, you are doing it right now. Even as you read this sentence you are traveling towards the future at the rate of sixty minutes per hour. Of course, that sort of time travel is not what most people find interesting. One of the more interesting types of time travel involves moving from the present time to the past. Another interesting type of time travel is going into some future time, without all that time consuming mucking about in all the time between now and then.

While it has been claimed that if a person travels far enough, she will end up back where she started, no one claims that if you travel far enough you will meet yourself. However, if time travel is possible, a person should be able to travel back in time and, in theory, meet herself in the past. If a person takes care not to travel too far ahead in time, he should be able to meet himself in the future.

Naturally, there are all sorts of problems and paradoxes involved with people traveling about in time to meet themselves. For example, suppose Bill, who is thirty four now, decides to go back in time and kill himself at age twenty. Obviously, if Bill succeeds in killing himself, he would not exist at age thirty four. Hence, he could hardly go back to kill himself. Yet, if Bill is able to travel through time, he should be able to go back and kill himself. ¹These sorts of problems probably help fuel the sale of aspirin.

Fortunately, this article is not about those brain teasing paradoxes. For example, I will not argue whether Bill would be committing murder or suicide if he went back in time to kill himself. Instead, I will focus on the problem of simply going back in time and meeting yourself. Or your past self. Or however one would word it.

As has been noted above, if you can travel backwards in time, then you should be able to meet yourself. This creates an interesting metaphysical problem, that of explaining how the very same thing, namely you, can be in two places at exactly the same time.

¹ Robert Heinlen, in his 1973 novel *Time Enough for Love*, addresses a similar problem, namely that of going back in time and killing one's grandfather. Through the main character he asserts that the fact that a person exists means that he did not (or will not) kill his grandfather.

In order for the same person to be in two different places at the same time, the components that make up the person² would, of course, have to be capable of existing in more than one place at the same time. In other words, the components would have to be capable of multiple location.

Another philosophic problem, namely the problem of universals, also involves the issue of the same thing existing in different places at the same time. Very, very briefly, one part of the problem of universals is determining what it is for two tokens to be of the same type. To give a concrete example, part of the problem would be determining what it is for six different green objects to all be the same in respect to their color. Two popular solutions to the problem of universals, as it relates to the possibility of entities existing in multiple locations at the same time, are as follows.

David Armstrong, a well known Australian philosopher, argues that there are instantiated universals³. Briefly, an instantiated universal is a property (such as *being green*) that can exist in multiple locations at the same time. Going back to the problem of universals, for six different objects to all be green would be for each object to instantiate the universal green. The very same, identical universal green would be wholly located at each green object. To be even more specific, if a frog and a leaf are the same shade of green, the green of the frog and the green of the leaf are one and the same entity which happens to be multiply located.

Now, suppose that whatever it is that makes a person the person he happens to be is composed of instantiated universals⁴. In this case it would seem that going back in time to meet yourself would be possible. What would make this possible? First, it has been assumed that what makes a person who he is, say Bill, is made up of universals. Second, a universal, as has been established, is capable of existing in distinct locations at the same time. Hence, the universals that make up the person Bill happens to be can exist in different places at the same time. So, it would be possible to have a person identical to Bill standing five feet from Bill. This identical person could be the Bill from the future. Since Bill and Bill from the future would be identical, then it would seem they would be the same person. Hence, if a person is composed of universals, then he could travel back in time to meet himself. It would simply be a case of the same person existing in different locations at the same time.

Keith Campbell and I, among others, reject instantiated universals in favor of tropes⁵. Briefly, a trope is a property (such as *being green*) that can only exist in one location at one time. Trope theorists explain what it is for two tokens to be of the same type in terms of resemblance. As an example, for six different objects to all be green would be for each object to have its own distinct green trope. Each green trope would be a different entity from the other green tropes, but they would resemble each other and would all be taken to be green because of their resemblance.

Now, suppose that what makes a person the person he happens to be is composed of tropes. In this case it would seem that going back in time to meet yourself would be impossible. What would make this impossible? First, it has been assumed that what makes a person who he is, say Sally, is made up of tropes. Second, a trope, as has been established, is incapable of existing in distinct locations at the same time. Hence, the tropes that

²The components that make up a person might include the physical parts of the body, or perhaps the body as well as an immaterial mind or soul, or perhaps a person might be composed of other sorts of things. These components would also be composed of whatever metaphysical entities actually make up the universe.

³David Armstrong, *Universals*, (Westview: Boulder)1989.

⁴Suppose for example, that a person is her soul. In this case, the soul would be composed of universals.

⁵Keith Campbell's main work on trope is *Abstract Particulars* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1990). My latest publication on tropes is "Reply to Hochberg", in *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* 74 (1996) pp. 162-170.

make up Sally cannot exist in different places at the same time. So, it would not be possible to have a person identical to Sally, say the Sally from the future, standing five feet from her. Thus, if Keith Campbell and I are correct, it would seem that a person could not travel back in time and meet herself. This would also entail that time travel is not possible.

Since I am committed to tropes, but find the notion of time travel fascinating, it would be nice if there was a way to reconcile trope theory with time travel. Perhaps there is a way of doing this.

According to modern physics, which is based on Einstein's special theory of relativity, there is no such thing as absolute and universal time⁶. Instead, time is seen as being relative to each thing. In this context, time is relative in the sense that each thing carries around its own personal time scale which does not, in general, agree with the time scale of other entities. The relativity of time is subject to empirical proof. For example, if one precision atomic clock is left on earth and another is placed into the American space shuttle, the clock in the shuttle orbiting the earth will lag behind the clock left on earth. The difference in time is due to the speed of the shuttle and its location in earth's gravity well. Given the fact that this experiment has been conducted, it is hard to deny the relativity of time.

Once relativity is established, the notion of same time goes out the window. Each thing has its own time scale which varies with its location and speed, so there simply is no objective basis upon which sameness of time can be grounded. In this case, nothing can be in two different locations at the same time. Roughly put, being in a different location would put it in a different time.

One effect of the relativity of time would seem to be the end of instantiated universals. This is because an instantiated universal has to exist in different places at the same time. Since there is no such thing as sameness of time, instantiated universals simply cannot exist as defined.

A second effect of the relativity of time is that it enables time travel to be reconciled with tropes. The way this happens is as follows.

It is contended that people can be made of tropes, yet still be able to travel back in time to meet themselves. For example, imagine that Bill has traveled back in time to ask himself where he left his keys. Bill tells future Bill where they are in return for a bit of advice on how to play the ponies later on. Both Bill and future Bill can be composed of identical tropes, yet still meet. This is possible because Bill and future Bill, like any other entities, will actually exist at different times. Hence, there is no need for Bill and future Bill to exist at the same time. They simply have to have their times "close enough" to allow them to interact⁷. Thus, I can have my tropes and time travel, too.

Taoist Metaphysics

From *The Tao Teh King, Or The Tao And Its Characteristics*

by Lao-Tse

⁶For the technical details of relativity see Albert Einstein, *Relativity*, New York: Crown Publishers, 1961, David Griffin, ed., *Physics and the Ultimate Significance of Time*, New York: SUNY Press, 1986, and Hans Reichenbach, *The Direction of Time*.

⁷In the normal course of events, no two entities exist in exactly the same time. Yet, the times of most entities are apparently close enough to allow them to interact. For example, you can meet people at parties and do things like drink a beer or spill a plate of food all over that nice new carpet. So entities in different times can meet.

Chapter 1

1. The Tao that can be trodden is not the enduring and unchanging Tao. The name that can be named is not the enduring and unchanging name.
 2. (Conceived of as) having no name, it is the Originator of heaven and earth; (conceived of as) having a name, it is the Mother of all things.
 3. Always without desire we must be found, If its deep mystery we would sound; But if desire always within us be, Its outer fringe is all that we shall see.
 4. Under these two aspects, it is really the same; but as development takes place, it receives the different names. Together we call them the Mystery. Where the Mystery is the deepest is the gate of all that is subtle and wonderful.
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2. 1. All in the world know the beauty of the beautiful, and in doing this they have (the idea of) what ugliness is; they all know the skill of the skilful, and in doing this they have (the idea of) what the want of skill is.
 2. So it is that existence and non-existence give birth the one to (the idea of) the other; that difficulty and ease produce the one (the idea of) the other; that length and shortness fashion out the one the figure of the other; that (the ideas of) height and lowness arise from the contrast of the one with the other; that the musical notes and tones become harmonious through the relation of one with another; and that being before and behind give the idea of one following another.
 3. Therefore the sage manages affairs without doing anything, and conveys his instructions without the use of speech.
 4. All things spring up, and there is not one which declines to show itself; they grow, and there is no claim made for their ownership; they go through their processes, and there is no expectation (of a reward for the results). The work is accomplished, and there is no resting in it (as an achievement). The work is done, but how no one can see; 'Tis this that makes the power not cease to be.
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4. 1. The Tao is (like) the emptiness of a vessel; and in our employment of it we must be on our guard against all fullness. How deep and unfathomable it is, as if it were the Honoured Ancestor of all things!
 2. We should blunt our sharp points, and unravel the complications of things; we should attemper our brightness, and bring ourselves into agreement with the obscurity of others. How pure and still the Tao is, as if it would ever so continue!
 3. I do not know whose son it is. It might appear to have been before God.

6. The valley spirit dies not, aye the same; The female mystery thus do we name. Its gate, from which at first they issued forth, Is called the root from which grew heaven and earth. Long and unbroken does its power remain, Used gently, and without the touch of pain.

8. 1. The highest excellence is like (that of) water. The excellence of water appears in its benefiting all things, and in its occupying, without striving (to the contrary), the low place which all men dislike. Hence (its way) is near to (that of) the Tao.

2. The excellence of a residence is in (the suitability of) the place; that of the mind is in abysmal stillness; that of associations is in their being with the virtuous; that of government is in its securing good order; that of (the conduct of) affairs is in its ability; and that of (the initiation of) any movement is in its timeliness.

3. And when (one with the highest excellence) does not wrangle (about his low position), no one finds fault with him.

11. The thirty spokes unite in the one nave; but it is on the empty space (for the axle), that the use of the wheel depends. Clay is fashioned into vessels; but it is on their empty hollowness, that their use depends. The door and windows are cut out (from the walls) to form an apartment; but it is on the empty space (within), that its use depends. Therefore, what has a (positive) existence serves for profitable adaptation, and what has not that for (actual) usefulness.

12. 1. Color's five hues from th' eyes their sight will take; Music's five notes the ears as deaf can make; The flavors five deprive the mouth of taste; The chariot course, and the wild hunting waste Make mad the mind; and objects rare and strange, Sought for, men's conduct will to evil change.

2. Therefore the sage seeks to satisfy (the craving of) the belly, and not the (insatiable longing of the) eyes. He puts from him the latter, and prefers to seek the former.

14. 1. We look at it, and we do not see it, and we name it 'the Equable.' We listen to it, and we do not hear it, and we name it 'the Inaudible.' We try to grasp it, and do not get hold of it, and we name it 'the Subtle.' With these three qualities, it cannot be made the subject of description; and hence we blend them together and obtain The One.

2. Its upper part is not bright, and its lower part is not obscure. Ceaseless in its action, it yet cannot be named, and then it again returns and becomes nothing. This is called the Form of the Formless, and the Semblance of the Invisible; this is called the Fleeting and Indeterminable.

3. We meet it and do not see its Front; we follow it, and do not see its Back. When we can lay hold of the Tao of old to direct the things of the present day, and are able to know it as it was of old in the beginning, this is called (unwinding) the clue of Tao.

16. 1. The (state of) vacancy should be brought to the utmost degree, and that of stillness guarded with unwearying vigor. All things alike go through their processes of activity, and (then) we see them return (to their original state). When things (in the vegetable world) have displayed their luxuriant growth, we see each of them return to its root. This returning to their root is what we call the state of stillness; and that stillness may be called a reporting that they have fulfilled their appointed end.

2. The report of that fulfillment is the regular, unchanging rule. To know that unchanging rule is to be intelligent; not to know it leads to wild movements and evil issues. The knowledge of that unchanging rule produces a (grand) capacity and forbearance, and that capacity and forbearance lead to a community (of feeling with all things). From this community of feeling comes a kingliness of character; and he who is king-like goes on to be heaven-like. In that likeness to heaven he possesses the Tao. Possessed of the Tao, he endures long; and to the end of his bodily life, is exempt from all danger of decay.

22. 1. The partial becomes complete; the crooked, straight; the empty, full; the worn out, new. He whose (desires) are few gets them; he whose (desires) are many goes astray.

2. Therefore the sage holds in his embrace the one thing (of humility), and manifests it to all the world. He is free from self- display, and therefore he shines; from self-assertion, and therefore he is distinguished; from self-boasting, and therefore his merit is acknowledged; from self-complacency, and therefore he acquires superiority. It is because he is thus free from striving that therefore no one in the world is able to strive with him.

3. That saying of the ancients that 'the partial becomes complete' was not vainly spoken:--all real completion is comprehended under it.

25. 1. There was something undefined and complete, coming into existence before Heaven and Earth. How still it was and formless, standing alone, and undergoing no change, reaching everywhere and in no danger (of being exhausted)! It may be regarded as the Mother of all things.

2. I do not know its name, and I give it the designation of the Tao (the Way or Course). Making an effort (further) to give it a name I call it The Great.

3. Great, it passes on (in constant flow). Passing on, it becomes remote. Having become remote, it returns. Therefore the Tao is great; Heaven is great; Earth is great; and the (sage) king is also great. In the universe there are four that are great, and the (sage) king is one of them.

4. Man takes his law from the Earth; the Earth takes its law from Heaven; Heaven takes its law from the Tao. The law of the Tao is its being what it is.

34. 1. All-pervading is the Great Tao! It may be found on the left hand and on the right.

2. All things depend on it for their production, which it gives to them, not one refusing obedience to it. When its work is accomplished, it does not claim the name of having done it. It clothes all things as with a garment, and makes no assumption of being their lord;--it may be named in the smallest things. All things return (to

their root and disappear), and do not know that it is it which presides over their doing so;--it may be named in the greatest things.

3. Hence the sage is able (in the same way) to accomplish his great achievements. It is through his not making himself great that he can accomplish them.

37. 1. The Tao in its regular course does nothing (for the sake of doing it), and so there is nothing which it does not do.

2. If princes and kings were able to maintain it, all things would of themselves be transformed by them.

3. If this transformation became to me an object of desire, I would express the desire by the nameless simplicity.

Simplicity without a name Is free from all external aim. With no desire, at rest and still, All things go right as of their will.

40. 1. The movement of the Tao By contraries proceeds; And weakness marks the course Of Tao's mighty deeds.

2. All things under heaven sprang from It as existing (and named); that existence sprang from It as non-existent (and not named).

42. 1. The Tao produced One; One produced Two; Two produced Three; Three produced All things. All things leave behind them the Obscurity (out of which they have come), and go forward to embrace the Brightness (into which they have emerged), while they are harmonized by the Breath of Vacancy.

2. What men dislike is to be orphans, to have little virtue, to be as carriages without naves; and yet these are the designations which kings and princes use for themselves. So it is that some things are increased by being diminished, and others are diminished by being increased.

3. What other men (thus) teach, I also teach. The violent and strong do not die their natural death. I will make this the basis of my teaching.

Readings Part Four: Value

Ethics

Utilitarianism

From *Utilitarianism* (London, 1863)

-John Stuart Mill

What Utilitarianism Is

The creed which accepts as the foundation of morals "utility" or the "greatest happiness principle" holds that actions are right in proportion as they tend to promote happiness; wrong as they tend to produce the reverse of happiness. By happiness is intended pleasure and the absence of pain-, by unhappiness, pain and the privation of pleasure. To give a clear view of the moral standard set up by the theory, much more requires to be said; in particular, what things it includes in the ideas of pain and pleasure, and to what extent this is left an open question. But these supplementary explanations do not affect the theory of life on which this theory of morality is groundednamely, that pleasure and freedom from pain are the only things desirable as ends-, and that all desirable things (which are as numerous in the utilitarian as in any other scheme) are desirable either for pleasure inherent in themselves or as means to the promotion of pleasure and the prevention of pain.

Now such a theory of life excites in many minds, and among them in some of the most estimable in feeling and purpose, inveterate dislike. To suppose that life has (as they express it) no higher end than pleasure-no better and nobler object of desire and pursuit-they designate as utterly mean and groveling, as a doctrine worthy only of swine, to whom the followers of Epicurus were, at a very early period, contemptuously likened; and modern holders of the doctrine are occasionally made the subject of equally polite comparisons by its German, French, and English assailants.

When thus attacked, the Epicureans have always answered that it is not they, but their accusers, who represent human nature in a degrading light, since the accusation supposes human beings to be capable of no pleasures except those of which swine are capable. If this supposition were true, the charge could not be gainsaid, but would then be no longer an imputation; for if the sources of pleasure were precisely the same to human beings and to swine, the rule of life which is good enough for the one would be good enough for the other. The comparison of the Epicurean life to that of beasts is felt as degrading, precisely because a beast's pleasures do not satisfy a human being's conceptions of happiness. Human beings have faculties more elevated than the animal appetites and, when once made conscious of them, do not regard anything as happiness which does not include their gratification. I do not, indeed, consider the Epicureans to have been by any means faultless in drawing out their scheme of consequences from the utilitarian principle. To do this in any sufficient manner, many Stoic, as well as Christian, elements require to be included. But there is no known Epicurean theory of life which does not assign to the pleasures of the intellect, of the feelings and imagination, and of the moral sentiments a much higher value as pleasures than to those of mere sensation. It must be admitted, however, that utilitarian writers in general have placed the superiority of mental over bodily pleasures chiefly in the greater permanency safety, uncostliness, etc., of the former-that is, in their circumstantial advantages rather than in their intrinsic nature.

And on all these points utilitarians have fully proved their case; but they might have taken the other and, as it may be called, higher ground with entire consistency. It is quite compatible with the principle of utility to recognize the fact that some kinds of pleasure are more desirable and more valuable than others. It would be absurd that, while in estimating all other things quality is considered as well as quantity the estimation of pleasure should be supposed to depend on quantity alone.

If I am asked what I mean by difference of quality in pleasures, or what makes one pleasure more valuable than another, merely as a pleasure, except its being greater in amount, there is but one possible answer. Of two pleasures, if there be one to which all or almost all who have experience of both give a decided preference, irrespective of any feeling of moral obligation to prefer it, that is the more desirable pleasure. If one of the two is, by those who are competently acquainted with both, placed so far above the other that they prefer it, even though knowing it to be attended with a greater amount of discontent, and would not resign it for any quantity of the other pleasure which their nature is capable of, we are justified in ascribing to the preferred enjoyment a superiority in quality so far outweighing quantity as to render it, in comparison, of small account.

Now it is an unquestionable fact that those who are equally acquainted with and equally capable of appreciating and enjoying both do give a most marked preference to the manner of existence which employs their higher faculties. Few human creatures would consent to be changed into any of the lower animals for a promise of the fullest allowance of a beast's pleasures; no intelligent human being would consent to be a fool, no instructed person would be an ignoramus, no person of feeling and conscience would be selfish and base, even though they should be persuaded that the fool, the dunce, or the rascal is better satisfied with his lot than they are with theirs. They would not resign what they possess more than he for the most complete satisfaction of all the desires which they have in common with him. If they ever fancy they would, it is only in cases of unhappiness so extreme that to escape from it they would exchange their lot for almost any other, however undesirable in their own eyes. A being of higher faculties requires more to make him happy, is capable probably of more acute suffering, and certainly accessible to it at more points, than one of an inferior type; but in spite of these liabilities, he can never really wish to sink into what he feels to be a lower grade of existence. We may give what explanation we please of this unwillingness; we may attribute it to pride, a name which is given indiscriminately to some of the most and to some of the least estimable feelings of which mankind are capable; we may refer it to the love of liberty and personal independence, an appeal to which was with the Stoics one of the most effective means for the inculcation of it; to the love of power or to the love of excitement, both of which do really enter into and contribute to it; but its most appropriate appellation is a sense of dignity which all human beings possess in one form or other, and in some, though by no means in exact, proportion to their higher faculties, and which is so essential a part of the happiness of those in whom it is strong that nothing which conflicts with it could be otherwise than momentarily an object of desire to them. Whoever supposes that this preference takes place at a sacrifice of happiness—that the superior being, in anything like equal circumstances, is not happier than the inferior—confounds the two very different ideas of happiness and content. It is indisputable that the being whose capacities of enjoyment are low has the greatest chance of having them fully satisfied—, and a highly endowed being will always feel that any happiness which he can look for, as the world is constituted, is imperfect. But he can learn to bear its imperfections, if they are at all bearable, and they will not make him envy the being who is indeed unconscious of the imperfections, but only because he feels not at all the good which those imperfections qualify. It is better to be a human being dissatisfied than a pig satisfied; better to be Socrates dissatisfied than a fool satisfied. And if the fool, or the pig, are of a different opinion, it is

because they only know their own side of the question. The other party to the comparison knows both sides. It may be objected that many who are capable of the higher pleasures occasionally, under the influence of temptation, postpone them to the lower. But this is quite compatible with a full appreciation of the intrinsic superiority of the higher. Men often, from infirmity of character, make their election for the nearer good, though they know it to be the less valuable; and this no less when the choice is between two bodily pleasures than when it is between bodily and mental. They pursue sensual indulgences to the injury of health, though perfectly aware that health is the greater good. It may be further objected that many who begin with youthful enthusiasm for everything noble, as they advance in years, sink into indolence and selfishness. But I do not believe that those who undergo this very common change voluntarily choose the lower description of pleasures in preference to the higher. I believe that, before they devote themselves exclusively to the one, they have already become incapable of the other. Capacity for the nobler feelings is in most natures a very tender plant, easily killed, not only by hostile influences, but by mere want of sustenance; and in the majority of young persons it speedily dies away if the occupations to which their position in life has devoted them, and the society into which it has thrown them, are not favorable to keeping that higher capacity in exercise. Men lose their high aspirations as they lose their intellectual tastes, because they have not time or opportunity for indulging them; and they addict themselves to inferior pleasures, not because they deliberately prefer them, but because they are either the only ones to which they have access or the only ones which they are any longer capable of enjoying. It may be questioned whether anyone who has remained equally susceptible to both classes of pleasures ever knowingly and calmly preferred the lower, though many, in all ages, have broken down in an ineffectual attempt to combine both.

From this verdict of the only competent judges, I apprehend there can be no appeal. On a question which is the best worth having of two pleasures, or which of two modes of existence is the most grateful to the feelings, apart from its moral attributes and from its consequences, the judgment of those who are qualified by knowledge of both, or, if they differ, that of the majority among them, must be admitted as final. And there needs be the less hesitation to accept this judgment respecting the quality of pleasures, since there is no other tribunal to be referred to even on the question of quantity. What means are there of determining which is the acutest of two pains, or the intenser of two pleasurable sensations, except the general suffrage of those who are familiar with both? Neither pains nor pleasures are homogeneous, and pain is always heterogeneous with pleasure. What is there to decide whether a particular pleasure is worth purchasing at the cost of a particular pain, except the feelings and judgment of the experienced? When, therefore, those feelings and judgment declare the pleasures derived from the higher faculties to be preferable in kind, apart from the question of intensity, to those of which the animal nature, disjoined from the higher faculties, is susceptible, they are entitled on this subject to the same regard.

I have dwelt on this point as being a necessary part of a perfectly just conception of utility or happiness considered as the directive rule of human conduct. But it is by no means an indispensable condition to the acceptance of the utilitarian standard; for that standard is not the agent's own greatest happiness, but the greatest amount of happiness altogether; and if it may possibly be doubted whether a noble character is always the happier for its nobleness, there can be no doubt that it makes other people happier, and that the world in general is immensely a gainer by it. Utilitarianism, therefore, could only attain its end by the general cultivation of nobleness of character, even if each individual were only benefited by the nobleness of others, and his own, so

far as happiness is concerned, were a sheer deduction from the benefit. But the bare enunciation of such an absurdity as this last renders refutation superfluous.

According to the greatest happiness principle, as above explained, the ultimate end, with reference to and for the sake of which all other things are desirable—whether we are considering our own good or that of other people—is an existence exempt as far as possible from pain, and as rich as possible in enjoyments, both in point of quantity and quality; the test of quality and the rule for measuring it against quantity being the preference felt by those who, in their opportunities of experience, to which must be added their habits of self-consciousness and self-observation, are best furnished with the means of comparison. This, being according to the utilitarian opinion the end of human action, is necessarily also the standard of morality, which may accordingly be defined "the rules and precepts for human conduct," by the observance of which an existence such as has been described might be, to the greatest extent possible, secured to all mankind; and not to them only, but, so far as the nature of things admits, to the whole sentient creation....

Of What Sort of Proof the Principle of Utility Is Susceptible

It has already been remarked that questions of ultimate ends do not admit of proof, in the ordinary acceptation of the term. To be incapable of proof by reasoning is common to all first principles, to the first premises of our knowledge, as well as to those of our conduct. But the former, being matters of fact, may be the subject of a direct appeal to the faculties which judge of fact—namely our senses and our internal consciousness. Can an appeal be made to the same faculties on questions of practical ends? Or by what other faculty is cognizance taken of them?

Questions about ends are, in other words, questions [about] what things are desirable. The utilitarian doctrine is that happiness is desirable, and the only thing desirable, as an end; all other things being only desirable as means to that end. What ought to be required of this doctrine, what conditions is it requisite that the doctrine should fulfill—to make good its claim to be believed?

The only proof capable of being given that an object is visible is that people actually see it. The only proof that a sound is audible is that people hear it; and so of the other sources of our experience. In like manner, I apprehend, the sole evidence it is possible to produce that anything is desirable is that people do actually desire it. If the end which the utilitarian doctrine proposes to itself were not, in theory and in practice, acknowledged to be an end, nothing could ever convince any person that it was so. No reason can be given why the general happiness is desirable, except that each person, so far as he believes it to be attainable, desires his own happiness. This, however, being a fact, we have not only all the proof which the case admits of, but all which it is possible to require, that happiness is a good, that each person's happiness is a good to that person, and the general happiness, therefore, a good to the aggregate of all persons. Happiness has made out its title as one of the ends of conduct and, consequently, one of the criteria of morality.

But it has not, by this alone, proved itself to be the sole criterion. To do that, it would seem, by the same rule, necessary to show, not only that people desire happiness, but that they never desire anything else. Now it is palpable that they do desire things which, in common language, are decidedly distinguished from happiness. They desire, for example, virtue and the absence of vice no less really than pleasure and the absence of pain. The

desire of virtue is not as universal, but it is as authentic a fact as the desire of happiness. And hence the opponents of the utilitarian standard deem that they have a right to infer that there are other ends of human action besides happiness, and that happiness is not the standard of approbation and disapprobation.

But does the utilitarian doctrine deny that people desire virtue, or maintain that virtue is not a thing to be desired? The very reverse. It maintains not only that virtue is to be desired, but that it is to be desired disinterestedly, for itself. Whatever may be the opinion of utilitarian moralists as to the original conditions by which virtue is made virtue, however they may believe (as they do) that actions and dispositions are only virtuous because they promote another end than virtue, yet this being granted, and it having been decided, from considerations of this description, what is virtuous, they not only place virtue at the very head of the things which are good as means to the ultimate end, but they also recognize as a psychological fact the possibility of its being, to the individual, a good in itself, without looking to any end beyond it; and hold that the mind is not in a right state, not in a state conformable to utility, not in the state most conducive to the general happiness, unless it does love virtue in this manner-as a thing desirable in itself, even although, in the individual instance, it should not produce those other desirable consequences which it tends to produce, and on account of which it is held to be virtue. This opinion is not, in the smallest degree, a departure from the happiness principle. The ingredients of happiness are very various, and each of them is desirable in itself, and not merely when considered as swelling an aggregate. The principle of utility does not mean that any given pleasure, as music, for instance, or any given exemption from pain, as for example health, is to be looked upon as means to a collective something termed happiness, and to be desired on that account. They are desired and desirable in and for themselves; besides being means, they are a part of the end. Virtue, according to the utilitarian doctrine, is not naturally and originally part of the end, but it is capable of becoming so; and in those who live it disinterestedly it has become so, and is desired and cherished, not as a means to happiness, but as a part of their happiness.

To illustrate this further, we may remember that virtue is not the only thing originally a means, and which if it were not a means to anything else would be and remain indifferent, but which by association with what it is a means to comes to be desired for itself, and that too with the utmost intensity. What, for example, shall we say of the love of money? There is nothing originally more desirable about money than about any heap of glittering pebbles. Its worth is solely that of the things which it will buy; the desires for other things than itself, which it is a means of gratifying. Yet the love of money is not only one of the strongest moving forces of human life, but money is, in many cases, desired in and for itself-, the desire to possess it is often stronger than the desire to use it, and goes on increasing when all the desires which point to ends beyond it, to be compassed by it, are falling off. It may, then, be said truly that money is desired not for the sake of an end, but as part of the end. From being a means to happiness, it has come to be itself a principal ingredient of the individual's conception of happiness. The same may be said of the majority of the great objects of human life: power, for example, or fame, except that to each of these there is a certain amount of immediate pleasure annexed, which has at least the semblance of being naturally inherent in them-a thing which cannot be said of money. Still, however, the strongest natural attraction, both of power and of fame, is the immense aid they give to the attainment of our other wishes; and it is the strong association thus generated between them and all our objects of desire which gives to the direct desire of them the intensity it often assumes, so as in some characters to surpass in strength all other desires. In these cases the means have become a part of the end, and a more important part of it than any of the things which they are means to. What was once desired as an instrument for the attainment of happiness has come to be desired for its own sake. In being desired for its own sake it is, however, desired as part of

happiness. The person is made, or thinks he would be made, happy by its mere possession; and is made unhappy by failure to obtain it. The desire of it is not a different thing from the desire of happiness any more than the love of music or the desire of health. They are included in happiness. They are some of the elements of which the desire of happiness is made up. Happiness is not an abstract idea but a concrete whole; and these are some of its parts. And the utilitarian standard sanctions and approves their being so. Life would be a poor thing, very ill provided with sources of happiness, if there were not this provision of nature by which things originally indifferent, but conducive to, or otherwise associated with, the satisfaction of our primitive desires, become in themselves sources of pleasure more valuable than the primitive pleasures, both in permanency, in the space of human existence that they are capable of covering, and even in intensity

Virtue, according to the utilitarian conception, is a good of this description. There was no original desire of it, or motive to it, save its conduciveness to pleasure, and especially to protection from pain. But through the association thus formed it may be felt a good in itself, and desired as such with as great intensity as any other good; and with this difference between it and the love of money, of power, or of fame-that all of these may, and often do, render the individual noxious to the other members of the society to which he belongs, whereas there is nothing which makes him so much a blessing to them as the cultivation of the disinterested love of virtue. And consequently, the utilitarian standard, while it tolerates and approves those other acquired desires, up to the point beyond which they would be more injurious to the general happiness than promotive of it, enjoins and requires the cultivation of the love of virtue up to the greatest strength possible, as being above all things important to the general happiness.

It results from the preceding considerations that there is in reality nothing desired except happiness. Whatever is desired other-wise than as a means to some end beyond itself, and ultimately to happiness, is desired as itself a part of happiness, and is not desired for itself until it has become so. Those who desire virtue for its own sake desire it either because the consciousness of it is a pleasure, or because the consciousness of being without it is a pain, or for both reasons united; as in truth the pleasure and pain seldom exist separately but almost always together-the same person feeling pleasure in the degree of virtue attained, and pain in not having attained more. If one of these gave him no pleasure, and the other no pain, he would not love or desire virtue, or would desire it only for the other benefits which it might produce to himself or to persons whom he cared for.

We have now, then, an answer to the question, of what sort of proof the principle of utility is susceptible. If the opinion which I have now stated is psychologically true-if human nature is so constituted as to desire nothing which is not either a part of happiness or a means of happiness-we can have no other proof, and we require no other, that these are the only things desirable. If so, happiness is the sole end of human action, and the promotion of it the test by which to judge all of human conduct; from whence it necessarily follows that it must be the criterion of morality, since a part is included in the whole.

-Immanuel Kant**Translation by T.K. Abbot (1898)**

NOTHING CAN POSSIBLY BE CONCEIVED in the world, or even out of it, which can be called good without qualification, except a good will. intelligence wit, judgment, and other *talents of the mind*, however they may be named, or courage, resolution, perseverance, as qualities of temperament are undoubtedly good and desirable in many respects-, but these gifts of nature may also become extremely bad and mischievous *if the will which is to make use of them, and which, therefore constitutes what is called character, is not good*. It is the same with the *gifts of fortune*. Power, riches, honor, even health, and the general well-being and contentment with one's condition which is called *happiness*, inspire pride, and often presumption, if there is not a good will to correct the influence of these on the mind, and with this also to rectify the whole principle of acting, and adapt it to its end. The sight of a being who is not adorned with a single feature of a pure and good will, enjoying unbroken prosperity, can never give pleasure to an impartial rational spectator. Thus a good will appears to constitute the indispensable condition even of being worthy of happiness.

There are even some qualities which are of service to this good will itself, and may facilitate its action yet which have no intrinsic unconditional value, but always presuppose a good will, and this qualifies the esteem that we justly have for them, and does not permit us to regard them as absolutely good. Moderation in the affections and passions, self-control, and calm deliberation are not only good in many respects, but even seem to constitute part of the intrinsic worth of the person; but they, are far from deserving to be called good without qualification, although they have been so unconditionally praised by the ancients. For without the principles of a good will, they may become extremely bad; and the coolness of a villain not only makes him far more dangerous, but also directly makes him more abominable in our eyes than he would have been without it.

A good will is good not because of what it performs or effects, not by its aptness for the attainment of some proposed end, but simply by virtue of the volition -that is, it is good in itself, and considered by itself is to be esteemed much higher than all that can be brought about by it in favor of any inclination, nay, even of the sum total of all inclinations even if it should happen that, owing to special disfavor of fortune, or the niggardly provision of a stepmotherly nature, this will should wholly lack power to accomplish its purpose, if with its greatest efforts it should yet achieve nothing, and there should remain only the good will (not, to be sure, a mere wish, but the summoning of all means in our power), then, like a jewel, it would still shine by its own light, as a thing which has its whole value in itself. Its usefulness or fruitlessness can neither add to nor take away anything from this value. It would be, as it were, only the setting to enable us to handle it the more conveniently in common commerce, or to attract to it the attention of those who are not yet connoisseurs, but not to recommend it to true connoisseurs, or to determine its value....

Everything in nature works according to laws. Rational beings alone have the faculty of acting according to *the conception* of laws, that is according to principles, *i.e.* have a will. Since the deduction of actions from principles requires *reason*, the will is nothing but practical reason.... the relation of the objective laws to a will that is not thoroughly good is conceived as the determination of the will of a rational being by principles of reason, but which the will from its nature does not of necessity follow.

The conception of an objective principle, in so far as it is obligatory for a will, is called a command (of reason), and the formula of the command is called an Imperative. .

Now all *imperative* command either *hypothetically* or *categorically*...

... If now the action is good only as a means *to something else*, then the imperative is hypothetically if it is conceived as good *in itself* consequently as being necessarily the principle of a will which of itself conforms to reason, then it is *categorical*...

When I conceive of a hypothetical imperative, in general I do not know beforehand what it will contain until I am given the condition. But when I conceive a categorical imperative, I know at once what it contains. For as the imperative contains besides the law only the necessity that the maxims shall conform to this law, while the law contains no conditions restricting it, there remains nothing but the general statement that the maxim of the action should conform to a Universal law, and it is this conformity alone that the imperative properly represents as necessary

There is ... but one categorical imperative namely, this: *Act only on that maxim whereby thou canst at the same time will that it should become a universal law*

Now if all imperatives of duty can be deduced from this one imperative as from their principle, then, although it Should remain undecided whether what is called duty is not merely a vain notion, yet at least we shall be able to show what We Understand by it and what this notion means.

Since the universality of the law according to which effects are produced constitutes what is properly called *nature* in the most general sense (as to form), that is the existence of things so far as it is determined by general laws, the imperative of duty may be expressed thus: *Act as if the maxim of thy action were to become by thy will a universal law of nature*. We will now enumerate a few duties, adopting the usual division of them into duties to ourselves and to others, and into perfect and imperfect duties.

1. A man reduced to despair by a series of misfortunes feels wearied of life, but is still so far in possession of his reason that he can ask himself whether it would not be contrary to his duty to himself to take his own life. Now he inquires whether the maxim of his action could become a universal law of nature. His maxim is: From self-love I adopt it as a principle to shorten my life when its longer duration is likely to bring more evil than satisfaction. It is asked then simply whether this principle founded on self-love can become a universal law of nature. Now we see at once that a system of nature of which it should be a law to destroy life by means of the very feeling whose special nature it is to impel to the improvement of life would contradict itself, and therefore could not exist as a system of nature; hence that maxim cannot possibly exist as a universal law of nature, and consequently would be wholly inconsistent with the supreme principle of all duty

2. Another finds himself forced by necessity to borrow money He knows that he will not be able to repay it, but sees also that nothing will be lent to him, unless he promises stoutly to repay it in a definite time. He desires to make this promise, but he has still so much conscience as to ask himself- Is It not Unlawful and inconsistent ,with duty to get out of a difficulty ill this way? Suppose, however, that he resolves to do so, then the maxim of

his action Would be expressed thus: When I think myself In want of money, I will borrow money and promise to repay it, although I know that I never call do so. Now this principle of self-love or of one's own advantage may perhaps be consistent with my whole future welfare; but the question now is, is it right? I change then the suggestion of self-love into a universal law, and state the question thus How would it be if my maxim were a universal law? Then I see at once that it could never hold as a universal law of nature, but would necccssarily contradict itself. For Supposing it to be a universal law that everyone when lie thinks himself in a difficulty should be able to promise whatever he pleases, with the purpose of not keeping his promise, the promise itself Would become impossible, as well as the end that might have in view in it, since no one would consider that anything was promised to him, but would ridicule all such statements as vain pretences.

3. A third finds in himself a talent which with the help of some culture might make him a useful man in many respects. But he finds himself in comfortable circumstances, and prefers to indulge ill pleasure rather than to take pains in enlarging and improving his happy natural capacities. He asks, however, whether his maxim of neglect of his natural gifts, besides agreeing with his inclination to indulgence, agrees also with what is called duty. He sees then that a system of nature Could indeed subsist with such a universal law although men (like the South Sea islanders) should let their talents rest, and resolve to devote their lives merely to Idleness, amusement, and propagation of their species-in a word, to enjoyment; but he cannot possibly will that this should be a Universal law of nature, or be implanted in us as such by a natural instinct. For, as a rational being, he necessarily wills that his faculties be developed, since they serve him, and have been given him, for all sorts of possible purposes.

4. A fourth, who is in prosperity, while tic sees that others have to contend with great wretchedness and that lie could help them, thinks: What concern is it of mine,' Let everyone be as happy as Heaven pleases, or as lie call make himself, I will take nothing from him nor even envy him, only I do not wish to contribute anything to his welfare or to his assistance in distress! Now no doubt If such a mode of thinking were a universal law, the human race might very well subsist, and doubtless even better than In a state in which everyone talks of sympathy and good-will, or even takes care occasionally to put it into practice, but, oil the other side, also cheats when he can, betrays the rights of men, or otherwise violates them. But although it is possible that a Universal law of nature might exist in accordance with that maxim, it is impossible to null that Such a principle should have the Universal validity of a law of nature. For a will which resolved this would contradict Itself, inasmuch as mail\, cases might Occur in which one would have the need of the love and sympathy of others, and in which, by such a law of nature, sprung from ill's own will he would deprive himself of all hope of the aid lie desires.... We have thus established at least this much, that if duty is a conception which is to have any import and real legislative authority for our actions, it can only be expressed in categorical, and not at all in hypothetical imperatives. We have also, which is of great importance, exhibited clearly and definitely for every practical application the content of the categorical imperative, which must contain the principle of all duty if there is such a thing at all. We have not yet, however, advanced so far as to prove *a priori* that there actually is such an imperative, that there is a practical law which commands absolutely of itself, and without any other impulse, and that the following of this law is duty....

Now I say: man and generally any rational being *exists* as an end in himself, *not merely as a means* to be arbitrarily used by this or that will, but in all his actions, whether they concern himself or other rational beings, Must be always regarded at the same time as an end. All objects of the inclinations have only a conditional

worth; for if the inclinations and the wants founded on them did not exist, then their object would be without value. But the inclinations themselves being sources of want are so far from having an absolute worth for which they should be desired that, on the contrary, it must be the universal wish of every rational being to be wholly free from them. Thus the worth of any object which is *to be acquired* by our action is always conditional. Beings whose existence depends not on our will but on nature have nevertheless, if they are not rational beings, only a relative value as means, and are therefore called *things*; rational beings, on the contrary, are called *persons*, because their very nature points them out as ends in themselves, that is as something which must not be used only as means, and so far therefore restricts freedom of action (and is an object of respect). These, therefore, are not merely subjective ends whose existence has a worth *for us* as an effect of our action, but *objective ends*, that is things whose existence is an end in itself. an end moreover for which no other can be substituted, which they should subserve *merely* as means, for otherwise nothing whatever would possess *absolute worth*; but if all worth were conditioned and therefore contingent, then there would be no supreme practical principle of reason whatever.

If then there is a Supreme practical principle or, in respect of the human will, a categorical imperative it must be one which, being drawn from the conception of that which is necessarily an end for everyone because it is an *end in itself* constitutes an *objective* principle of will, and can therefore serve as a universal practical law. The foundation of this principle is: *rational nature exists as an end in itself* Man necessarily conceives his own existence as being so: so far then this is a *subjective* principle of human action. But every other rational being regards its existence similarly, just on the same rational principle, that holds for me: so that it is at the same time an objective principle, from which as a supreme practical law all laws of the will must be capable of being deduced. Accordingly the practical imperative will be as follows: So act *as to treat humanity, whether in thine own person or in that of any other, in every case as an end withal, never as means only...*

The conception of every rational being as one which must consider itself as giving all the maxims of its will universal laws, so as to judge itself and its actions from this point of view-this conception leads to another which depends on it and is very fruitful, namely, that of a *kingdom ends*.

By a *kingdom* I understand the union of different rational beings in a system by common laws. Now since it is by laws that ends are determined as regards their universal validity, hence, if we abstract from the personal differences of rational beings, and likewise from all the content of their private ends, we shall be able to conceive all ends combined in a systematic whole (including both rational beings as ends in themselves, and also the special ends which each may propose to himself), that is to say, we can conceive a kingdom of ends, which on the preceding principle is possible.

Aesthetics

Aesthetics is a branch of philosophy concerned with theories of art and beauty. Aesthetics can be divided into three general academic areas which are as follows.

Descriptive aesthetics is what is typically done by art historians and anthropologists. When one practices descriptive aesthetics one provides a description of a culture's, group's or a person's aesthetic views. This simply states the characteristics of the aesthetics in question. For example, an anthropologist might describe the artistic

style of Greek statues from the Hellenistic period or an art historian might describe the aesthetics evident in the works of Andrew Wyeth or Britney Spears.

Meta aesthetics is the most theoretical level of aesthetics. Doing this sort of thing involves the creation and assessment of aesthetic theories. Developing a theory of art, such as was done by thinkers like Plato and Tolstoy, would be an example of meta-aesthetics. For the most part, people tend to be less concerned with this level of abstraction and focus more on the more concrete and specific matters in aesthetics such as those covered by normative and applied aesthetics.

Normative aesthetics is more concrete than meta-aesthetics because it deals with the creation and application of aesthetic standards. An example of this is when a music critic develops a set of standards for classifying music into various genres (for example, country and western) and assessing music in terms of its aesthetic value.

The most concrete and specific type of aesthetics is applied aesthetics. As the name suggest, this involves the application of aesthetic standards to specific cases/situations. For example, a film critic is practicing applied aesthetics when she assesses a movie and assigns it stars, thumbs, or spitting llamas based on her aesthetic principles.

In somewhat more specific terms, aesthetics is a rational and systematic attempt to understand aesthetic statements, principles and theories. To achieve this goal, aestheticians analyze aesthetic concepts and terms, create and assessing principles relating to the arts, define and assess artistic value and create and assess aesthetic theories.

Classic Problems in Aesthetics

Over the centuries, philosophers have created and attempted to solve various problems in aesthetics. One of the most basic problems is the nature of art. Attempts to solve this problem involve trying to provide an adequate definition of the word “art.” Given the great diversity of things that the term is applied to it is no wonder that an adequate definition of the term is still not available.

Another problem is the nature of beauty. Intuitively, beauty is connected to art and many thinkers have attempted to define art in terms of beauty. Of course, beauty itself is a matter of great debate. Plato regarded beauty as an objective property of objects. Just as a statue could have the properties of being bronze and weighing 700 pounds it could also have the property of beauty. Other thinkers, such as David Hume, regarded beauty as a subjective matter. This view is nicely summed up by the saying “beauty is in the eye of the beholder.” There are many other views of beauty that have been presented over the centuries.

In addition to providing one of the first philosophical discussions of beauty, Plato also presented one of the first philosophical discussions of censorship. His argument, that art should be censored because of its corrupting influence, provides the standard template for almost all censorship arguments. Thus, Plato helped begin the ongoing and seemingly endless debate over censorship.

Another classic problem is the problem of objectivity. Some people, like Plato, have argued that artistic qualities are objective and that art can be assessed on objective grounds. On this view there are correct and incorrect aesthetic judgments and art is not just a matter of opinion. Other thinkers have contended that artistic judgments are subjective and hence they are a matter of mere opinion. This dispute gave rise to what is known as the paradox of taste. Presented by the 18th century Scottish philosopher David Hume, the paradox presents the following problem: On one hand, tastes cannot be disputed-if a person likes or dislikes a work they cannot be wrong about this. On the other hand, some aesthetic judgments seem not only wrong but also obviously absurd. The problem lies in sorting out these two plausible yet seemingly inconsistent claims.

Some Questions in Aesthetics

The following are some questions that arise in the field of aesthetics. This list is not exhaustive.

1. What is art?
2. What is beauty?
3. Is beauty subjective or objective?
4. Should art be censored by the government?
5. Should artists censor their own work?
6. What makes one work of art better than another?
7. How are genres defined?
8. Do genres matter?
9. Is art important to society?
10. Is art education important?
11. What, if anything, makes art valuable?
12. Can a forgery have the same value as "real" art?
13. What distinguishes "real" art from a forgery?
14. Should art serve political or social purposes?
15. What is the distinction between pornography and art?
16. Should historical films be historically accurate?

Aestheticians, Art Critics and Artists

A final way to understand aesthetics is to consider an analogy to the legal system. Aestheticians are like lawmakers—they create aesthetic theories. Art critics are like judges, applying the theories created by aestheticians. The artist is like the one on trial—they create the works of art that are to be judged.

Aesthetics involves, in part, developing theories or principles for assessing works of art. The art critic applies a specific theory or principle when assessing a specific work of art. The artist can use a specific theory or principle when creating her work. Naturally, one person might occupy all three roles.

The New Aesthetics

Oscar Wilde

VIVIAN. [...] All that I desire to point out is the general principle that Life imitates Art far more than Art imitates Life, and I feel sure that if you think seriously about it you will find that it is true. Life holds the mirror up to Art, and either reproduces some strange type imagined by painter or sculptor, or realizes in fact what has been dreamed in fiction. Scientifically speaking, the basis of life—the energy of life, as Aristotle would call it—is simply the desire for expression, and Art is always presenting various forms through which this expression can be attained. Life seizes on them and uses them, even if they be to her own hurt. Young men have committed suicide because Rolla did so, have died by their own hand because by his own hand Werther died. Think of what we owe to the imitation of Christ, of what we owe to the imitation of Caesar.

CYRIL. The theory is certainly a very curious one, but to make it complete you must show that Nature, no less than Life, is an imitation of Art. Are you prepared to prove that?

VIVIAN. My dear fellow I am prepared to prove anything.

CYRIL. Nature follows the landscape painter, then, and takes her effects from him?

VIVIAN. Certainly. Where, if not from the Impressionists, do we get those wonderful brown fogs that come creeping down our streets, blurring the gaslamps and changing the houses into monstrous shadows? To whom, if not to them and their master, do we owe the lovely silver mists that brood over our river, and turn to faint forms of fading grace curved bridge and swaying barge? The extraordinary change that has taken place in the climate of London during the last ten years is entirely due to a particular school of Art. You smile. Consider the matter from a scientific or metaphysical point of view, and you will find that I am right. For what is Nature? Nature is no great mother who has borne us. She is our creation. It is in our brain that she quickens to life. Things are because we see them, and what we see, and how we see it, depends on the Arts that have influenced us. To look at a thing is very different from seeing a thing. One does not see anything until one sees its beauty then, and then only, does it come into existence. At present, people see fogs, not because there are fogs, but because poets and painters have taught them the mysterious loveliness of such effects. There may have been fogs for centuries in London. I dare say there were. But no one saw them, and so we do not know anything about them. They did not exist till Art had invented them. Now, it must be admitted, fogs are carried to excess. They have become the mere mannerism of a clique, and the exaggerated realism of their method gives dull people bronchitis. Where the cultured catch an effect, the uncultured catch cold. And so, let us be humane, and invite Art to turn her wonderful eyes elsewhere. She has done so already, indeed. That white quivering sunlight that one sees now in France, with its strange blotches of mauve, and its restless violet shadows, is her latest fancy, and, on the whole, Nature reproduces it quite admirably. Where she used to give us Corots and Daubignys, she gives us now exquisite Monets and entrancing Pissaros. Indeed there are moments, rare, it is true, but still to be observed from time to time, when Nature becomes absolutely modern. Of course she is not always to be relied upon. The fact is that she is in this unfortunate position. Art creates an incomparable and unique effect, and, having done so, passes on to other things. Nature, upon the other hand, forgetting that imitation can be made the sincerest form of insult, keeps on repeating this effect until we all become absolutely wearied of it. Nobody of any real culture, for instance, ever talks nowadays about the beauty of a sunset. Sunsets are quite old-fashioned. They belong to the time when Turner was the last note in art. To admire them is a distinct sign of provincialism of temperament. Upon the other hand they go on. Yesterday evening Mrs Arundel insisted on my going to the window, and looking at the glorious sky, as she called it. Of course I had to look at it. She is one of those absurdly pretty Philistines to whom one can deny nothing. And what was it? It was simply a very second-rate Turner, a Turner of a bad period, with all the painter's worst faults exaggerated and over-emphasized. Of course, I am quite ready to admit that Life very often commits the same error. She produces her false Rene's and her sham Vautrins, just as Nature gives us, on one day a doubtful Cuypp, and on another a more than questionable Rousseau. Still, Nature irritates one more when she does things of that kind. It seems so stupid, so obvious, so unnecessary. A false Vautrin might be delightful. A doubtful Cuypp is unbearable. However, I don't want to be too hard on Nature. I wish the Channel, especially at Hasnogs, did not look quite

so often like a Henry Moore, grey pearl with yellow lights, but then, when Art is more varied. Nature will, no doubt, be more varied also. That she imitates Art, I don't think even her worst enemy would deny now. It is the one thing that keeps her in touch with civilized man. But have I proved my theory to your satisfaction?

C YR I L. You have proved it to my dissatisfaction, which is better. But even admitting this strange imitative instinct in Life and Nature, surely you would acknowledge that Art expresses the temper of its age, the spirit of its time, the moral and social conditions that surround it, and under whose influence it is produced.

V I V I A N. Certainly not! Art never expresses anything but itself. This is the principle of my new aesthetics; and it is this, more than that vital connection between form and substance, on which Mr Pater dwells, that makes music the type of all the arts. Of course, nations and individuals, with that healthy natural vanity which is the secret of existence, are always under the impression that it is of them that the Muses are talking, always trying to find in the calm dignity of imaginative art some mirror of their own turbid passions, always forgetting that the singer of life is not Apollo but Marsyas. Remote from reality, and with her eyes turned away from the shadows of the cave, Art reveals her own perfection, and the wondering crowd that watches the opening of the marvelous, many-petalled rose fancies that it is its own history that is being told to it, its own spirit that is finding expression in a new form. But it is not so. The highest art rejects the burden of the human spirit, and gains more from a new medium or a fresh material than she does from any enthusiasm for art, or from any lofty passion, or from any great awakening of the human consciousness. She develops purely on her own lines. She is not symbolic of any age. It is the ages that are her symbols.

Even those who hold that Art is representative of time and place and people cannot help admitting that the more imitative an art is, the less it represents to us the spirit of its age. The evil faces of the Roman emperors look out at us from the fowl porphyry and spotted jasper in which the realistic artists of the day delighted to work, and we fancy that in those cruel lips and heavy sensual jaws we can find the secret of the ruin of the Empire. But it was not so. The vices of Tiberius could not destroy that supreme civilization, any more than the virtues of the Antonines could save it. It fell for other, for less interesting reasons. The sibyls and prophets of the Sistine may indeed serve to interpret for some that new birth of the emancipated spirit that we call the Renaissance; but what do the drunken boors and brawling peasants of Dutch art tell us about the great soul of Holland? The more abstract, the more ideal an art is, the more it reveals to us the temper of its age. If we wish to understand a nation by means of its art, let us look at its architecture or its music.

CYRIL. I quite agree with you there. The spirit of an age may be best expressed in the abstract ideal arts, for the spirit itself is abstract and ideal.

Upon the other hand, for the visible aspect of an age, for its look, as the phrase goes, we must of course go to the arts of imitation.

VIVIAN. I don't think so. After all, what the imitative arts really give us are merely the various styles of particular artists, or of certain schools of artists. Surely you don't imagine that the people of the Middle Ages bore any resemblance at all to the figures on mediaeval stained glass, or in medieval stone and wood carving, or on mediaeval metal-work, or tapestries, or illuminated MSS. They were probably very ordinary-looking people, with nothing grotesque, or remarkable, or fantastic in their appearance. The Middle Ages, as we know them in art, are simply a definite form of style, and there is no reason at all why an artist with this style should not be produced in the nineteenth century. No great artist ever sees things as they really are. If he did, he would cease to be an artist. Take an example from our own day. I know that you are fond of Japanese things. Now, do you really imagine that the Japanese people, as they are presented to us in art, have any existence? If you do, you have never understood Japanese art at all. The Japanese people are the deliberate self-conscious creation of certain individual artists. If you set a picture by Hokusai, or Hokkei, or any of the great native painters, beside a real Japanese gentleman or

lady, you will see that there is not the slightest resemblance between them. The actual people who live in Japan are not unlike the general run of English people; that is to say, they are extremely commonplace, and have nothing curious or extraordinary about them. In fact the whole of Japan is a pure invention. There is no such country. there are no such people. One of our most charming painters went recently to the Land of the Chrysanthemum in the foolish hope of seeing the Japanese. All he saw, all he had the chance of painting, were a few lanterns and some fans. He was quite unable to discover the inhabitants, as his delightful exhibition at Messrs Dowdeswell's Gallery showed only too well. He did not know that the Japanese people are, as I have said, simply a mode of style, an exquisite fancy of art. And so, if you desire to see a Japanese effect. you will not behave like a tourist and go to Tokio. On the contrary, you will stay at home and steep yourself in the work of certain Japanese artists, and then, when you have absorbed the spirit of their style and caught their imaginative manner of vision, you will go some afternoon and sit in the Park or stroll down Piccadilly, and if you cannot see an absolutely Japanese effect there, you will not see it anywhere. Or, to return again to the past, take another instance, the ancient Greeks. Do you think that Greek art ever tells us what the Greek people were like? Do you believe that the Athenian women were like the stately dignified figures of the Parthenon frieze or like those marvelous goddesses who sat in the triangular pediments of the same building? If you judge from the art, they certainly were so. But read an authority like Aristophanes for instance. You will find that the Athenian ladies laced tightly, wore high-heeled shoes, dyed their hair yellow, painted and rouged their faces, and were exactly like any silly fashionable or fallen creature of our own day. The fact is that we look back on the ages entirely through the medium of art, and art, very fortunately, has never once told us the truth.

CYRIL: But in order to avoid making any error I want you to tell me briefly the doctrines of the new aesthetics.

V I V I A N. Briefly, then, they are these. Art never expresses anything but itself. It has an independent life, just as thought has, and develops purely on its own lines. It is not necessarily realistic in an age of realism, nor spiritual in an age of faith. So far from being the creation of its time, it is usually in direct opposition to it, and the only history that it preserves for us is the history of its own progress. Sometimes it returns upon its footsteps, and revives some antique form, as happened in the archaistic movement of late Greek Art, and in the pre-Raphaelite movement of our own day. At other times it entirely anticipates its age, and produces in one-century work that it takes another century to understand, to appreciate and to enjoy. In no case does it reproduce its age. To pass from the art of a time to the time itself is the great mistake that all historians commit.

The second doctrine is this. All bad art comes from returning to Life and Nature, and elevating them into ideals. Life and Nature may sometimes be used as part of Art's rough material, but before they are of any real service to art they must be translated into artistic conventions. The moment Art surrenders its imaginative medium it surrenders everything. As a method Realism is a complete failure, and the two things that every artist should avoid are modernity of form and modernity of subject-matter. To us, who live in the nineteenth century, any century is a suitable subject for art except our own. The only beautiful things are the things that do not concern us. It is, to have the pleasure of quoting myself, exactly because Hecuba is nothing to us that her sorrows are so suitable a motive for a tragedy. Besides, it is only the modern that ever becomes old-fashioned. M. Zola sits down to give us a picture of the Second Empire. Who cares for the Second Empire now? It is out of date. Life goes faster than Realism, but Romanticism is always in front of Life.

The third doctrine is that Life imitates Art far more than Art imitates Life. This results not merely from Life's imitative instinct, but from the fact that the self-conscious aim of Life is to find expression, and that Art offers it

certain beautiful forms through which it may realize that energy. It is a theory that has never been put forward before, but it is extremely fruitful, and throws an entirely new light upon the history of Art.

It follows, as a corollary from this, that external Nature also imitates Art. The only effects that she can show us are effects that we have already seen through poetry, or in paintings. This is the secret of Nature's charm, as well as the explanation of Nature's weakness.

The final revelation is that Lying, the telling of beautiful untrue things, is the proper aim of Art. But of this I think I have spoken at sufficient length. And now let us go out on the terrace, where 'droops the milk-white peacock like a ghost,' while the evening star 'washes the dusk with silver.' At twilight nature becomes a wonderfully suggestive effect, and is not without loveliness, though perhaps its chief use is to illustrate quotations from the poets. Come! We have talked long enough.

What is Fascism

-Benito Mussolini & Giovanni Gentile

Fascism, the more it considers and observes the future and the development of humanity quite apart from political considerations of the moment, believes neither in the possibility nor the utility of perpetual peace. It thus repudiates the doctrine of Pacifism -- born of a renunciation of the struggle and an act of cowardice in the face of sacrifice. War alone brings up to its highest tension all human energy and puts the stamp of nobility upon the peoples who have courage to meet it. All other trials are substitutes, which never really put men into the position where they have to make the great decision -- the alternative of life or death....

...The Fascist accepts life and loves it, knowing nothing of and despising suicide: he rather conceives of life as duty and struggle and conquest, but above all for others -- those who are at hand and those who are far distant, contemporaries, and those who will come after...

...Fascism [is] the complete opposite of...Marxian Socialism, the materialist conception of history of human civilization can be explained simply through the conflict of interests among the various social groups and by the change and development in the means and instruments of production.... Fascism, now and always, believes in holiness and in heroism; that is to say, in actions influenced by no economic motive, direct or indirect. And if the economic conception of history be denied, according to which theory men are no more than puppets, carried to and fro by the waves of chance, while the real directing forces are quite out of their control, it follows that the existence of an unchangeable and unchanging class-war is also denied - the natural progeny of the economic conception of history. And above all Fascism denies that class-war can be the preponderant force in the transformation of society....

After Socialism, Fascism combats the whole complex system of democratic ideology, and repudiates it, whether in its theoretical premises or in its practical application. Fascism denies that the majority, by the simple fact that it is a majority, can direct human society; it denies that numbers alone can govern by means of a periodical consultation, and it affirms the immutable, beneficial, and fruitful inequality of mankind, which can never be permanently leveled through the mere operation of a mechanical process such as universal suffrage....

...Fascism denies, in democracy, the absurd conventional untruth of political equality dressed out in the garb of collective irresponsibility, and the myth of "happiness" and indefinite progress....

...Given that the nineteenth century was the century of Socialism, of Liberalism, and of Democracy, it does not necessarily follow that the twentieth century must also be a century of Socialism, Liberalism and Democracy: political doctrines pass, but humanity remains, and it may rather be expected that this will be a century of authority...a century of Fascism. For if the nineteenth century was a century of individualism it may be expected that this will be the century of collectivism and hence the century of the State....

The foundation of Fascism is the conception of the State, its character, its duty, and its aim. Fascism conceives of the State as an absolute, in comparison with which all individuals or groups are relative, only to be conceived of in their relation to the State. The conception of the Liberal State is not that of a directing force, guiding the play and development, both material and spiritual, of a collective body, but merely a force limited to the function of recording results: on the other hand, the Fascist State is itself conscious and has itself a will and a personality -- thus it may be called the "ethic" State....

...The Fascist State organizes the nation, but leaves a sufficient margin of liberty to the individual; the latter is deprived of all useless and possibly harmful freedom, but retains what is essential; the deciding power in this question cannot be the individual, but the State alone....

...For Fascism, the growth of empire, that is to say the expansion of the nation, is an essential manifestation of vitality, and its opposite a sign of decadence. Peoples which are rising, or rising again after a period of decadence, are always imperialist; and renunciation is a sign of decay and of death. Fascism is the doctrine best adapted to represent the tendencies and the aspirations of a people, like the people of Italy, who are rising again after many centuries of abasement and foreign servitude. But empire demands discipline, the coordination of all forces and a deeply felt sense of duty and sacrifice: this fact explains many aspects of the practical working of the regime, the character of many forces in the State, and the necessarily severe measures which must be taken against those who would oppose this spontaneous and inevitable movement of Italy in the twentieth century, and would oppose it by recalling the outworn ideology of the nineteenth century - repudiated wheresoever there has been the courage to undertake great experiments of social and political transformation; for never before has the nation stood more in need of authority, of direction and order. If every age has its own characteristic doctrine, there are a thousand signs which point to Fascism as the characteristic doctrine of our time. For if a doctrine must be a living thing, this is proved by the fact that Fascism has created a living faith; and that this faith is very powerful in the minds of men is demonstrated by those who have suffered and died for it.

Liberty

Excerpt From *On Liberty*

-John Stuart Mill (1806-1873):

Chapter I Introductory

THE subject of this Essay is not the so-called Liberty of the Will, so unfortunately opposed to the misnamed doctrine of Philosophical Necessity; but Civil, or Social Liberty: the nature and limits of the power which can be legitimately exercised by society over the individual. A question seldom stated, and hardly ever discussed, in

general terms, but which profoundly influences the practical controversies of the age by its latent presence, and is likely soon to make itself recognized as the vital question of the future. It is so far from being new, that, in a certain sense, it has divided mankind, almost from the remotest ages, but in the stage of progress into which the more civilized portions of the species have now entered, it presents itself under new conditions, and requires a different and more fundamental treatment.

The struggle between Liberty and Authority is the most conspicuous feature in the portions of history with which we are earliest familiar, particularly in that of Greece, Rome, and England. But in old times this contest was between subjects, or some classes of subjects, and the government. By liberty, was meant protection against the tyranny of the political rulers. The rulers were conceived (except in some of the popular governments of Greece) as in a necessarily antagonistic position to the people whom they ruled. They consisted of a governing One, or a governing tribe or caste, who derived their authority from inheritance or conquest; who, at all events, did not hold it at the pleasure of the governed, and whose supremacy men did not venture, perhaps did not desire, to contest, whatever precautions might be taken against its oppressive exercise. Their power was regarded as necessary, but also as highly dangerous; as a weapon which they would attempt to use against their subjects, no less than against external enemies. To prevent the weaker members of the community from being preyed upon by innumerable vultures, it was needful that there should be an animal of prey stronger than the rest, commissioned to keep them down. But as the king of the vultures would be no less bent upon preying upon the flock than any of the minor harpies, it was indispensable to be in a perpetual attitude of defence against his beak and claws. The aim, therefore, of patriots, was to set limits to the power which the ruler should be suffered to exercise over the community; and this limitation was what they meant by liberty. It was attempted in two ways. First, by obtaining a recognition of certain immunities, called political liberties or rights, which it was to be regarded as a breach of duty in the ruler to infringe, and which, if he did infringe, specific resistance, or general rebellion, was held to be justifiable. A second, and generally a later expedient, was the establishment of constitutional checks; by which the consent of the community, or of a body of some sort supposed to represent its interests, was made a necessary condition to some of the more important acts of the governing power. To the first of these modes of limitation, the ruling power, in most European countries, was compelled, more or less, to submit. It was not so with the second; and to attain this, or when already in some degree possessed, to attain it more completely, became everywhere the principal object of the lovers of liberty. And so long as mankind were content to combat one enemy by another, and to be ruled by a master, on condition of being guaranteed more or less efficaciously against his tyranny, they did not carry their aspirations beyond this point.

A time, however, came in the progress of human affairs, when men ceased to think it a necessity of nature that their governors should be an independent power, opposed in interest to themselves. It appeared to them much better that the various magistrates of the State should be their tenants or delegates, revocable at their pleasure. In that way alone, it seemed, could they have complete security that the powers of government would never be abused to their disadvantage. By degrees, this new demand for elective and temporary rulers became the prominent object of the exertions of the popular party, wherever any such party existed; and superseded, to a considerable extent, the previous efforts to limit the power of rulers. As the struggle proceeded for making the ruling power emanate from the periodical choice of the ruled, some persons began to think that too much importance had been attached to the limitation of the power itself. That (it might seem) was a resource against rulers whose interests were habitually opposed to those of the people. What was now wanted was, that the rulers should be identified with the people; that their interest and will should be the interest and will of the nation. The nation did not need to be protected against its own will. There was no fear of its tyrannizing over itself. Let the rulers be effectually responsible to it, promptly removable by it, and it could afford to trust them with power of

which it could itself dictate the use to be made. Their power was but the nation's own power, concentrated, and in a form convenient for exercise. This mode of thought, or rather perhaps of feeling, was common among the last generation of European liberalism, in the Continental section of which, it still apparently predominates. Those who admit any limit to what a government may do, except in the case of such governments as they think ought not to exist, stand out as brilliant exceptions among the political thinkers of the Continent. A similar tone of sentiment might by this time have been prevalent in our own country, if the circumstances which for a time encouraged it had continued unaltered.

But, in political and philosophical theories, as well as in persons, success discloses faults and infirmities which failure might have concealed from observation. The notion, that the people have no need to limit their power over themselves, might seem axiomatic, when popular government was a thing only dreamed about, or read of as having existed at some distant period of the past. Neither was that notion necessarily disturbed by such temporary aberrations as those of the French Revolution, the worst of which were the work of an usurping few, and which, in any case, belonged, not to the permanent working of popular institutions, but to a sudden and convulsive outbreak against monarchical and aristocratic despotism. In time, however, a democratic republic came to occupy a large portion of the earth's surface, and made itself felt as one of the most powerful members of the community of nations; and elective and responsible government became subject to the observations and criticisms which wait upon a great existing fact. It was now perceived that such phrases as "self-government," and "the power of the people over themselves," do not express the true state of the case. The "people" who exercise the power, are not always the same people with those over whom it is exercised, and the "self-government" spoken of, is not the government of each by himself, but of each by all the rest. The will of the people, moreover, practically means, the will of the most numerous or the most active part of the people; the majority, or those who succeed in making themselves accepted as the majority; the people, consequently, may desire to oppress a part of their number; and precautions are as much needed against this, as against any other abuse of power. The limitation, therefore, of the power of government over individuals, loses none of its importance when the holders of power are regularly accountable to the community, that is, to the strongest party therein. This view of things, recommending itself equally to the intelligence of thinkers and to the inclination of those important classes in European society to whose real or supposed interests democracy is adverse, has had no difficulty in establishing itself; and in political speculations "the tyranny of the majority" is now generally included among the evils against which society requires to be on its guard.

Like other tyrannies, the tyranny of the majority was at first, and is still vulgarly, held in dread, chiefly as operating through the acts of the public authorities. But reflecting persons perceived that when society is itself the tyrant --society collectively, over the separate individuals who compose it--its means of tyrannizing are not restricted to the acts which it may do by the hands of its political functionaries. Society can and does execute its own mandates: and if it issues wrong mandates instead of right, or any mandates at all in things with which it ought not to meddle, it practises a social tyranny more formidable than many kinds of political oppression, since, though not usually upheld by such extreme penalties, it leaves fewer means of escape, penetrating much more deeply into the details of life, and enslaving the soul itself. Protection, therefore, against the tyranny of the magistrate is not enough; there needs protection also against the tyranny of the prevailing opinion and feeling; against the tendency of society to impose, by other means than civil penalties, its own ideas and practices as rules of conduct on those who dissent from them; to fetter the development, and, if possible, prevent the formation, of any individuality not in harmony with its ways, and compel all characters to fashion themselves upon the model of its own. There is a limit to the legitimate interference of collective opinion with individual

independence; and to find that limit, and maintain it against encroachment, is as indispensable to a good condition of human affairs, as protection against political despotism.

But though this proposition is not likely to be contested in general terms, the practical question, where to place the limit--how to make the fitting adjustment between individual independence and social control--is a subject on which nearly everything remains to be done. All that makes existence valuable to any one, depends on the enforcement of restraints upon the actions of other people. Some rules of conduct, therefore, must be imposed, by law in the first place, and by opinion on many things which are not fit subjects for the operation of law. What these rules should be, is the principal question in human affairs; but if we except a few of the most obvious cases, it is one of those which least progress has been made in resolving. No two ages, and scarcely any two countries, have decided it alike; and the decision of one age or country is a wonder to another. Yet the people of any given age and country no more suspect any difficulty in it, than if it were a subject on which mankind had always been agreed. The rules which obtain among themselves appear to them self-evident and selfjustifying. This all but universal illusion is one of the examples of the magical influence of custom, which is not only, as the proverb says a second nature, but is continually mistaken for the first. The effect of custom, in preventing any misgiving respecting the rules of conduct which mankind impose on one another, is all the more complete because the subject is one on which it is not generally considered necessary that reasons should be given, either by one person to others, or by each to himself. People are accustomed to believe and have been encouraged in the belief by some who aspire to the character of philosophers, that their feelings, on subjects of this nature, are better than reasons, and render reasons unnecessary. The practical principle which guides them to their opinions on the regulation of human conduct, is the feeling in each person's mind that everybody should be required to act as he, and those with whom he sympathizes, would like them to act. No one, indeed, acknowledges to himself that his standard of judgment is his own liking; but an opinion on a point of conduct, not supported by reasons, can only count as one person's preference; and if the reasons, when given, are a mere appeal to a similar preference felt by other people, it is still only many people's liking instead of one. To an ordinary man, however, his own preference, thus supported, is not only a perfectly satisfactory reason, but the only one he generally has for any of his notions of morality, taste, or propriety, which are not expressly written in his religious creed; and his chief guide in the interpretation even of that. Men's opinions, accordingly, on what is laudable or blamable, are affected by all the multifarious causes which influence their wishes in regard to the conduct of others, and which are as numerous as those which determine their wishes on any other subject. Sometimes their reason--at other times their prejudices or superstitions: often their social affections, not seldom their antisocial ones, their envy or jealousy, their arrogance or contemptuousness: but most commonly, their desires or fears for themselves--their legitimate or illegitimate self-interest. Wherever there is an ascendant class, a large portion of the morality of the country emanates from its class interests, and its feelings of class superiority. The morality between Spartans and Helots, between planters and negroes, between princes and subjects, between nobles and roturiers, between men and women, has been for the most part the creation of these class interests and feelings: and the sentiments thus generated, react in turn upon the moral feelings of the members of the ascendant class, in their relations among themselves. Where, on the other hand, a class, formerly ascendant, has lost its ascendancy, or where its ascendancy is unpopular, the prevailing moral sentiments frequently bear the impress of an impatient dislike of superiority. Another grand determining principle of the rules of conduct, both in act and forbearance which have been enforced by law or opinion, has been the servility of mankind towards the supposed preferences or aversions of their temporal masters, or of their gods. This servility though essentially selfish, is not hypocrisy; it gives rise to perfectly genuine sentiments of abhorrence; it made men burn magicians and heretics. Among so many baser influences, the general and

obvious interests of society have of course had a share, and a large one, in the direction of the moral sentiments: less, however, as a matter of reason, and on their own account, than as a consequence of the sympathies and antipathies which grew out of them: and sympathies and antipathies which had little or nothing to do with the interests of society, have made themselves felt in the establishment of moralities with quite as great force.

The likings and dislikings of society, or of some powerful portion of it, are thus the main thing which has practically determined the rules laid down for general observance, under the penalties of law or opinion. And in general, those who have been in advance of society in thought and feeling, have left this condition of things unassailed in principle, however they may have come into conflict with it in some of its details. They have occupied themselves rather in inquiring what things society ought to like or dislike, than in questioning whether its likings or dislikings should be a law to individuals. They preferred endeavouring to alter the feelings of mankind on the particular points on which they were themselves heretical, rather than make common cause in defence of freedom, with heretics generally. The only case in which the higher ground has been taken on principle and maintained with consistency, by any but an individual here and there, is that of religious belief: a case instructive in many ways, and not least so as forming a most striking instance of the fallibility of what is called the moral sense: for the odium theologicum, in a sincere bigot, is one of the most unequivocal cases of moral feeling. Those who first broke the yoke of what called itself the Universal Church, were in general as little willing to permit difference of religious opinion as that church itself. But when the heat of the conflict was over, without giving a complete victory to any party, and each church or sect was reduced to limit its hopes to retaining possession of the ground it already occupied; minorities, seeing that they had no chance of becoming majorities, were under the necessity of pleading to those whom they could not convert, for permission to differ. It is accordingly on this battle-field, almost solely, that the rights of the individual against society have been asserted on broad grounds of principle, and the claim of society to exercise authority over dissentients openly controverted. The great writers to whom the world owes what religious liberty it possesses, have mostly asserted freedom of conscience as an indefeasible right, and denied absolutely that a human being is accountable to others for his religious belief. Yet so natural to mankind is intolerance in whatever they really care about, that religious freedom has hardly anywhere been practically realized, except where religious indifference, which dislikes to have its peace disturbed by theological quarrels, has added its weight to the scale. In the minds of almost all religious persons, even in the most tolerant countries, the duty of toleration is admitted with tacit reserves. One person will bear with dissent in matters of church government, but not of dogma; another can tolerate everybody, short of a Papist or an Unitarian; another, every one who believes in revealed religion; a few extend their charity a little further, but stop at the belief in a God and in a future state. Wherever the sentiment of the majority is still genuine and intense, it is found to have abated little of its claim to be obeyed.

In England, from the peculiar circumstances of our political history, though the yoke of opinion is perhaps heavier, that of law is lighter, than in most other countries of Europe; and there is considerable jealousy of direct interference, by the legislative or the executive power with private conduct; not so much from any just regard for the independence of the individual, as from the still subsisting habit of looking on the government as representing an opposite interest to the public. The majority have not yet learnt to feel the power of the government their power, or its opinions their opinions. When they do so, individual liberty will probably be as much exposed to invasion from the government, as it already is from public opinion. But, as yet, there is a considerable amount of feeling ready to be called forth against any attempt of the law to control individuals in things in which they have not hitherto been accustomed to be controlled by it; and this with very little discrimination as to whether the matter is, or is not, within the legitimate sphere of legal control; insomuch that

the feeling, highly salutary on the whole, is perhaps quite as often misplaced as well grounded in the particular instances of its application.

There is, in fact, no recognized principle by which the propriety or impropriety of government interference is customarily tested. People decide according to their personal preferences. Some, whenever they see any good to be done, or evil to be remedied, would willingly instigate the government to undertake the business; while others prefer to bear almost any amount of social evil, rather than add one to the departments of human interests amenable to governmental control. And men range themselves on one or the other side in any particular case, according to this general direction of their sentiments; or according to the degree of interest which they feel in the particular thing which it is proposed that the government should do; or according to the belief they entertain that the government would, or would not, do it in the manner they prefer; but very rarely on account of any opinion to which they consistently adhere, as to what things are fit to be done by a government. And it seems to me that, in consequence of this absence of rule or principle, one side is at present as often wrong as the other; the interference of government is, with about equal frequency, improperly invoked and improperly condemned.

The object of this Essay is to assert one very simple principle, as entitled to govern absolutely the dealings of society with the individual in the way of compulsion and control, whether the means used be physical force in the form of legal penalties, or the moral coercion of public opinion. That principle is, that the sole end for which mankind are warranted, individually or collectively in interfering with the liberty of action of any of their number, is self-protection. That the only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilized community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others. His own good, either physical or moral, is not a sufficient warrant. He cannot rightfully be compelled to do or forbear because it will be better for him to do so, because it will make him happier, because, in the opinions of others, to do so would be wise, or even right. These are good reasons for remonstrating with him, or reasoning with him, or persuading him, or entreating him, but not for compelling him, or visiting him with any evil, in case he do otherwise. To justify that, the conduct from which it is desired to deter him must be calculated to produce evil to some one else. The only part of the conduct of any one, for which he is amenable to society, is that which concerns others. In the part which merely concerns himself, his independence is, of right, absolute. Over himself, over his own body and mind, the individual is sovereign.

It is, perhaps, hardly necessary to say that this doctrine is meant to apply only to human beings in the maturity of their faculties. We are not speaking of children, or of young persons below the age which the law may fix as that of manhood or womanhood. Those who are still in a state to require being taken care of by others, must be protected against their own actions as well as against external injury. For the same reason, we may leave out of consideration those backward states of society in which the race itself may be considered as in its nonage. The early difficulties in the way of spontaneous progress are so great, that there is seldom any choice of means for overcoming them; and a ruler full of the spirit of improvement is warranted in the use of any expedients that will attain an end, perhaps otherwise unattainable. Despotism is a legitimate mode of government in dealing with barbarians, provided the end be their improvement, and the means justified by actually effecting that end. Liberty, as a principle, has no application to any state of things anterior to the time when mankind have become capable of being improved by free and equal discussion. Until then, there is nothing for them but implicit obedience to an Akbar or a Charlemagne, if they are so fortunate as to find one. But as soon as mankind have attained the capacity of being guided to their own improvement by conviction or persuasion (a period long since reached in all nations with whom we need here concern ourselves), compulsion, either in the direct form

or in that of pains and penalties for non-compliance, is no longer admissible as a means to their own good, and justifiable only for the security of others.

It is proper to state that I forego any advantage which could be derived to my argument from the idea of abstract right as a thing independent of utility. I regard utility as the ultimate appeal on all ethical questions; but it must be utility in the largest sense, grounded on the permanent interests of man as a progressive being. Those interests, I contend, authorize the subjection of individual spontaneity to external control, only in respect to those actions of each, which concern the interest of other people. If any one does an act hurtful to others, there is a *prima facie* case for punishing him, by law, or, where legal penalties are not safely applicable, by general disapprobation. There are also many positive acts for the benefit of others, which he may rightfully be compelled to perform; such as, to give evidence in a court of justice; to bear his fair share in the common defense, or in any other joint work necessary to the interest of the society of which he enjoys the protection; and to perform certain acts of individual beneficence, such as saving a fellow-creature's life, or interposing to protect the defenseless against ill-usage, things which whenever it is obviously a man's duty to do, he may rightfully be made responsible to society for not doing. A person may cause evil to others not only by his actions but by his inaction, and in neither case he is justly accountable to them for the injury. The latter case, it is true, requires a much more cautious exercise of compulsion than the former. To make any one answerable for doing evil to others, is the rule; to make him answerable for not preventing evil, is, comparatively speaking, the exception. Yet there are many cases clear enough and grave enough to justify that exception. In all things which regard the external relations of the individual, he is *de jure* amenable to those whose interests are concerned, and if need be, to society as their protector. There are often good reasons for not holding him to the responsibility; but these reasons must arise from the special expediencies of the case: either because it is a kind of case in which he is on the whole likely to act better, when left to his own discretion, than when controlled in any way in which society have it in their power to control him; or because the attempt to exercise control would produce other evils, greater than those which it would prevent. When such reasons as these preclude the enforcement of responsibility, the conscience of the agent himself should step into the vacant judgment-seat, and protect those interests of others which have no external protection; judging himself all the more rigidly, because the case does not admit of his being made accountable to the judgment of his fellow creatures.

But there is a sphere of action in which society, as distinguished from the individual, has, if any, only an indirect interest; comprehending all that portion of a person's life and conduct which affects only himself, or, if it also affects others, only with their free, voluntary, and undeceived consent and participation. When I say only himself, I mean directly, and in the first instance: for whatever affects himself, may affect others through himself; and the objection which may be grounded on this contingency, will receive consideration in the sequel. This, then, is the appropriate region of human liberty. It comprises, first, the inward domain of consciousness; demanding liberty of conscience, in the most comprehensive sense; liberty of thought and feeling; absolute freedom of opinion and sentiment on all subjects, practical or speculative, scientific, moral, or theological. The liberty of expressing and publishing opinions may seem to fall under a different principle, since it belongs to that part of the conduct of an individual which concerns other people; but, being almost of as much importance as the liberty of thought itself, and resting in great part on the same reasons, is practically inseparable from it. Secondly, the principle requires liberty of tastes and pursuits; of framing the plan of our life to suit our own character; of doing as we like, subject to such consequences as may follow; without impediment from our fellow-creatures, so long as what we do does not harm them even though they should think our conduct foolish, perverse, or wrong. Thirdly, from this liberty of each individual, follows the liberty, within the same limits, of

combination among individuals; freedom to unite, for any purpose not involving harm to others: the persons combining being supposed to be of full age, and not forced or deceived.

No society in which these liberties are not, on the whole, respected, is free, whatever may be its form of government; and none is completely free in which they do not exist absolute and unqualified. The only freedom which deserves the name, is that of pursuing our own good in our own way, so long as we do not attempt to deprive others of theirs, or impede their efforts to obtain it. Each is the proper guardian of his own health, whether bodily, or mental or spiritual. Mankind are greater gainers by suffering each other to live as seems good to themselves, than by compelling each to live as seems good to the rest.

Though this doctrine is anything but new, and, to some persons, may have the air of a truism, there is no doctrine which stands more directly opposed to the general tendency of existing opinion and practice. Society has expended fully as much effort in the attempt (according to its lights) to compel people to conform to its notions of personal, as of social excellence. The ancient commonwealths thought themselves entitled to practice, and the ancient philosophers countenanced, the regulation of every part of private conduct by public authority, on the ground that the State had a deep interest in the whole bodily and mental discipline of every one of its citizens, a mode of thinking which may have been admissible in small republics surrounded by powerful enemies, in constant peril of being subverted by foreign attack or internal commotion, and to which even a short interval of relaxed energy and self-command might so easily be fatal, that they could not afford to wait for the salutary permanent effects of freedom. In the modern world, the greater size of political communities, and above all, the separation between the spiritual and temporal authority (which placed the direction of men's consciences in other hands than those which controlled their worldly affairs), prevented so great an interference by law in the details of private life; but the engines of moral repression have been wielded more strenuously against divergence from the reigning opinion in self-regarding, than even in social matters; religion, the most powerful of the elements which have entered into the formation of moral feeling, having almost always been governed either by the ambition of a hierarchy, seeking control over every department of human conduct, or by the spirit of Puritanism. And some of those modern reformers who have placed themselves in strongest opposition to the religions of the past, have been noway behind either churches or sects in their assertion of the right of spiritual domination: M. Comte, in particular, whose social system, as unfolded in his *Traite de Politique Positive*, aims at establishing (though by moral more than by legal appliances) a despotism of society over the individual, surpassing anything contemplated in the political ideal of the most rigid disciplinarian among the ancient philosophers.

Apart from the peculiar tenets of individual thinkers, there is also in the world at large an increasing inclination to stretch unduly the powers of society over the individual, both by the force of opinion and even by that of legislation: and as the tendency of all the changes taking place in the world is to strengthen society, and diminish the power of the individual, this encroachment is not one of the evils which tend spontaneously to disappear, but, on the contrary, to grow more and more formidable. The disposition of mankind, whether as rulers or as fellow-citizens, to impose their own opinions and inclinations as a rule of conduct on others, is so energetically supported by some of the best and by some of the worst feelings incident to human nature, that it is hardly ever kept under restraint by anything but want of power; and as the power is not declining, but growing, unless a strong barrier of moral conviction can be raised against the mischief, we must expect, in the present circumstances of the world, to see it increase.

It will be convenient for the argument, if, instead of at once entering upon the general thesis, we confine ourselves in the first instance to a single branch of it, on which the principle here stated is, if not fully, yet to a certain point, recognized by the current opinions. This one branch is the Liberty of Thought: from which it is

impossible to separate the cognate liberty of speaking and of writing. Although these liberties, to some considerable amount, form part of the political morality of all countries which profess religious toleration and free institutions, the grounds, both philosophical and practical, on which they rest, are perhaps not so familiar to the general mind, nor so thoroughly appreciated by many even of the leaders of opinion, as might have been expected. Those grounds, when rightly understood, are of much wider application than to only one division of the subject, and a thorough consideration of this part of the question will be found the best introduction to the remainder. Those to whom nothing which I am about to say will be new, may therefore, I hope, excuse me, if on a subject which for now three centuries has been so often discussed, I venture on one discussion more.

ANARCHISM: WHAT IT REALLY STANDS FOR

From *Anarchism and Other Essays* (3rd revised edition, New York: Mother Earth Publishing Association, 1917)

-Emma Goldman

*Ever reviled, accursed, ne'er understood,
 Thou art the grisly terror of our age.
 "Wreck of all order," cry the multitude,
 "Art thou, and war and murder's endless rage."
 O, let them cry. To them that ne'er have striven
 The truth that lies behind a word to find,
 To them the word's right meaning was not given.
 They shall continue blind among the blind.
 But thou, O word, so clear, so strong, so pure,
 Thou sayest all which I for goal have taken.
 I give thee to the future! Thine secure
 When each at least unto himself shall waken.
 Comes it in sunshine? In the tempest's thrill?
 I cannot tell--but it the earth shall see!
 I am an Anarchist! Wherefore I will
 Not rule, and also ruled I will not be!*

-JOHN HENRY MACKAY.

THE history of human growth and development is at the same time the history of the terrible struggle of every new idea heralding the approach of a brighter dawn. In its tenacious hold on tradition, the Old has never hesitated to make use of the foulest and cruelest means to stay the advent of the New, in whatever form or period the latter may have asserted itself. Nor need we retrace our steps into the distant past to realize the enormity of opposition, difficulties, and hardships placed in the path of every progressive idea. The rack, the thumbscrew, and the knout are still with us; so are the convict's garb and the social wrath, all conspiring against the spirit that is serenely marching on.

Anarchism could not hope to escape the fate of all other ideas of innovation. Indeed, as the most revolutionary and uncompromising innovator, Anarchism must needs meet with the combined ignorance and venom of the world it aims to reconstruct.

To deal even remotely with all that is being said and done against Anarchism would necessitate the writing of a whole volume. I shall therefore meet only two of the principal objections. In so doing, I shall attempt to elucidate what Anarchism really stands for.

The strange phenomenon of the opposition to Anarchism is that it brings to light the relation between so-called intelligence and ignorance. And yet this is not so very strange when we consider the relativity of all things. The ignorant mass has in its favor that it makes no pretense of knowledge or tolerance. Acting, as it always does, by mere impulse, its reasons are like those of a child. "Why?" "Because." Yet the opposition of the uneducated to Anarchism deserves the same consideration as that of the intelligent man.

What, then, are the objections? First, Anarchism is impractical, though a beautiful ideal. Second, Anarchism stands for violence and destruction, hence it must be repudiated as vile and dangerous. Both the intelligent man and the ignorant mass judge not from a thorough knowledge of the subject, but either from hearsay or false interpretation.

A practical scheme, says Oscar Wilde, is either one already in existence, or a scheme that could be carried out under the existing conditions; but it is exactly the existing conditions that one objects to, and any scheme that could accept these conditions is wrong and foolish. The true criterion of the practical, therefore, is not whether the latter can keep intact the wrong or foolish; rather is it whether the scheme has vitality enough to leave the stagnant waters of the old, and build, as well as sustain, new life. In the light of this conception, Anarchism is indeed practical. More than any other idea, it is helping to do away with the wrong and foolish; more than any other idea, it is building and sustaining new life.

The emotions of the ignorant man are continuously kept at a pitch by the most blood-curdling stories about Anarchism. Not a thing too outrageous to be employed against this philosophy and its exponents. Therefore Anarchism represents to the unthinking what the proverbial bad man does to the child,--a black monster bent on swallowing everything; in short, destruction and violence.

Destruction and violence! How is the ordinary man to know that the most violent element in society is ignorance; that its power of destruction is the very thing Anarchism is combating? Nor is he aware that Anarchism, whose roots, as it were, are part of nature's forces, destroys, not healthful tissue, but parasitic growths that feed on the life's essence of society. It is merely clearing the soil from weeds and sagebrush, that it may eventually bear healthy fruit.

Someone has said that it requires less mental effort to condemn than to think. The widespread mental indolence, so prevalent in society, proves this to be only too true. Rather than to go to the bottom of any given idea, to examine into its origin and meaning, most people will either condemn it altogether, or rely on some superficial or prejudicial definition of non-essentials.

Anarchism urges man to think, to investigate, to analyze every proposition; but that the brain capacity of the average reader be not taxed too much, I also shall begin with a definition, and then elaborate on the latter.

ANARCHISM:--The philosophy of a new social order based on liberty unrestricted by man-made law; the theory that all forms of government rest on violence, and are therefore wrong and harmful, as well as unnecessary.

The new social order rests, of course, on the materialistic basis of life; but while all Anarchists agree that the main evil today is an economic one, they maintain that the solution of that evil can be brought about only through the consideration of every phase of life,--individual, as well as the collective; the internal, as well as the external phases.

A thorough perusal of the history of human development will disclose two elements in bitter conflict with each other; elements that are only now beginning to be understood, not as foreign to each other, but as closely related and truly harmonious, if only placed in proper environment: the individual and social instincts. The individual and society have waged a relentless and bloody battle for ages, each striving for supremacy, because each was blind to the value and importance of the other. The individual and social instincts,--the one a most potent factor for individual endeavor, for growth, aspiration, self-realization; the other an equally potent factor for mutual helpfulness and social well-being.

The explanation of the storm raging within the individual, and between him and his surroundings, is not far to seek. The primitive man, unable to understand his being, much less the unity of all life, felt himself absolutely dependent on blind, hidden forces ever ready to mock and taunt him. Out of that attitude grew the religious concepts of man as a mere speck of dust dependent on superior powers on high, who can only be appeased by complete surrender. All the early sagas rest on that idea, which continues to be the Leitmotiv of the biblical tales dealing with the relation of man to God, to the State, to society. Again and again the same motif, man is nothing, the powers are everything. Thus Jehovah would only endure man on condition of complete surrender. Man can have all the glories of the earth, but he must not become conscious of himself. The State, society, and moral laws all sing the same refrain: Man can have all the glories of the earth, but he must not become conscious of himself.

Anarchism is the only philosophy which brings to man the consciousness of himself; which maintains that God, the State, and society are non-existent, that their promises are null and void, since they can be fulfilled only through man's subordination. Anarchism is therefore the teacher of the unity of life; not merely in nature, but in man. There is no conflict between the individual and the social instincts, any more than there is between the heart and the lungs: the one the receptacle of a precious life essence, the other the repository of the element that keeps the essence pure and strong. The individual is the heart of society, conserving the essence of social life; society is the lungs which are distributing the element to keep the life essence--that is, the individual--pure and strong.

"The one thing of value in the world," says Emerson, "is the active soul; this every man contains within him. The soul active sees absolute truth and utters truth and creates." In other words, the individual instinct is the thing of value in the world. It is the true soul that sees and creates the truth alive, out of which is to come a still greater truth, the re-born social soul.

Anarchism is the great liberator of man from the phantoms that have held him captive; it is the arbiter and pacifier of the two forces for individual and social harmony. To accomplish that unity, Anarchism has declared war on the pernicious influences which have so far prevented the harmonious blending of individual and social instincts, the individual and society.

Religion, the dominion of the human mind; Property, the dominion of human needs; and Government, the dominion of human conduct, represent the stronghold of man's enslavement and all the horrors it entails. Religion! How it dominates man's mind, how it humiliates and degrades his soul. God is everything, man is nothing, says religion. But out of that nothing God has created a kingdom so despotic, so tyrannical, so cruel, so terribly exacting that naught but gloom and tears and blood have ruled the world since gods began. Anarchism rouses man to rebellion against this black monster. Break your mental fetters, says Anarchism to man, for not until you think and judge for yourself will you get rid of the dominion of darkness, the greatest obstacle to all progress.

Property, the dominion of man's needs, the denial of the right to satisfy his needs. Time was when property claimed a divine right, when it came to man with the same refrain, even as religion, "Sacrifice! Abnegate! Submit!" The spirit of Anarchism has lifted man from his prostrate position. He now stands erect, with his face toward the light. He has learned to see the insatiable, devouring, devastating nature of property, and he is preparing to strike the monster dead.

"Property is robbery," said the great French Anarchist Proudhon. Yes, but without risk and danger to the robber. Monopolizing the accumulated efforts of man, property has robbed him of his birthright, and has turned him loose a pauper and an outcast. Property has not even the time-worn excuse that man does not create enough to satisfy all needs. The A B C student of economics knows that the productivity of labor within the last few decades far exceeds normal demand. But what are normal demands to an abnormal institution? The only demand that property recognizes is its own gluttonous appetite for greater wealth, because wealth means power; the power to subdue, to crush, to exploit, the power to enslave, to outrage, to degrade. America is particularly boastful of her great power, her enormous national wealth. Poor America, of what avail is all her wealth, if the individuals comprising the nation are wretchedly poor? If they live in squalor, in filth, in crime, with hope and joy gone, a homeless, soilless army of human prey.

It is generally conceded that unless the returns of any business venture exceed the cost, bankruptcy is inevitable. But those engaged in the business of producing wealth have not yet learned even this simple lesson. Every year the cost of production in human life is growing larger (50,000 killed, 100,000 wounded in America last year); the returns to the masses, who help to create wealth, are ever getting smaller. Yet America continues to be blind to the inevitable bankruptcy of our business of production. Nor is this the only crime of the latter. Still more fatal is the crime of turning the producer into a mere particle of a machine, with less will and decision than his master of steel and iron. Man is being robbed not merely of the products of his labor, but of the power of free initiative, of originality, and the interest in, or desire for, the things he is making.

Real wealth consists in things of utility and beauty, in things that help to create strong, beautiful bodies and surroundings inspiring to live in. But if man is doomed to wind cotton around a spool, or dig coal, or build

roads for thirty years of his life, there can be no talk of wealth. What he gives to the world is only gray and hideous things, reflecting a dull and hideous existence,--too weak to live, too cowardly to die. Strange to say, there are people who extol this deadening method of centralized production as the proudest achievement of our age. They fail utterly to realize that if we are to continue in machine subserviency, our slavery is more complete than was our bondage to the King. They do not want to know that centralization is not only the death-knell of liberty, but also of health and beauty, of art and science, all these being impossible in a clock-like, mechanical atmosphere.

Anarchism cannot but repudiate such a method of production: its goal is the freest possible expression of all the latent powers of the individual. Oscar Wilde defines a perfect personality as "one who develops under perfect conditions, who is not wounded, maimed, or in danger." A perfect personality, then, is only possible in a state of society where man is free to choose the mode of work, the conditions of work, and the freedom to work. One to whom the making of a table, the building of a house, or the tilling of the soil, is what the painting is to the artist and the discovery to the scientist,--the result of inspiration, of intense longing, and deep interest in work as a creative force. That being the ideal of Anarchism, its economic arrangements must consist of voluntary productive and distributive associations, gradually developing into free communism, as the best means of producing with the least waste of human energy. Anarchism, however, also recognizes the right of the individual, or numbers of individuals, to arrange at all times for other forms of work, in harmony with their tastes and desires.

Such free display of human energy being possible only under complete individual and social freedom, Anarchism directs its forces against the third and greatest foe of all social equality; namely, the State, organized authority, or statutory law,--the dominion of human conduct.

Just as religion has fettered the human mind, and as property, or the monopoly of things, has subdued and stifled man's needs, so has the State enslaved his spirit, dictating every phase of conduct. "All government in essence," says Emerson, "is tyranny." It matters not whether it is government by divine right or majority rule. In every instance its aim is the absolute subordination of the individual.

Referring to the American government, the greatest American Anarchist, David Thoreau, said: "Government, what is it but a tradition, though a recent one, endeavoring to transmit itself unimpaired to posterity, but each instance losing its integrity; it has not the vitality and force of a single living man. Law never made man a whit more just; and by means of their respect for it, even the well disposed are daily made agents of injustice."

Indeed, the keynote of government is injustice. With the arrogance and self-sufficiency of the King who could do no wrong, governments ordain, judge, condemn, and punish the most insignificant offenses, while maintaining themselves by the greatest of all offenses, the annihilation of individual liberty. Thus Ouida is right when she maintains that "the State only aims at instilling those qualities in its public by which its demands are obeyed, and its exchequer is filled. Its highest attainment is the reduction of mankind to clockwork. In its atmosphere all those finer and more delicate liberties, which require treatment and spacious expansion, inevitably dry up and perish. The State requires a taxpaying machine in which there is no hitch, an exchequer in which there is never a deficit, and a public, monotonous, obedient, colorless, spiritless, moving humbly like a flock of sheep along a straight high road between two walls."

Yet even a flock of sheep would resist the chicanery of the State, if it were not for the corruptive, tyrannical, and oppressive methods it employs to serve its purposes. Therefore Bakunin repudiates the State as synonymous with the surrender of the liberty of the individual or small minorities,--the destruction of social relationship, the curtailment, or complete denial even, of life itself, for its own aggrandizement. The State is the altar of political freedom and, like the religious altar, it is maintained for the purpose of human sacrifice.

In fact, there is hardly a modern thinker who does not agree that government, organized authority, or the State, is necessary only to maintain or protect property and monopoly. It has proven efficient in that function only.

Even George Bernard Shaw, who hopes for the miraculous from the State under Fabianism, nevertheless admits that "it is at present a huge machine for robbing and slave-driving of the poor by brute force." This being the case, it is hard to see why the clever prefacer wishes to uphold the State after poverty shall have ceased to exist.

Unfortunately, there are still a number of people who continue in the fatal belief that government rests on natural laws, that it maintains social order and harmony, that it diminishes crime, and that it prevents the lazy man from fleecing his fellows. I shall therefore examine these contentions.

A natural law is that factor in man which asserts itself freely and spontaneously without any external force, in harmony with the requirements of nature. For instance, the demand for nutrition, for sex gratification, for light, air, and exercise, is a natural law. But its expression needs not the machinery of government, needs not the club, the gun, the handcuff, or the prison. To obey such laws, if we may call it obedience, requires only spontaneity and free opportunity. That governments do not maintain themselves through such harmonious factors is proven by the terrible array of violence, force, and coercion all governments use in order to live. Thus Blackstone is right when he says, "Human laws are invalid, because they are contrary to the laws of nature."

Unless it be the order of Warsaw after the slaughter of thousands of people, it is difficult to ascribe to governments any capacity for order or social harmony. Order derived through submission and maintained by terror is not much of a safe guaranty; yet that is the only "order" that governments have ever maintained. True social harmony grows naturally out of solidarity of interests. In a society where those who always work never have anything, while those who never work enjoy everything, solidarity of interests is non-existent; hence social harmony is but a myth. The only way organized authority meets this grave situation is by extending still greater privileges to those who have already monopolized the earth, and by still further enslaving the disinherited masses. Thus the entire arsenal of government--laws, police, soldiers, the courts, legislatures, prisons,--is strenuously engaged in "harmonizing" the most antagonistic elements in society.

The most absurd apology for authority and law is that they serve to diminish crime. Aside from the fact that the State is itself the greatest criminal, breaking every written and natural law, stealing in the form of taxes, killing in the form of war and capital punishment, it has come to an absolute standstill in coping with crime. It has failed utterly to destroy or even minimize the horrible scourge of its own creation.

Crime is naught but misdirected energy. So long as every institution of today, economic, political, social, and moral, conspires to misdirect human energy into wrong channels; so long as most people are out of place doing

the things they hate to do, living a life they loathe to live, crime will be inevitable, and all the laws on the statutes can only increase, but never do away with, crime. What does society, as it exists today, know of the process of despair, the poverty, the horrors, the fearful struggle the human soul must pass on its way to crime and degradation. Who that knows this terrible process can fail to see the truth in these words of Peter Kropotkin:

"Those who will hold the balance between the benefits thus attributed to law and punishment and the degrading effect of the latter on humanity; those who will estimate the torrent of depravity poured abroad in human society by the informer, favored by the Judge even, and paid for in clinking cash by governments, under the pretext of aiding to unmask crime; those who will go within prison walls and there see what human beings become when deprived of liberty, when subjected to the care of brutal keepers, to coarse, cruel words, to a thousand stinging, piercing humiliations, will agree with us that the entire apparatus of prison and punishment is an abomination which ought to be brought to an end."

The deterrent influence of law on the lazy man is too absurd to merit consideration. If society were only relieved of the waste and expense of keeping a lazy class, and the equally great expense of the paraphernalia of protection this lazy class requires, the social tables would contain an abundance for all, including even the occasional lazy individual. Besides, it is well to consider that laziness results either from special privileges, or physical and mental abnormalities. Our present insane system of production fosters both, and the most astounding phenomenon is that people should want to work at all now. Anarchism aims to strip labor of its deadening, dulling aspect, of its gloom and compulsion. It aims to make work an instrument of joy, of strength, of color, of real harmony, so that the poorest sort of a man should find in work both recreation and hope.

To achieve such an arrangement of life, government, with its unjust, arbitrary, repressive measures, must be done away with. At best it has but imposed one single mode of life upon all, without regard to individual and social variations and needs. In destroying government and statutory laws, Anarchism proposes to rescue the self-respect and independence of the individual from all restraint and invasion by authority. Only in freedom can man grow to his full stature. Only in freedom will he learn to think and move, and give the very best in him. Only in freedom will he realize the true force of the social bonds which knit men together, and which are the true foundation of a normal social life.

But what about human nature? Can it be changed? And if not, will it endure under Anarchism?

Poor human nature, what horrible crimes have been committed in thy name! Every fool, from king to policeman, from the flatheaded parson to the visionless dabbler in science, presumes to speak authoritatively of human nature. The greater the mental charlatan, the more definite his insistence on the wickedness and weaknesses of human nature. Yet, how can any one speak of it today, with every soul in a prison, with every heart fettered, wounded, and maimed?

John Burroughs has stated that experimental study of animals in captivity is absolutely useless. Their character, their habits, their appetites undergo a complete transformation when torn from their soil in field and forest.

With human nature caged in a narrow space, whipped daily into submission, how can we speak of its potentialities?

Freedom, expansion, opportunity, and, above all, peace and repose, alone can teach us the real dominant factors of human nature and all its wonderful possibilities.

Anarchism, then, really stands for the liberation of the human mind from the dominion of religion; the liberation of the human body from the dominion of property; liberation from the shackles and restraint of government. Anarchism stands for a social order based on the free grouping of individuals for the purpose of producing real social wealth; an order that will guarantee to every human being free access to the earth and full enjoyment of the necessities of life, according to individual desires, tastes, and inclinations.

This is not a wild fancy or an aberration of the mind. It is the conclusion arrived at by hosts of intellectual men and women the world over; a conclusion resulting from the close and studious observation of the tendencies of modern society: individual liberty and economic equality, the twin forces for the birth of what is fine and true in man.

As to methods. Anarchism is not, as some may suppose, a theory of the future to be realized through divine inspiration. It is a living force in the affairs of our life, constantly creating new conditions. The methods of Anarchism therefore do not comprise an iron-clad program to be carried out under all circumstances. Methods must grow out of the economic needs of each place and clime, and of the intellectual and temperamental requirements of the individual. The serene, calm character of a Tolstoy will wish different methods for social reconstruction than the intense, overflowing personality of a Michael Bakunin or a Peter Kropotkin. Equally so it must be apparent that the economic and political needs of Russia will dictate more drastic measures than would England or America. Anarchism does not stand for military drill and uniformity; it does, however, stand for the spirit of revolt, in whatever form, against everything that hinders human growth. All Anarchists agree in that, as they also agree in their opposition to the political machinery as a means of bringing about the great social change.

"All voting," says Thoreau, "is a sort of gaming, like checkers, or backgammon, a playing with right and wrong; its obligation never exceeds that of expediency. Even voting for the right thing is doing nothing for it. A wise man will not leave the right to the mercy of chance, nor wish it to prevail through the power of the majority." A close examination of the machinery of politics and its achievements will bear out the logic of Thoreau.

What does the history of parliamentarism show? Nothing but failure and defeat, not even a single reform to ameliorate the economic and social stress of the people. Laws have been passed and enactments made for the improvement and protection of labor. Thus it was proven only last year that Illinois, with the most rigid laws for mine protection, had the greatest mine disasters. In States where child labor laws prevail, child exploitation is at its highest, and though with us the workers enjoy full political opportunities, capitalism has reached the most brazen zenith.

Even were the workers able to have their own representatives, for which our good Socialist politicians are clamoring, what chances are there for their honesty and good faith? One has but to bear in mind the process of

politics to realize that its path of good intentions is full of pitfalls: wire-pulling, intriguing, flattering, lying, cheating; in fact, chicanery of every description, whereby the political aspirant can achieve success. Added to that is a complete demoralization of character and conviction, until nothing is left that would make one hope for anything from such a human derelict. Time and time again the people were foolish enough to trust, believe, and support with their last farthing aspiring politicians, only to find themselves betrayed and cheated.

It may be claimed that men of integrity would not become corrupt in the political grinding mill. Perhaps not; but such men would be absolutely helpless to exert the slightest influence in behalf of labor, as indeed has been shown in numerous instances. The State is the economic master of its servants. Good men, if such there be, would either remain true to their political faith and lose their economic support, or they would cling to their economic master and be utterly unable to do the slightest good. The political arena leaves one no alternative, one must either be a dunce or a rogue.

The political superstition is still holding sway over the hearts and minds of the masses, but the true lovers of liberty will have no more to do with it. Instead, they believe with Stirner that man has as much liberty as he is willing to take. Anarchism therefore stands for direct action, the open defiance of, and resistance to, all laws and restrictions, economic, social, and moral. But defiance and resistance are illegal. Therein lies the salvation of man. Everything illegal necessitates integrity, self-reliance, and courage. In short, it calls for free, independent spirits, for "men who are men, and who have a bone in their backs which you cannot pass your hand through."

Universal suffrage itself owes its existence to direct action. If not for the spirit of rebellion, of the defiance on the part of the American revolutionary fathers, their posterity would still wear the King's coat. If not for the direct action of a John Brown and his comrades, America would still trade in the flesh of the black man. True, the trade in white flesh is still going on; but that, too, will have to be abolished by direct action. Trade-unionism, the economic arena of the modern gladiator, owes its existence to direct action. It is but recently that law and government have attempted to crush the trade-union movement, and condemned the exponents of man's right to organize to prison as conspirators. Had they sought to assert their cause through begging, pleading, and compromise, trade-unionism would today be a negligible quantity. In France, in Spain, in Italy, in Russia, nay even in England (witness the growing rebellion of English labor unions), direct, revolutionary, economic action has become so strong a force in the battle for industrial liberty as to make the world realize the tremendous importance of labor's power. The General Strike, the supreme expression of the economic consciousness of the workers, was ridiculed in America but a short time ago. Today every great strike, in order to win, must realize the importance of the solidaric general protest.

Direct action, having proven effective along economic lines, is equally potent in the environment of the individual. There a hundred forces encroach upon his being, and only persistent resistance to them will finally set him free. Direct action against the authority in the shop, direct action against the authority of the law, direct action against the invasive, meddlesome authority of our moral code, is the logical, consistent method of Anarchism.

Will it not lead to a revolution? Indeed, it will. No real social change has ever come about without a revolution. People are either not familiar with their history, or they have not yet learned that revolution is but thought carried into action.

Anarchism, the great leaven of thought, is today permeating every phase of human endeavor. Science, art, literature, the drama, the effort for economic betterment, in fact every individual and social opposition to the existing disorder of things, is illuminated by the spiritual light of Anarchism. It is the philosophy of the sovereignty of the individual. It is the theory of social harmony. It is the great, surging, living truth that is reconstructing the world, and that will usher in the Dawn.