**Introduction to Ethics 2015 Class Notes**

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Ethics as a discipline has a history throughout philosophy.

* The Foundations of Society
* What is Good

Beginning with a Hegelian Thought:

* If you want to know something… Hegel believes it is necessary to study the history of it.

The Problem of Beginning:

* Where do we start our research?
* Where does Ethics first of all start?

Conceptions of the Beginning:

* Different in the past than how they are today.
  + 1. Originated in many cultures with Mythological views.
* The concept of space and the concept of time.
  + When was the creation of the cosmos really done?
  + How big is the cosmos?
    - Where do human beings lie in that space?
  + **The Concept of Space:**
    - In most mythological approaches to creation, the world revolves around Human Beings.
  + **The Concept of Time:** We all have an idea of what has been the past and what has been the future.
    - How far can you go in the memory of your family?
    - In traditional societies they had memories before a written culture.
      * A story teller who can recount a family genealogy.
      * In modern culture we have no sense of that family tradition.
* When people thought of when the beginning was – their ideas were not of that long ago.
  + Jewish people (3500 years before Christ)
  + Egyptians (38,000 years ago)
  + Greek (5,000 B.C.)
    - Generally speaking the world was smaller and generally concentrated around human beings.
    - **For us the idea of Time is completely different.**
      * We hold the cosmos are 13.7 Billion years old.
      * The earth is 4.5 billion years old
        + First life is 2 Billion years ago.

Human Beings only began to appear only 600,000 years ago.

* + If the timespan is shorter, your life seems to be more important, as does family history.

**Comparing our modern day approach to space and time with Ancient Human beings.**

***“When I see the blind and wretched state of men, when I survey the whole Universe in its deadness, and men left to himself with no light, as though lost in this corner of the universe without knowing who put him there, what he has to do, or what will become of him when he dies, incapable of knowing anything, I am moved to terror, like a man transported in his sleep to some terrifying desert island, who wakes up quite lost, with no means of escape. Then I marvel that so wretched a state does not drive people to despair.” – (Pascal – 17th Century)***

Ethics as a discipline is moved into the direction to give people definite assurance that the life they are living is worthwhile – that it is justified. It fits with something of much importance.

* In the development of Ethical thinking there is the tendency to reassure people.

**Let us concentrate for a moment on Human Beings:**

* We were originally primates, and developed slowly to become human beings.
* What is responsible for the shift in when we became human beings?
  + Many people believe animals are worthwhile as well (Singer)
    - There is a tendency to believe that there is not too much of a difference between primates and human beings.
      * IS this correct?

What was the first ethical practice?

* Have animal’s already ethical behavior?
* A certain responsibility?

Only in the last 600,000 years have humans undergone a change to distinguish them from primates.

* What has changed is the volume of the brains.

Michael Tomasello (Psychologist/Cultural Anthropologist)

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michael_Tomasello>

Wanted to know the difference between chimpanzees and human beings.

* + Has come to the conclusion that chimpanzees have features that human beings have not.
    - What kind of differences?
      * Chimpanzees can think, and has the ability to know what other animals are doing.
        + As long as a chimpanzee has a definite goal, he is motivated to what the other animals are doing.
        + The chimpanzee is not interested in what others are doing if there is nothing in it for themselves.

What makes humans different?

**Joint (shared) Intentionality: (Warneken, Chen, and Tomasello (2006))**

* Human beings can think about the interests of the other, without the fact that they need something.
* There is a notion that when you do something together and obtain something, you need to divide in a just way.
* “To have the idea that when you are doing something that is not only your own interests, but that there is a perspective to do things together.”
  + Examples:
    - Two friends want to move a big desk to the second floor.
      * From the moment they begin, they form an organism of their own. They must work together and constantly think jointly.
        + This comes along with expectations.
    - In this room there is a kind of joint intentionality.
* Joint intentionality is also necessary for communication.

Animals have no joint intentionality; although often times it seems to suggest they have the intentions that we have.

* Scientists can explain very well that the cooperation is instinctive, and not thought about.

**What caused the original humans to leave Africa 60,000 years ago?**

Joint Intentionality in Humans is somewhat astonishing.

* How did this originally come about?

Tomasello’s idea:

* At a certain moment of evolution with human beings it was far more interesting to have collaboration.
* Allowed them to hunt big animals
  + Allowed them to survive.
  + Allowed them to move about and leave their own place.
* There must be a point where humans were more capable than others to possess joint intentionality. (more selective)
* Children have far more of a natural tendency to help others and to think of them – and to enjoy that cooperation as well.
  + This does not explain how that capacity will be used in a kind of setting.

**Communal Values:**

* The whole idea that things are meaningful – within a kind of group it is recognized as something that is worthwhile.
* External vs. Internal motivation
* Most of the time in morality, people feel called to fulfill their duties because it is important for a certain group.
  + Categorical – unconditional = you really want to do it, because you enjoy the action itself.
* Ethics has to do with the community which the individual functions in.
  + It has to do with the joint - intentionality atmosphere.

Would it not be better to be justified in a bigger scheme of things?

* Because we play an important role in nature… or a general objective as a whole…?
* **Contingent: That it is a matter of chance – that it developed culturally – that it could have been different and that it means nothing in the grand scheme of things.**

Philosophy has tried to give such answers.

* Next week: Plato
  + Phaedo: The dialogue Socrates is doing with his disciples, in the evening of his last day.
    - Has influenced our approach to what the identity of a person is.
  + We will then compare that tradition with the Homeric tradition.
    - **The position of Plato and what a human being, and what happens after death is quite different than what the Homeric tradition says it is.**

Introduction to Ethics September 29, 2015

Professor Pattyn.

**What is our true self?**

* Where do you situate yourself spatially?
  + If you want to define the self you need to figure out how it is separated from things that are not yourself.
  + Where do you put that boundary of what is a part of yourself and what is not?
    - Is it psychological and not to do with the body or is who we are dependent on our body?
  + We must also account our relationships and how that also defines our identity?
* We can also attempt to situate ourselves in time.
  + Is there a time when our self, became apparent?
    - Were we there before we were born?
    - What will happen to us after we die?
      * Will it end or will it continue to exist forever?
    - The problem of continuity = will we stay ourselves or will we change.
      * If I am changing will I stay who I am?
* Where will you put the boundaries in time and space?

The question of the self begins by taking account of oneself. In order to analyze ourselves we must be able to be aware of ourselves and to think of ourselves as something different from our surroundings.

Can we say that there is such a thing as a self, before we take account of ourselves?

* Does the fact that we have to think about ourselves in order to access ourselves a problem?

Is there a core within us? A higher self…

We must be aware of ourselves in order to guarantee continuity. If we are not aware of ourselves then continuity cannot be guaranteed.

Language plays a very important role. Has a chimpanzee an I?

If you restrict the self, narrowly, the larger the possibility of continuity. If you take your body and your emotions into yourself it is more difficult to account for continuity.

Transitional object – an object loaded with fantasy, projected with meaning that is not really in the object itself, but the object is real. This makes it possible for the child to have something which guarantees continuity.

It would be comfortable to find something which guarantees continuity – something permanent.

The Position of Plato:

**The classical way of thinking about identity and self in philosophy, goes in the direction of defining it very narrowly. The true identity of persons is something on its own independent of everything else. Its continuity is guaranteed – it existed before we were born and it will exist in eternity.**

* Truth is eternal.

**Phaedo:**

Pythagoras:

* Was fascinated by mathematics.
  + Numbers don’t move.
    - 1 is 1, 2 is 2, etc.
  + Logic or mathematics continues to be true separate of reality.
  + Even though a tree may vanish the idea of a tree remains.
  + Colors: White is white. It keeps to be what it is.
* Reality as it is, is inspired by these immovable ideas.

**Phaedo is a discussion of this type of reality.**

* + Socrates is defending the Pythagorean approach. The fact that Plato is having the Pythagoreans attempt to defeat the concept of Pythagoras is tricky. As an artist Plato plays with the dialogue.
  + People later on got the sense that Plato was a defender of the neo-Pythagorean idea.
    - That reality is tricky and it is a vulnerable and uncomplete expression of what is behind and what is pure. In contradistinction to this our reality is changing and perishing.

Phaedo is a discussion of this tragedy.

* Beginning of the dialogue: Socrates sends his wife and children away.
  + **His friends come and they decide to discuss if the soul will remain after Socrates dies.**
  + Socrates seems to defend the idea that for philosophers dying is a relief. It helps us end all confusion.
    - Socrates claims “Philosophers are not afraid of dying.”
  + We need to concentrate on things as they are, on their own independent of things around them.
    - By concentrating on what seems to last forever, one is able to escape from confusion and senselessness.
  + Socrates, argues that he is not afraid of dying because he will come into contact with these eternal ideas.
  + To say there is no problem with dying has a very narrow vision of what the self is.
    - The self is thinking by considering these eternal ideas. You find your final destination or your true self.
  + It is good for Socrates to die, but can we say that it is not important to have relations with our friends and our families?
    - Socrates does not care to see his family at the end.
  + Comparing Socrates vs. Jesus. A serious opposition **between the Platonic tradition and the Christian Tradition.**
    - Jesus wept, he felt sorrow and he was alone.
    - In the Platonic approach there is no suffering and no sorrow. It is Socrates being sure he has found a way out for himself.
      * In this sense there is no imperative to care for others.
    - If you take Socrates’ reasoning seriously, logically it is not important to care about your family or your friends. The one thing that the philosopher must do is find the truth which is eternal.
* In Dante, the Divine Comedy explains how someone visits hell and heaven. The way heaven is presented is very close with what Plato had in mind. God is seen as something on its own – independent of everything else.
  + There is a radicalization of the Platonic idea of the Phaedo after Plato. If we want to know the most perfect thing in the world we will end up with a single principle.
    - In everyone there is a longing to reunite with the principle which one has come from. Therefore one must leave the world and meditate and concentrate on something which is far higher.
    - New Age: There is a principle in us which is connected with the universe, and if we try to purify ourselves we can reach the final true self.
      * **This is Neo-Platonic. There is a higher me, which is connected with a creator. By finding a connection with this creator I find my true self.**
* There is an important Ethical distinction – between a neo-plutonian way of approaching ethics and that ethics is the result of joint-intentionality.
  + Neo-Platonic idea argues it is from within.
  + Joint-Intentionality
* In the Neo-Pythagorean Tradition:
  + Truth is one its own, eternal and independent.
  + This is the idea of Bach. He created music as a mystical consideration – the idea that true harmony is something eternal. He is busy with Celestial harmonies.

**Returning to the Phaedo:**

* In the dialogue the discussants are aware that they are trying to find some comfort.

**The Homeric Tradition:**

The Neo-Pythagorean Approach was not typical in Greece. In Greece you have the Homeric approach. It has no idea of the spirit. What is important is the body the youth, courage, strength, honor!

A true hero gives himself away. In the movement of giving yourself away, you reach that eternity. The society and the public are important as well.

In the Homeric Tradition – the body seems to be crucial.

* There is not a word for body. The reason there is no body is because the opposite is not developed. Everything is body.

Philosophy is always embedded in a kind of situation. We must take into account the difference between the Homeric tradition (800 B.C.) and the Socratic society (400 B.C.). The writings of Plato were meant to be read by a very small circle – a selected group of intellectuals.

Our question is what has happened between the Homeric type and the Socratic view?

**Introduction to Ethics October 6, 2015**

**Lesson 3 – Comparing Homeric and Socratic Ethics and Christian Ethics**

**The Phaedo:**

* The center of Socrates identity is his self.
  + What is not important is the body
  + Desires
  + Emotions
  + Your relationships with your friends
* The most important thing is to concentrate on what is immovable – in the center of yourself.
  + Here we have the beginning of Metaphysics.
* There was a decision to make a distinction between immovable things and non-changing things. Immaterial things vs. Sensible things. Independent vs. Dependent objects.
* Related to appreciation to ideas - conceptions

This approach is quite different from original Greek culture:

* Original Greek Culture:
  + The body
  + Love and honor from this community
  + Heroic acts
  + A person busy in life

**What made up the difference between the Homeric and Neo-Platonic tradition?**

* Philosophy is always linked up with the society it emerges.
* There is no thinking independent of culture it originated in.
* Related to the collective consciousness of a certain society.
* It would be impossible for philosophy to exist in a society which is very linked up with family ties, local traditions, and mythical representations.
  + Philosophy requires a certain distance.
    - A crisis or trouble in society.
  + There is a strong relation between the kind of society we are living in and the kind of ideas we have.

To understand Greek Homeric Culture you need to understand what happened sociologically/culturally. There has been a shift in the Greek society.

* Homer written down around 800 B.C.
* The Phaedo around 400 years after Homer.

The Homeric tradition was during the period 800 – 400 B.C. was invaded by new kinds of traditions.

Man is the decision maker of all and the family is a hierarchical way of dealing with things. This is a traditional society model.

The family is quite central and is headed by the father.

1. **The Dionysus Tradition:**
   1. Doesn’t really fit within the Greek model of Patriarchy.
   2. Comes from East Asia
      1. Dionysian rituals are done by women and even by slaves.
      2. A tradition of going beyond yourselves:
         1. Drinking too much
         2. Ecstatic dances
         3. Orgies.
      3. This is the start of a new kind of thinking:
         1. A losing of oneself where the soul leaves the body and something happens on a spiritual level.
   3. **The Dionysian tradition signifies the idea of a soul which is busy with ecstatic things and goes beyond the body.**
      1. The shift to the spiritual level.
   4. In the Homeric tradition being busy with the Psyche is unimportant.
      1. It is totally focused on the body.
      2. Thinking is something done in the chest.
   5. The idea that there is some kind of psyche is not there in the Homeric tradition.
2. **The Ophitic (Orphism) Tradition:** 
   1. Offers the individual opportunity for personal redemption.
      1. Not completely community based.
   2. A shift from the family (clan) to the individual.
      1. One starts to think that in each individual there is a spark of the divine, in which one must purify oneself to find ones true self.
   3. This prepared the appearance of the first philosophers.
      1. Within this kind of tradition there were many sects:
         1. Priests going around preaching purification, and travelling from city to city.
      2. The first philosophers seemed to say something similar.
3. **The Pythagoreans:**
   1. Focused on spiritual questions.

The shift in philosophy had much to do with the change in Society:

* Shift in property as well:
  + Originally property was not divided; only one person got everything because what was important was the continuation of the property of the family.
* Shift in Politics:
  + The father is deciding everything and you must simply obey.
  + Later on you get a shift to Aristocracy and certain citizens have voice.

**Philosophy appears at the moment where the self-evident culture is losing its authority.**

* There are no identity questions in the social structure.
  + No purpose of life questions

What happens in the Greek situation also reappears in history.

* When tribal societies hold strong in patriarchal aristocratic model:
  + Downton Abbey (where the hierarchical was not questioned)
    - The lord is the central part and everyone abides.
* This falls apart with modernity – each individual has his own place, his own rights.
  + Most of these systems completely collapse.

Philosophy is not just coming out of nowhere, it appears in a certain social situation where people feel the **need** to think as the social authority is eroding.

**Mary Douglas – Anthropologist.**

* Models for understanding different Cultures:
  + 2 Basic features:
    - **1. Categories (Grid)**: divisions we make between things.
      * Strong categories = strong divisions from role patterns.
      * You can’t change this grid because if you do there is something that happens to order of things.
        + In a traditional society there are very strong categories and honor of the system.
        + If this falls apart there is more freedom to do more ‘awkward’ things.
    - 2. **Emotion (Group):**
      * Lot of social control but also the possibility to be a hero.
        + Lots of emotions can create an enormous reaction.
        + More group pressure, more social control, more push to be a hero.
        + Less group pressure, less social control, a lack of interest , no care for what one is doing.
      * Sacredness has to do with group pressure.
        + If many people care it feels like it has more relevance if you do it.

**Types of Societies Based on the Grid:**

*Enclavistic Society:*

* Lots of group pressure but not lots of categorization.
* Conform with eachother and form a ‘we’ vs. ‘others’
  + The mentality of Racists, the Green movement, etc.

*Hierarchic Society:*

* Lots of categories and lots of emotion.

*Isolated Society:*

* Lots of categories little emotion.
* No social pressures, things don’t really seem to have value.
* The individual feels lost in this system.
  + Confronted with an abstract way of dealing with things and is disconnected from the group.
* Group pressure creates a kind of sacredness towards a kind of rule.

*The Individualistic Society:*

* No categories, and little social pressure.
* People are able to pursue their own destiny.
* The neo-platonic society:
  + Neo-Platonism develops when the Roman Empire is growing more important.

**Philosophy will appear in a society where strong values of sacredness are falling apart and questions dealing with ‘why am I here’ will bubble up in people.**

When traditional ways of dealing with things are not self-evident it leads to further interest in different types of religions.

* The Neo-Platonic way of dealing holds the idea that there is something incorruptible, divine within ourselves. By turning into ourselves is how we must go about our life.

All these anthropomorphic way of presenting God is critiqued by this neo-plutonian perspective.

Emperors and Roman intellectuals were far more convinced that the Neo-Platonic way of dealing with things was the correct way.

**The Christian Tradition:**

* People really believed in the end times at the beginning of Christianity.
  + Apocalyptic expectation.
  + 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18
    - “We who are still alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep.”
      * There was an urgency.
      * The expectation that the end of times was coming soon.
  + Mark 16: 1-8

**Chronology of the New Testament:**

Mark – 70 AD

Matthew 80-90 AD

Luke 80 – 90 AD

John 90 AD.

**Pauline Epistles:**

* First Thessalonians (50 AD)
* Galatians 53 AD
* First Corinthians 53-54 AD
* Philippians 55 AD
* Philemon 55 AD
* Second Corinthians 55-56 AD.
* Romans 57 AD.

The Christian tradition spread out beyond the Jewish tradition. It did not limit itself to the Judaic obeying of Laws.

**Christian Ethics appear:°**

* It not simply obey the law as was the Judaic model.

From the moment you believe there is a last judgment, ethics is no longer a matter of obeying local traditions.

The important idea is what God thinks of us:

* Ethics is not based on etiquette, it is about being good, independent of the social situation, independent of the particular culture, of social organization.
  + It is about being good in the eyes of one central likeness.
  + Was is this not developed in the Greek way of dealing in Religion?
    - The Greeks did not believe the Gods were interested in them.
* In the Christian tradition God seems to care about us.
  + The result will be the final judgement.
    - As a skeptical philosopher it is quite difficult to go with this reasoning.

When Christianity appeared, Christians flourished, and Roman Intellectuals attacked it:

* Anthropomorphic
* Frightening

From the Neo-Platonic vision it is strange because the body will resurrect yet the soul will not survive.

* Neo Platonic intellectuals had quite some trouble with Christianity.

**Apocalypse, Last Judgement, Freedom of the Christian still lingers in Secular Philosophy.**

* This idea is based that there is something in the cosmos of absolute importance.
* If we go before God, we are left with what is important among us, in our particular Earth, in our particular society.

**The Catholic vs. Protestant Conflict:**

* The initiative of God himself.
* Paul’s Critique of the Jewish tradition is:
  + That when people obey the law, to be sure that they will be saved, then in a certain sense they don’t trust God. They try to arrange things in such a way where they themselves are in charge.
    - They obey the law to be saved. Meanwhile the true Christian trusts God (agape) and does not care about whether he will be saved or not.
    - Simply following the rules is what Paul would call sinful.
      * The true Christian trusts God.
        + And obeys the law without self-justification.
* The main idea is that Christians are free from the law. Believing will save you, and you are not doing things simply for the sake of being saved.

**Catholics will believe in the following of Certain Rules, while the Protestants know they are never sure, and must trust in God. The Result was that the Protestants felt more indecisive about being on the correct side. The Catholics felt fall left problems.**

Catholics adopted a Burgundian way of living.

**When people behave themselves ethically, because they want to be on the correct side, there is a kind of narcissistic feature in that kind of thinking. This is why in Ethics, if you do something it must be done unconditionally. In itself.**

**The Kantian Notion of the Categorical Imperative is related to the intrinsic value of a thing.**

The individualistic tendency to be busy with your person is in the perspective of the Christian tradition sinful.

*The Neo-Platonic and the Christian Tradition have quite a few conflicts:*

* In the neo platonic tradition there is nothing to do with the body.
* The idea that people care for people is foreign to the Neo-platonic perspective.
  + To care about something is to invest yourself into it.

*The Aristotelian Approach to Ethics:*

* His approach was quite different from Plato.
* Aristotle believed that when you are dead, you are dead.
  + - This has serious influences for how you perceive ethics.
  + How to be gentleman like
* The idea of the Ideal society Aristotle takes it from the Aristocratic society.
  + What are the features to be excellent?
    - Virtues are defined in this light.
      * How can I be an interesting praiseworthy person?

**Introduction to Ethics October 13, 2015**

**Week 4 – Aristotle.**

Recap:

* Ethics in Christianity – Apocalyptic expectations and the ensuing end of the world.
  + Early Christians dealt with Ethics by focusing on the end of the world, and especially the idea of the last judgment.

**The Didache:**

1. There are two ways, one of life and one of death; but there is a great difference between the two ways.
2. Now the way of life is this: First though shalt love God who made thee, secondly, thy neighbor as thyself; and all things whatsoever thou wouldst not have done to thee, neither do thou to another.
3. Now the teaching of these (two) words (of the lord) is this: Bless those who curse you, and pray for your enemies, and fast for those who persecute you; for what thank is there if ye love those who love you? Do not even Gentiles the same? But love ye those who hate you, and ye shall not have an enemy.
4. Abstain from fleshly and bodily (worldly) lusts. If anyone give thee a blow on the right cheek turn to him the other also, and thou shall be perfect. If anyone press thee to go with him one mile, go with him two; If anyone take away thy cloak, give him also thy tunic; if anyone take from thee what is thine, ask not it back…

What is the place of the Aristotelian Ethics?

* What is left from that neo-platonic influence, in Aristotle?

**The main Platonic Idea:**

* The true meaning of our concepts and the final destination of what we are is connected to something that is on its own and independent of something different, giving us our identity.

Aristotle:

* Why we need to behave virtuous?
  + Linked up to the image he has of what an improved society is.
* How to behave virtuous?

Throughout history almost all philosophers refer to Nichomachean Ethics.

* Had an influence on the development of Christian Ethics.

What is important is that Aristotle develops 2 kinds of questions.

* He has a philosophy of why human beings need to behave virtuously or ethically.
  + Implied in this is his conception (of universal value) of what a human is, and the destiny of a human being.
* At the same time he develops what ethics is about, and is linked up more with the community he lives with.
  + It seems to be about how to behave yourself in a society to be appreciated or honored.
  + For Aristotle there is no heaven or hell. If we die, it is finished. There is no last judgment.
* If Ethics is relevant it must have relevance for the earth. How do we among us, appreciate certain things?
  + What is excellence, what is seen as gentleman like?

Aristotle interesting points on ethics:

* **“Not for young people”**
  + Young people are unconventional and impulsive.
* **“The hierarchical order among sciences”**
  + Ethics has to do with finding the final true destination within a community – all of the things we do has a certain aim.
  + There must be a final objective that the different sciences work at different levels of.
    - Military – to bring about peace – peace for what?
  + The final goal of a science is not the ultimate goal.
  + What do we want a as a society?
    - All the other sciences form part of this effort – building up to what we finally need.
  + If we think about ethics, we end up thinking about the final destiny of a society – and how to organize a society in the best way.
  + Ethics is also thinking about Happiness – it must be seen as not just a feeling, but because it seems to answer the reason why you are there.
    - It is not pleasure of animals, or pleasure of being alive, or sexual desire.
      * It is fulfillment.
    - It must have something to do with rational capacity, you feel like you are doing what you are made for.
      * Now there is a social pressure to say ‘I am an individual.’
      * Being yourself as an individual seems to develop much later on.
    - For Aristotle, Ethics is about being honorable, within society.
    - Being an individual = being able to be aware of the ties/loyalties you have to your society/community.
* **“The pursuit of Happiness”**
  + The pursuit of fulfillment. Finding what seems to be important as a human being – using your rational capacities.
  + This most ideal persons to do this seem to be the philosophers.
  + There are other ways:
* **“The difference between values and virtues.”**
  + - Being a virtuous person within the city life, within the community.
    - This is something we must analyze carefully.
    - Virtue derives from latin – Virtus = what a man needs to be.
      * Mixed with some Christian ideas, being virtuous seems to be like the people obeying the Didache.

The original idea has something to do with being excellent. A gentleman like human being who you appreciate. A good person from a good family, who properly behaves himself.

*Being Virtuous/Excellent is not the same as having values. A value, today, seems to be connected to subjective aims of what needs to be done within society. Virtues have something to do with passions. It is not only cognitive decision making – It has to do with the way you train yourself to deal with certain passions.*

* + For Aristotle, we cannot let our passions go naturally. We need to train ourselves to answer and follow our passions. When we have children, we train them to handle their passions – to be less impulsive.
    - Only when you are able to control your passions, are you far freer.
    - If you don’t control your passions, you end up a slave of your passions.
    - In the whole Greek Culture of that time it is important to deal with your passions.
* For Aristotle it is about finding the middle between the extreme ways of having passions:

Reckless – courageous – cowardly

Lustful – temperate – indifferent

Snobbish – tasteful – petty

Arrogant – generous – shy

Ambitious – bold – timid

Rude – thoughtful – flattering

Boastful – true-hearted – servile

Preposterous – witty – callous

A virtue is something that is trained and exercised. You must find the middle.

It is important if you want to be a good citizen to be not only obedient, but to do beautiful things; one must develop a taste for how you go about things.

**The Christian Mentality does not fit in this one.**

For Aristotle, the type of obedience – turning the other cheek – is not seen as an excellent way of behaving.

**Aristotle’s Virtues:**

*Temperance*

*Liberality or Generosity*

*Magnificence*

*Greatness of Soul*

*Gentleness*

*Something like friendship*

*Honesty about oneself.*

*Witty or charming*

Intellectual Virtues:

* Sophia (wisdom)
* Episteme (Scientific Knowledge, Empirical Knowledge)
* Nous – Reason

Practical Virtues:

* Phronesis (practical wisdom/prudence)

Productive:

* Techne (Skill with materials or techniques).

**What is the relation between the Neo-platonic and the Aristotelian Approach:**

* Plato/neo-platonians believed that the ideas of these forms existed in another world.
  + Ideas or forms not in this world.
* Aristotle held that forms/appearances corresponded with essences.
  + He held that the forms of things were guided by essences.
  + He holds it is a kind of energy – essence – that works within all objects.
    - The main idea is we are all guided by our essence or our nature. By the principle of what inspires us to be a human being.
      * This is why it is important to be a human being. Because that is our essence.
      * If we want to behave ourselves ethically we need to follow nature – follow our essence.
  + On the one side in Aristotle you have an awareness of the fact that a society seems to be important to recognize the virtuous.
  + At the same time he seems to have a universal philosophy on the destiny of human beings that has to do with the principle working in it.
    - This philosophy is attractive for those who believe that nature is of importance.
    - **It can also be dangerous:**
      * Aristotle defends slavery on the basis that it is the nature of that person.
      * Helps us to justify principles that are the result of culture or habits.
      * The moment you start from the idea of creation, you come to hold that what is important ethically was decided before we were born.
        + **Natural Law**

Ethics is something in the order of things.

It is unity with the cosmic scheme of things.

* If our conventions, or our boundaries are culturally bounded, then we don’t need to hold many values.
  + Knowing that they deal with family relations differently in different cultures, does that really change the way you interact with you parents?
  + It is rather dangerous on the abstract level.
    - But may not lead to practical destruction.

He references a society that is no longer existing at this time. Athens at that time is not an aristocratic society any longer.

* He comes up as a stranger, coming with an old fashionable way of dealing with ethics.
* There is something attractive in developing the idea of ethics being related to an identity, and appreciation of society and gentlemanlike.
* 4th Century B.C. – in Greece you have a shift to a more individualistic society.
  + Already a society with different religions, sects, ways of trying to find your personal individual destiny.

**Cynics:**

* Diogenes
* We don’t need to care about what other people are thinking. We need to answer natural laws, rational principles, apart from what societies think.
  + Related to modernity where people are trying to find a way out.
* You don’t need to care about what other people are thinking: the cynic lives in the tomb, with dogs around the tomb.
  + He doesn’t care about honor or being important, bound up with that natural way of dealing with things.
* It is important in this school to keep your autonomy, and guide your passions in a rational way.
  + Control is important.
    - From this developed the Stoic Philosophy.

**Stoicism:**

* An ethics developed from control – being aware of your passions, and explaining it in such a way that you can be invulnerable to all kinds of circumstances.
  + You must appreciate natural laws, and accept nature.
* This is a very controlled way of dealing with things. IT means that it stresses the Individual way of dealing with things. If you control yourself, it is good for yourself.
  + This kind of ethics is not interested in the well-being of society.
* Keep your autonomy, don’t be afraid of your emotions, deal with things in a rational way.

**Epicurean Philosophy:**

* Was in favor of creating happiness by having enjoyment.
* One must cultivate a nice way of dealing with life by cultivating a way of enjoying life.
* The only way of dealing life in a happy way is to be in control. It is not to try to get something tremendous or to be controlled by a passion.
  + You need to enjoy the little things.
    - A warm meal.
    - A good conversation.
  + You need to take distance and control yourself. You don’t go deeper into your passions. You must use your rational tendencies.
* It is not in favor of live up to your passions, more – try to live a life that is interesting and enjoyable by being in control.
  + This is not about how ‘we as a society’ will move onward.
  + It is about how ‘I with my friends’ will enjoy life.
    - It has an Individualistic Tendency.

**From the Book Habits of the Heart:**

* Utilitarian Individualists vs. Expressive Individualism
  + **Expressive individualism:** preoccupation with a personal well-being. But it lacks a virtuous tendency to do something for the community.
    - When people develop an identity they are pre-occupied with themselves.
  + Alexis De Tocqueville
    - Wrote on the Development of Democracy in the US
    - He describes individualism as the tendency to turning your hat from society to your own friends. Leaving public values and turning to utilitarian or expressive enjoyments.

**Roman Virtues:**

* Different from the Christian Way of looking at things.
* Roman Virtues:
  + Auctoritas: The sense of ones social standing, built up through experience. Pietas and Industria. This is essential for a magistrate to enforce law and order.
  + Comitas: Ease of manner, courtesy, openness, and friendliness.
  + Constantia: Perseverance – military stamina, as well as general mental and physical endurance.
  + Clementia – Mercy, mildness and gentleness.
  + Dignitas: Dignity, a sense of self-worth.
  + Pietas – Dutifulness (Citizenship) – more than religious piety; a respect for the natural order. Includes ideas of patriotism, fulfillment of pious obligation to the gods, and honoring other human beings (in client patron relationship).
* All these things have to do with being important – well looked upon – societally respected.

**Christian Virtues:**

* **Theological Virtues:**
  + Faith, hope and charity.
* **Cardinal Virtues:**
  + Wisdom, Justice, Moderation and Courage.
* The different way of approaching things:
  + Less assertive, more obedient, the idea of God is almighty, and that we need to obey God.
    - Instead of thinking of yourself as the master, Christians believe God is the master.
  + Nietzsche says that in Christianity ethics shifts from the idea of being powerful, to a subordinate ethics.
* **Evagrius Ponticus** 
  + Christians were really not persecuted that often.
    - The idolatry of those who were persecuted was seen as a way of being heroic against the Roman way.
    - There was a strong sense of leaving the world to be closer to God.
      * We must control our passions to hold a relationship with God.
  + This Psychological Analysis has tried to determine what are sinful tendencies or sinful desires.
    - **Cardinal sins:**
      * Gluttony
      * Greed
      * Sloth
      * Envy
      * Wrath
      * Pride
      * Lust
  + Deadly sins have to do with the intention of doing something wrongly. Has nothing to do with Cardinal Sins.
* To know how to behave you must know the cardinal virtues, the theological virtues and the cardinal sins.
  + People were trained this way.
* The Ethical system is linked up with these virtues, along with the 10 commandments.

**During history the cardinal sins play an exceptional role.**

**Today, a lot of these desires can harm:**

* **Wrath,**
* **Greed,**

Introduction to Ethics October 20, 2015

Week 5 – Ethics during the middle ages

2 things Important in Aristotle:

1. Aristotle has a metaphysical approach; he believes that these ideas are working within reality, and that they are inspiring everything that exists. They are an energetic principle within each of us, and they motivate each subject to become what he or she is destined for.
   1. A tree becomes a tree.
   2. The essence of principle inspiring material reality creates what the thing becomes.
   3. If we think about ethics what seems to be important from this kind of perspective is that we need to know how we need to behave.
   4. Nature informs us on what seems to be important.
2. Aristotle was aware that in a community there are certain habits, or virtues appreciated; thus within a community it is important to behave yourself in an excellent way.
   1. For Aristotle there is not afterlife; if he is thinking about ethics it has to do with this world, and what we need to do.

**The Christian Heritage:**

* The neo plutonian approach and Aristotle’s approach to virtues has been very important in the Christian Heritage.
* What is the use in understanding what Christianity is about?
  + If we want to understand liberalism, and the western approach to ethics, it is deeply related to the Christian tradition.
* The conception of the possibilities of an individual to know what seems to be right or wrong.
  + There is no need for familial structure – a very individualistic approach.

There was a serious conflict between Christian thinking and philosophical thinking.

In Neo-Platonism there is a lack of appreciation for the material and the body, and an appreciation for the spiritual.

If you want to preserve yourself you must contact the divine principle.

* If you consider the incarnation and the resurrection this means this becomes unthinkable for the Neo-Platonists.

There has been a relation between Neo-Platonic and Christian ways of thinking.

* Rational way of thinking in Neo-Platonic tradition is rather incompatible with the Christian tradition.

**The Last Judgment:**

* This changes ethics.
* It means that instead of looking around for what is right or wrong, there is only 1 important principle – God and the final judgment.
* It becomes individualistic, instead of focusing on the community.
  + Important to save yourself and distance yourself from the world.

**First Christian Communities:**

* Developed a non-assertive way of dealing with each other.
* An obedient way of dealing with each other, in a loving, soft way.

**Neo-Platonic Importance:**

* After people tried to be closer to God, with ascetic techniques.
  + Trying to connect God to the source of us.
* By exploring their passions in a rational way, they discovered their bad features:
  + – Greed, Sloth, Luxury.

**Aristotelian Essentialism:**

* Brings things down to Earth – These ideas, these forms, are seen as inspiring nature – working within this reality.
* Science is seen as studying nature to explore the divine.
  + Looking to nature is special.
* If you have an Aristotelian Approach to nature, everything seems to be inspired by the divine.
  + It seems important to study biological features, and nature.
  + Right and Wrong based on Nature.
    - Things are right if they are natural, and wrong if they are unnatural.

**Augustine:**

* **Against Manicheism (2 principles):**
  + A kind of religion that gives a solution to the nature of evil in relation to the divine.
  + If we believe the world is created by the divine entity, and we believe that the divine entity is good, why is there so much evil?
  + The people cannot believe that God can be good.
  + The solution is that there are 2 principles:
    - 1. Evil – a Divine Principle
    - 2. Good – another Divine Principle.
  + A cosmological approach with the Good and the Bad.

Augustine tries to solve how there is just one principle, instead of 2. He is greatly inspired by the neo-platonic approach, and believes that instead of concentrating yourself to the divine principle, there are certain elements within the cosmos that are not strong enough to do that and have fallen back.

Bad is a result of some features not being able to hold on to that central principle. Principles no longer guided by that first principle.

In Creation there is only 1 principle, and the bad tendencies result from the fact that some created beings no longer concentrate themselves onto the divine principle.

Nature is not bad as it is created by God.

Ethics is benevolent to natural principles and natural desires. But when he comes to discuss with other intellectuals he comes into contact with people who believe that they can reason their way to the proper principles:

* Why do we need religion? Why was the son of man crucified?

Augustine is convinced there is something deeply wrong with human nature. He believes that there was sin since Adam and Eve were expelled.

The only way we can be saved is by the fact that we are informed by revelation. **We are not in control, and we are dependent on the grace of God.**

It is in trusting and believing that you find the possibility to be saved. Can we save ourselves?

It is rather important to have that relation with God. We can only be saved by the initiative of God.

If we take this seriously then all these non-Christian philosophers are no longer that important. There appears a hostility towards them.

Plato and Aristotle are important – they will be in heaven – then why is revelation important?

They are Neo-Platonic in believing that these ideas are in God, and we have no access to them.

**When the Germanic tribes entered, Ethics relapsed to the Homeric values in a sense.**

* **Against Pelagius (Nature can show the way):**
  + The importance of revelation and grace.

**The conflict of Nominalism and Realism:**

* Realists believe we can get the truth if we study reality.
* Intellectual conception – Conception of Reality = Idea of the essential thing at work.
  + If you want to study an animal you need to understand the essence and when you grasp the essence you have a realistic sense of what it is.
* The Neo-Platonists don’t believe that there are such universals in reality.
  + Instead of believing that there is that principle at work – you simply believe it is a matter of convention and has nothing to do with the divine inspiration.
  + What God intended to do with Nature is something that we cannot reach. God is completely different from nature. We are cut off from what God thinks or intended.
* In Aristotelian Approach God is always present.
* **Nominalists** – Ideas in heaven no access – What we see around us is not inspired by God and is simply nature.
  + Our logical, empirical knowledge – but disconnected with principles of God.
  + Nature is suffering, filthy.
  + In trusting God and waiting for revelation can we apprehend the truth.

In the Protestant tradition what seems to be crucial is to believe and to trust.

In Catholicism = Far more pessimistic about nature. Obeying rules very strictly.

* Dogma. And Sacraments.

Nominalism vs Realism:

* Prepares the protestant tradition vs the catholic tradition.
  + Protestant: Split between nature and the divine reality.
    - The only reason we can be saved is by following and trusting in God.
    - Nature is no longer inspired by essences.
    - Now we can explore nature in a Utilitarian way.
    - The development of Science if far more elaborated.
    - If it’s true that being saved is the result of your personal belief, there is no possibility that it is important to be connected to other people.
    - The Neo-Platonic approach is very individualistic.
    - **The starting point of a liberal vision.**

**Peter Abelard:**

* In the 12th Century a critical way of thinking is well developed.
* People were far more intellectual than today.
* Abelard was a 12th century intellectual teacher:
  + Read these classical texts, to really try to understand them.
* Abelard is important because it is an example of a shift in ethics with a very theocentric point of view.
  + He is convinced that these passions, habits, and virtues are best understood in the Aristotelian tradition.
  + There is one condition that makes a bad behavior a sin:
    - When the intention is there to do that behavior with your full acknowledgement.
  + The idea is we cannot do as if, because there is God and he knows everything. Being Good is immediately connected to the vision of God of what is happening among us.

Joint Intentionality creates a perspective of a ‘we’ and thus can evaluate their own behavior of if we are doing the good.

* In the approach of Abelard this is not important, what is important is the perspective of God.
* He knows what is right and wrong, and that is taken into account for the final judgment.
* Ethics is seen definitively from one universal point of view.
  + What is right and wrong has a kind of metaphysical meaning and is not about our real relations with one another.
  + It is more to do with universal definite laws.
* This is quite different from a sociological analysis of how people deal with each other.
* This is cosmological as it is created by a divine entity.
* There is nothing metaphysical in an anthropological or sociological approach to ethics.
  + This is more relativistic
* Abelard is universal – ontologically related to reality.

11th – 12th century

**Thomas Aquinas:**

* Thomas has tried to make a synthesis between Aristotle and Christianity.
  + Summa answers the preoccupation:
    - All things that are in existent, come out of that ideal divine principle.
    - The only possibility of returning, is through revelation.
  + If Aquinas followed Aristotle completely then there would be no need of revelation.
* There are some neo-platonic features in Thomas Aquinas. He has difficulties really believing Christ became a human being.
* Aquinas utilizes a **realistic** approach, and believes that science can be done to observe reality to figure out the principle that makes a thing what it is.
  + This kind of science is quite different from what science is nowadays.

For Aristotle if a stone is falling down – the principle that is within a stone, moves the stone towards the earth. It is typical for a stone to go as close as it can with the earth.

Nowadays a stone falling is simply a matter of causality. It is material substance, and if it moves it because it is attracted by something that is not the stone – gravity.

Instead of believing the cosmos is inspired by ideals, you see it as a mechanical instrument of material things that are not inspired but just are because of external forces moving.

In separating Nature and God it arrives at a very pessimistic view of this world. Between the sword and the wall.

**Week 6:**

Previous Lesson Recap:

* 2 Main tendencies to Understand Ethics in the Middle Ages:
  + Plato (Nominalism) – concentrate yourself to the world beyond this world.
    - Nature is not seen as very interesting; passions and bodies are not good.
      * Theologians who oriented themselves to this approach are hostile to nature.
  + Aristotle (Essentialism) – do science and derive the essences to help you become closer to the most important things that are working in nature.
    - Theologians inspired by this kind of approach believed that by exploring nature and deriving essences we are very close with what God intended for creation.
      * We need to find out what our true nature is.

Augustine:

* Against Manicheism: Nature is Good.
  + Manicheism says there are 2 main principles – a good principle and a bad principle. A divine good principle and a divine evil principle.
* Against Pelagius: The importance of Revelation and Grace.
  + Humans are lowly and need to be filled up.
  + If there is no initiative by God then we are lost.
    - Related to the vision of Paul.
  + If we just use rules to justify our own lives we take life into our own hands and then have no need to trust God.
  + A true believer will behave himself properly, but keeps in mind that finally he can’t justify himself.

Neo-Platonism vs. Aristotelianism:

* Nominalism vs. Realism.

Plato influenced Theologians were skeptical of humans being able to discover their own truth.

* Held that human beings are deeply flawed.

How to create knowledge:

* Aristotelians – we can have a real knowledge by knowing the essences that are in our reality.
* Neo-Platonic’s are skeptical that these essences can be discovered in nature; God is so beyond, we cannot know what God really has in mind.
  + They don’t believe that we can access the essences at work in nature.
  + They no longer believe there is an essence of being a horse, now we just say that we use a name for animals that seems to be comparable or identical.
    - Getting names to the kind of same creatures.
    - No longer believe there are essences in reality.
  + Nominalism – More the idea that we need to trust God and be obedient to discover the right or wrong.

This painting summarizes the whole conception of the catholic approach.

4 Corners = 4 extremes:

1. Death
2. The Coming of Man (End Times)
3. Hell
4. Heaven

We are within that space and our nature is not that good.

The only possibility of saving ourselves is to trust in Christ.

**Christian Ethics:**

* Envy
* Greed
* Gluttony
* Sloth
* Lust
* Pride
* Wrath

Only possibility to save yourself is to trust in Christ.

The idea that human beings are bad is representative in Art.

The idea was to lead a simple life, retreat from the world.

**In the Renaissance One discovers the Greek and Roman Mentality:**

**Humanism:**

* A kind of mentality that doesn’t have a dark image of condemned vulnerable bad people.
* A more open image, with the possibility to enjoy life, or to cultivate life.
* If you read in books, or come to other cultures, you see the way you perceive things – By looking back you are able to glimpse your own image.
  + A language is a kind of classification. The way you express things in a certain language is taking things a certain way.
  + Learning another language gives you another way of perceiving things.
    - By reading Greek and Roman texts the people of the Renaissance were confronted with the different worlds from the past.
    - You get a more frivolous way of dealing with reality – trying to develop yourself as a human being to become an interesting person.
* One tries to explore the importance of education in the Renaissance by making them read.
  + Learning these old languages – Latin and Greek.
  + Writing poems
  + Singing
  + Dancing
  + Able to be physically fit.
    - Tennis, fencing, etc.
  + This is also for Women.

By learning Greek one discovers that the official texts of the New Testament had all kinds of faults that needed to be corrected.

* If people had access to holy texts you previously risked misinterpretations.

**Gothic Churches:**

* Represent an awareness of the transcendence of God.
  + Needed money to fund these Cathedrals.
    - Selling Indulgences.

Pious People living together – this new kind of mentality.

The Praise of Folly – 1511.

* Erasmus.
* A critical look of how religious people live.
* He takes a distance from his own culture, and imagines a kind of new world.

Thomas Moore – 1516.

* Utopia was published in Leuven in 1516.
  + A kind of critique towards the way noble people were organizing society.

Martin Luther – 1517

* The beginning of Protestantism.

**Protestantism:**

* Martin Luther was an Augustinian Monk.
* Created with this neo-platonic vision.
  + Grace is most important – that becomes a most central part of his way of dealing with Christianity.
  + He has contempt to the world of the rich, powerful, church leaders.
    - They cannot decide by themselves how to justify the world.
  + His critique to the developing catholic tradition:
    - We can arrange in a sense that we can go to heaven.
* Using ethics to find self-justification is wrong.
  + Using the sacraments,
  + Trying to collect a positive image by doing good work is wrong.
    - Then you do not trust you try to arrange it yourself.
  + The first one that succeeds in Criticizing the Catholic church.
    - Before Protestantism there was One Unity.
      * It was self-evident that everyone was religious and functioned in that same church.
      * Everyone had the impression that there was just one church.
        + After the rise of Protestantism there is a fragmentation into many different churches.
* Breaching the idea that there was only 1 church created a lot of uncertainty.
  + It led to many violent conflicts.

Our relations with other human beings is not always rosy.

* If you are being attacked by a certain person, in order to protect yourself you conform with others around you. If you believe the same things and trust in the same things the union will make yourself less vulnerable.
* Always when there are conflicts, there are the in-group and the out-group.
  + You will then hate all these people that are not conformists.
    - You will hate Jews for example. Because they don’t behave like us, and they don’t believe like us.
    - In times of conflict minority groups are targets.
  + In Religious wars:
    - We are right, they are wrong.
    - Strangers are expelled.

Protestantism is Important for mainly 2 reasons:

1. Since the people who were responsible for the Protestant reformation conquered the hierarchical model of the church, they strongly believed that every individual had the same chances of being saved.
   1. **For God everyone is on the same level.**
      1. The Original cosmological vision was still very hierarchical.
         1. No social movement.
      2. Social control in the protestant countries are far more strict.
         1. Obeying rules, living disciplined lives, not laughing that easily.
         2. In The Catholic South people seem to enjoy life a little more.
            1. A Burgundian way of dealing with life.
2. They were industrious: there was no essentialism.
   1. Protestants became craftsman, and spent money to invest in their business. They did not spend their money on the luxury.
      1. Protestantism is linked with capitalism – Weber.
      2. With Protestantism you have focus on the individual, and the individual life can be subject of something important.
         1. This conflicts with the Catholic approach.

**The best way of dealing with religious conflicts:**

3 Strategies to Neutralize Conflicts:

1. **Homogenize**: The Government decides what people need to believe, and force people to believe a certain kind of religion. They will use force to oblige people to convert to a certain way of expressing things. They will use propaganda. This is strong in European History.
   1. In the place where I rule, it will be my religion.
      1. Elizabeth, Louis the 14th. Made a homogenous country.
2. **Deride:** You laugh at religion and you make it seem like it is silly. Voltaire, and others followed this approach. They were not strong believers and they laughed at people who used religion.
3. **Separate Church and State:** Pioneered by John Locke, and say that religion is a matter of personal choice. Everyone needs to make up his or her own mind. The government cannot be involved in religion. They don’t do anything related to religion.
   1. **This implies a very particular way of religion:**
      1. It starts from the idea that Religion is a personal matter. That you makeup within your own soul. Really inspired already by Protestantism. In defending the idea of toleration he supposes the only important thing in religion is the personal decision to believe and trust in God. You cannot force them to believe or trust.
         1. **Individualized.**
      2. The second element of Locke’s strategy is that he is tolerant to all churches because he doesn’t know which one is the right church.
         1. **Relativize the Possibility of knowing the Truth.**

The Catholic way of dealing with things has been moved towards these Protestant views.

A Society can exist with differing beliefs by making a division between the Public Space and the Private Sphere.

* Is such a distinction even possible?
* Is there not a danger of individualization? Especially for those unwilling to think.

If you start from the idea that everyone can choose for him or herself what is Right and Wrong becomes blurred.

**Introduction to Ethics November 3, 2015**

**Moving into Modernity**

Previous lesson we talked about conflict – religious wars during the 16th and 17th Century:

Conflict can easily appear:

* Carl Schmidt:
  + A German Philosophy who collaborated with the German’s during the war.
  + He believes that it doesn’t matter what kind of features account: conflicts can appear really easily.
    - From the moment you feel threatened by someone else, and he condemns you, and your identity is threatened, there is a tendency to react.
    - There is a tendency to form a group of friends. It doesn’t matter if it is about Religion, property, or your country. From the moment you feel threatened by a kind of opposition, and your identity feels threatened, you will react.
    - Politics is to oppose all those against your identity, in that struggle.
    - All kinds of trivial problems can lead to conflict.
  + Example:
    - Conflicts among friends about music choice, fashion, sports, etc.
    - The best way to defend yourself is to form one group, all friends against enemies.
* It is not only the fault of religion – the in group out group dynamic is for a large number of reasons.

Carl Schmitt:

* Friend and Enemy:
  + The enemy is in a especially intense way, existentially something different and alien.
* Politics:
  + Opposition to any person or entity that represents a serious threat or conflict to one’s own interests.

Religion has been for a lot of people – of the utmost importance.

Sometimes Religion can be a kind of way of dealing with troubles in life. If you feel lost or anxious, and have a sectarian view of religion you have a security.

* Vulnerable people may stick to religion.

**Types of Wars:**

* Religious Wars
* Nationalist Wars
* Economic Wars

**Carl Schmitt believes that the way to deal with conflicts is to say that the problem is personal. That it is a matter of your own decision – what kind of a religion you prefer. He claims a nation is not any longer of much importance.**

* **Especially after the First World War there was sentiment that there was no sense of fighting for your country.**
  + After the first world war nation emphasis shifts to ideologies:
    - Fascist
    - American
    - Communist
* ***What seems to happen, according to Schmitt, the importance of an issue is losing its attractiveness. If you want to end a religious conflict, you need to cultivate a way of dealing with religion where it is not that important.***
  + After the religious wars in Europe, religion was not officially seen as that important anymore.
  + This is because it is seen as a matter of individuals, and also because it is relative.

**Recap Strategies to Neutralize Conflicts:**

1. Homogenize – One government tells you what you need.
   1. Spanish, French and England created states with 1 true religion.
      1. In France Protestants were expelled.
      2. In England (Lizabeth 1st) tried to create 1 official church.
2. Deride – Laugh at religion.
   1. Make it less powerful, and less important.
   2. Do not take religion seriously, trust in Science and Rationality
3. Separate State and Church – John Locke
   1. Church power is meant to make it possible for individuals to follow their own private belief.
   2. The church tries to arrange an appropriate way for the individual to deal with that religion, while the government is focused on fostering a peaceful state.
      1. Individualize (1689):
         1. Religion must be left to the individuals as a personal choice.
         2. Locke as a protestant believed religion was a personal way of trusting God.
      2. Relativize:
         1. This same technique is used to make all kinds of other things personal matters.
         2. In conflicts today we say, “You need to find out for yourself.” A lack of knowing exactly what is right or wrong.
            1. The seed of the Mass Man.
         3. How you need to arrange your free time, how you ought to deal with your neighbors, etc.
         4. This approach works very well with an economic way of arranging things.
            1. People with private, personal, preferences.
            2. There is the free market delivering all kinds of free products.
            3. This is a very powerful way of dealing with things today.

To make it possible that individuals are free enough, then that is the limit. Everyone should be able to choose whatever he likes, as much as he can.

**Relativizing Society leads to less conflict. The Authority of a lot of institutions is crumbling.**

* The Authority of the professors teaching literature.
  + The reaction is that everyone can do whatever he likes – The Mass Man.

The professors themselves have chosen that path and have been inflicted with that liberal political correctness.

* **From the moment you neutralize conflict by Relativizing you diminish the authority of certain groups.**

In the liberal context everything seems to be attractive in the same way – so that means nothing much.

**In our Western Cultures, some young people have problems in finding an identity. Especially if they are not well educated.**

* In turn they are vulnerable.
  + The Tendency for people who have lost their way, to join a sectarian way of approaching things is a way out.
  + There is also a possibility of nationalistic tendency.

Things lose value, so when someone comes up with something that is of value, there are problems of extreme nationalism.

* There is a Crisis going on.

**1558 – 1603 – Queen Elizabeth**

* Tried to homogenize religion.
* Used strong force – very hierarchical.

**1588 – 1679 - Thomas** **Hobbes**

* After Elizabeth there was a fear of Kings returning to Catholicism.
* 1625 – 1649 Charles 1st As Ruler
* 1649 – 1658 Oliver Cromwell As Ruler.
  + The King was executed, and Oliver Cromwell – a puritan protestant took over.
* Hobbes attempts to come up with how to deal with conflicts:
  + He says what is important is a kind of king, or a kind of protector.
  + 1651 Leviathan Hobbes Publishes this idea.
    - In his approach, being aware of religious war in his country, and what is happening in the rest of Europe, Hobbes believes that in the state of nature if you took away a government and just had people… you would just have total war all the time, and you would have no society.
* “War of all Against All” (Bellum Omnium Contra Omnes)
  + **In such condition, there is no place for industry: because the fruit thereofr is uncertain: and consequently no culture of the earth, no navigation, nor use of the commodities that may be imported by sea: no commodious buildings, no instruments of moving and removing, such things as require much force; no knowledge of the face of the earth, no account of time, no arts, no letters, no society, and which is worst of all, continual fear, and danger of violent death, and the life of man, solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short.**
* The protector is made by the individuals. In order for society to function, Hobbes argues that Human beings need to surrender their individuality to form and respect one powerful protector.
* He is not seeing as if there is a natural order, and it is self-evident that the king has his power from a transcendent being.
  + Instead of Taking a Theocentric Approach, he takes an anthropocentric approach. God is not prominent, the humans go from what they need.
    - An example of an approach which doesn’t start with a cosmological framework.
* **Hobbes View:**
  + The sovereign must control civil, military, judicial, and ecclesiastical powers:
    - To avoid war of all against all, all people must accede to a social contract and establish a civil society.
    - The protector’s sovereign power derives from individuals surrendering their own sovereign power for protection.
  + See what is happening in culture at that moment.
    - The root of what he is saying, is from his experience of his own culture. Where he was aware of there being a civil war and no strong government.

**John Locke 1632 – 1704**

* Locke is a believer, and he has in his approach a possibility to think things from a theological perspective.
  + Comes up with a theological approach over a philosophical approach.
    - Religion is only worthwhile if it is done by the action of an individual, and the personal relationship with the Divine. This is the starting point of his idea.
* Locke says people are free to choose their church.
* You have the realm of the government (arrangements of property, liberty, etc.)
  + We can arrange law by following natural principles.
  + He is really intolerant to Atheists.
  + He is intolerant to the Catholics
    - Although Locke is seen as the founder of a Liberal way of dealing with things, this was self-evident from his religious perspectives.
    - After religious wars and after the restoration (1688), there is a kind of way of dealing with things that seems to work .
      * Division between King and Power of Parliament.
* You have the realm of the Church (spirituality, etc.)

**18th Century:**

* Aristocratic gatherings, busy with developing culture, and the art of conversation, using polite conversations.
  + This development of morality, as a kind of Etiquette is linked with a development of moral sense. A way of dealing with relations in a very intelligent and moral manner.
    - Expressed in the way people dance/cultivate music.
  + Handel, Bach, etc.
  + It exists among these Aristocrats this special young culture.
    - What seems to be important in ethics, is how you can behave like a gentlemen, how you can be seen as someone respectful. A way of developing a common understanding of what is most appropriate.
    - What is beautiful or sensible, is related to what is universally beautiful and sensible.
      * Bach’s music is about trying to find what God intended with music. It is above human beings.
  + In these Aristocratic gatherings, they developed the belief that they developed something really valuable.
    - Language developed as purified in that century.
      * The origin of Philosophers coming into contact with other people, to discuss things within the salons.

**1638 – 1715 Louis the XIV**

* Loved Dancing in that refined way.

At the same period in the 18th Century there were gatherings of wealthy merchants, coming together and discussing all kinds of things, in the Coffeehouses. People had sufficient free time, and read newspapers and discussed all kinds of matters.

* You begin to develop a rational way of dealing with things.
* This kind of conversation developed first of all among nobles. This polite way helped to have a kind of dealing with each other so that everyone can come up with his or her arguments.

**1660 – 1731 Daniel Defoe ( Author of Robinson Crusoe )**

* At the end of the 17th Century they end Censorship in England.
* They end it because things are arranged economically unpractical.
  + In order to publish something you need to go to a beaurocrat.
    - The reason why Locke defends the idea that you can have an uncensored press is purely practical.
    - There are not liberal rights involved.
* **Wigs and Torries** 
  + Parliament vs. Royalist approach.
    - These 2 parties have a discussion and they do it, using newspapers.
    - These are then read in the public sphere and discussed by the public.

Habermas holds that the public discourse prepared democracy, not backed up with power, but solely for reasonable arguments.

* What would be the quality of those who were publishing the arguments in the newspapers?

**Defoe was paid by Wigs and Torries to write political pamphlets.**

**Joseph Addison 1672 – 1719 – Wrote essays ‘The Spectator” and “The Tatler”**

* Seen as the one who developed English in the most beautiful way as possible.
  + Has that humanistic education.
  + He published in a gentle, respectful way. He joined every kind of conversation.
* In the first issue of the spectator there is a lot of wit and humor. Very pleasant to read. You do not know the person Addison himself.

**David Hume is closely related to this kind of approach:**

* The calm, Aristocratic, the beautiful wit and way of dealing with things, “Addison will be long more remembered than Locke” – Hume

**Jonathan Swift 1667 – 1745**

**Georg Friedrich Handel – 1685 – 1759 (Composer) Listen to the Music.**

* A really good composer.

**Samuel Johnson 1709 – 1784**

* A little after Addison.
* Dr. Johnson is someone busy with Language.

**David Hume 1711 – 1776**

* Hume is a person of his time. And he comes into time, during this period.
* In his approach to Ethics he comes up with what seems to be important in a polite sensible, calm rational way of dealing with things.
  + He believes that the enlightenment will come from that calm reflection.
    - Fanaticism has passed, people are reading and listening to each other in a gentle way.
* These Philosophers are reading Roman and Greek texts where you have the same kind of mentality.
* The attempt to understand something from a distance is more frequent in a writing approach than a verbal discussion approach.
  + In oral cultures it is more emotional and with less distance not as thoughtful.
  + In writing a newspaper we don’t know who will read it. If I want to be understandable I need to start from a general perspective.

**This enlightenment is linked up with respectful discussion, dialogue, taking a distance, and trying to have an interesting intercourse – the rationality of these literate people. This is what comes up among people in London or Paris for those who have sufficient free time.**

In this culture Hume participates in it.

Hume starts from a secular approach to ethics. If you are not a believer, then how will you have certainty that moral behaviors are right or wrong?

He doesn’t believe in finding a rational way of finding the foundations of ethical behavior. There is no such thing as natural law.

What is important for Hume is the development of Sensibility in dealing with things. The ability to identify yourself with the position of another, understand his particular position.

This has helped with honoring certain virtues.

* Hume calls these virtues natural.
* Artificial virtues stem from practical arrangements.

Hume will be explained more in detail next class.

**Week 8 November 10, 2015**

**Introduction to Ethics**

Recap:

* The week before we saw a shift in mentality specific to the enlightenment.
* After the wars we see how people developed a different kind of culture.
* In the 18th Century we see that people have more time, to read, and discuss – this is for merchants and wealthy people.
  + They gathered in salons and coffee houses to discuss all kinds of things.
  + The style of this was inspired by an Aristocratic way of conversation:
    - Polite, well formulated, nicely written texts thinking about all subjects.
    - The mentality developed here was that the argument on its own is valuable, not your position in society.
      * There is a kind of equality among all the participants in the discussion.
  + What matters are the arguments you come up with – this is a sign of rationality.
    - This atmosphere is developing in the 1700s.
      * Politeness is a way of creating a space for people.
      * In this approach Hume had an optimistic view – at least at the beginning of his career.
        + At the end he was aware at the end of the 18th Century there developed different kinds of discussions.

Not based on reason but based on emotion and fear.

* + - * + Hume was hostile to this development because he believed in Serene, Calm, rational discourse.

The atmosphere is the idea that people feel a little free from the old tradition, and they seem to trust the possibility to think and reason in that calm way. This is not only in England, but in France and Germany as well.

* In France Voltaire can spread his brilliant way of talking, and Rousseau as well.

**David Hume 1711 – 1776**

* **Hume’s Approach:** He doesn’t come up with a religious theory or natural right or vision, that there is a kind of final foundation for what is right and what is wrong.
  + Hume does not believe in God.
  + He does not believe in such a thing as natural law.
* His approach is the one of the spectator.
  + Look in on people from the outside.
    - It is more descriptive.
    - He tries to see how something works, and from there to come up with things that can make it better.
    - He uses a psychological analysis to determine why people act a certain way.
  + He believes rational capacity is not the most important way of dealing with thing’s.
    - It is primarily an emotion, or a feeling.
    - He tries to figure out how this emotional dispassion develops.
      * In a sense he is in line with these people who are trying to find out what seems to be virtuous to develop like a gentleman.
        + Develop features, virtues so you become an interesting valuable person.

Jane Austin in Pride and Prejudice.

Now it is a matter of looking at the features of a person, beyond their societal place/value.

In Hume’s approach he distinguishes between Artificial Virtues and Natural Virtues.

* Natural Virtues:
  + Spontaneous actions.
* Artificial Virtues:
  + A result of a kind of reflection.
  + If you want to have a peaceful society, you need to develop arrangements.
    - These arrangements are developed from perspective, distance.

**What is important is that he strongly believes that these arrangements are specific for a kind of group or kind of culture you deal with. He does not believe the virtues he speaks of are universal. In Hume’s approach you have the idea that it is important to understand the context of dealing with problems, so you can understand how best to attack the problems.**

There is a kind of normativity in his approach – in the sense that he thinks it is better to develop a gentleman like life. It is important to develop virtues that foster certain values that makes you an agreeable person.

Hume vs. Kant.

* In Kant’s vision there is a universal way of dealing with ethics.
  + You need to be guided by rational principles.
* In the Kantian approach the idea that you do certain things is because it is your duty and the right thing to do.
  + Morality cannot be used to obtain certain things.
  + It must be done for the sake of the thing in itself.
* Is Hume up to the idea that we need to behave ourselves gentleman like for ourselves, or because we feel good?

In the Kantian perspective, morality is about doing the right thing because it is the right thing.

Kant vs. Utilitarian approach.

Utilitarian approach focus is to end as much possible suffering. We need to try and make sure that the most people possible are pleased the most they can be.

**It is wrong to think of Hume as a kind of utilitarian. He is sensible enough to realize that if we are doing something for someone else, we do not think about it in terms of psychological egoism. A gentleman like person is not a psychological egoist.**

In the Kantian tradition, all the possible links with pleasure are disinterested.

Kantian epistemological tradition, has created in the way that we deal with culture, an enormous influence on how we deal with culture.

**Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712 – 1778)**

* He developed a new way of thinking instead of sticking to traditions or the religious way of dealing with things. He develops well formulated discourses on all kinds of subjects.
* In this period he breaks with Religious Obligation.

The Rousseau Approach:

* He seems to suggest that progress and rationality and culture and civilization and business, is not that nice. It is corrupting something. That the nature of human beings, without culture was better.
* If only we could return to that kind of natural innocence, would we be able to create that better society.
* Instead of Hobbes – who believed in the danger of humans in the natural state – Rousseau holds that people in nature are good, and that it was culture that was corrupting them.
  + This is indeed a more romantic way of dealing with ethics.
* Nature seems to be original.
  + Rousseau spreads an affinity for the developing of nature in such a way.
* In such an approach it is important that people are seen as equal – that they are all the same from the beginning.
  + He says we cannot make a decision between noble people and common people.
    - In Rousseau’s vision there is the idea that people have created a kind of agreement among each other, a social contract.
    - He believes ethics is the result of a kind of social contract.
      * In it everyone needs to live up to something they all seem to have.
      * The idea of the general will.
      * You take the perspective of what everyone feels to be necessary, you have a good guiding principle for how to arrange your society.
  + How can we think about a general will?
    - The kind of perspective we develop once we are engaged in a kind of project.
    - All these people concentrate on what we need to do to be successful.
      * They think about their own movements from the general perspective of evaluation.
        + They evaluate themselves as a “we”.
    - There is a feeling of what seems to be expected from us, from the “we” perspective.
      * A kind of agreement.
      * Everyone knows, that everyone knows from a we perspectives what each person needs to do.
* If we have a society with a common way of goals, then to realize these common goals, each individual needs to do his or her part. There is a notion of what is important for the common good.
* The common will is related to that kind of perspective.
  + If you are authoritarian and you go against this common will, you are unethical.
    - This has its problems:
      * + If the common will is strong, how many places are there for individualism in this kind of approach?
        + This can lead to a totalitarian fanatic way of asking everyone to march in the same direction.
* Rousseau has a lot of ideas that are not quite compatible.

**Rousseau was important because he inspired a lot of thinkers especially at the beginning of the French Revolution.** **At the end of the 18th Century you have these revolutionary tendencies.**

That reaction was the division between the upper class people and the lower class people. Instead of having a hierarchical society, even the intellectuals and the noble people start to question the way they dealt with society in the past.

* War and Peace by Tolstoy.
  + Shows how people see the incompatibility of the hierarchical way.

**Immanuel Kant (1724 – 1804)**

* 2 main things about Kant:
  + 1. Ethical theories.
  + 2. Epistemological approach:

At first sight Kant’s Epistemology has nothing to do with ethics.

* It is trying to find out how we come to certain knowledge.
* He is critical to the empirical way of dealing with it.

**Kant’s Ethical Theory:**

* Kant’s approach is rather severe. In a certain sense it is linked up with the protestant way of dealing with things.
* If you try to be good, to be allowed into heaven, it is instrumental.
  + You are doing things to get into heaven.
* This is very impious for Protestants.
* What was important was the guiding of God, trusting his words.
  + There cannot be something instrumental in that behavior.
* If you have this kind of behavior you cannot act instrumental.

You need to do things in the right way, because it needs to be done – it is self-evident.

If you are instrumentalizing ethics, then it is a sign that you are not pure.

* The chance that you will be just or not is equal: If you really as a person convert yourself to God or trust yourself to God then everyone can be saved in the same way.
  + The belief is that every human being is as valuable as another human being.

It is not doing something in a certain sense, it is a kind of surrender. It makes you pure. Not an instrumental way of dealing with ethics and not an instrumental way of dealing with religion.

* A sense of equality is developed.
* If you are busy with garbage, or art, you are equal.

It seems the Kantian way of dealing with Ethics is linked up with this kind of tradition. For Kant – doing your duty cannot be instrumental. It must be done categorically – unconditionally.

* You do it because it is something that needs to be done.
* You must make the decision yourself.

In Kant’s perspective, if we want to realize what is really good – what kind of things can we call really good?

* Traditionally we would say virtues, or being courageous.
* Kant says if a person is a wicked person and develops these virtues, and the virtues to not help him to be good = a wicked courageous person.
* If you really want to find out what seems to be on its own good – it is the will of a particular person. It is the unconditional will to do good things. This is related to the idea that indeed, doing things in a good way, cannot be done instrumentally.
  + If people act instrumentally, then it is already wicked.
  + It must be a personal decision unconditionally taken.
* It must be done autonomously and unconditionally.
* To Kant it is very, very important to do the right thing.
  + If you want a successful life, you must do your duty out of free will.
    - This makes morality very, very important.
    - People are obliged to be moral people.
  + If you want to develop art, for artists it is important for them to develop these things.

For Kant, Morality is the only saving thing. Everyone is equal – everyone needs to be able to make his or her own decision – you cannot force people – you must give people space enough to develop it. You need to appreciate the freedom.

* They can discover what is important, by using their reason. If you make it possible for everyone to develop his or her own rational capacity, he or she will see automatically what is right thing to do.

A utilitarian perspective must be useful

A Humean perspective about moral judgments being in line with your passions.

* If that is the motivation then the whole enterprise is wicked.

It will end up with the idea that we cannot use people, but need to respect them as the place where fulfillment can take place. They are ends in themselves. You cannot use them for your own projects.

How did Kant react to the Capitalism of his time?

The problem, is that it is not very clear at the end, what duties are. You must see every person as something sacred.

* In the Kantian approach this is not filled in.

For Kant, do you need to be aware of your duty, in order to do your duty correctly?

If so, then don’t you need to utilize your reason?

Are all humans at a place where they can utilize their reason?

If not, what are the implications of this for them? And their ability to act morally?

It’s not that I don’t believe in the need to use reason, it is that I don’t think that the use of reason ought to be a pre-requisite for correct moral behavior.

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The Empirical Way of dealing with things began with Locke and Hume.

* Recall the Neo-Platonic or Aristotelian approach:
  + Within your soul, you can create a kind of correspondence with your knowledge and the thing in reality.

The empiricists are saying that this is rubbish. They say the only way you can know a certain thing is through empirical evidence.

Simple Ideas are the result of impressions for Hume – A tree and the concept of a tree.

Kant:

When you see certain things you will immediately organize things in space and time.

* These are called categories.

Where are these impressions coming from?

After Kant there is a lot of discussion among all kinds of scientists.

* Perhaps we have developed this slowly in our experience.

The idea of object permanence – for very young children the idea is that they don’t know when things are leaving, that they are really lost.

* If I am not just in your sight, children may not think you are not there.

You teach them certain structures so that then they can have more control over what appears.

* Language also plays an important role. If we use a word, we generalize specific aspect of reality in a conventional way. We can stop confusion by using words.

This is also what is structuring perceptions – words. All of these classifications create an order in the world.

Categories = Kant

Institutions = Hegel

Language = Von Humboldt

Classifications = Durkheim

Cognitive Schemas = Piaget

Concepts = Vygotsky

Language Systems = De Saussure

Symbolic Forms = Cassirer

If you say that things are linked up with your world view then you come to a culturally relativist view.

* What is the right way of dealing with things?
  + We end up with a kind of Humean Approach.

If you want to understand something specific, you need to understand the context.

**Introduction to Ethics November 24, 2015**

**Around the 19th Century**

Last week he began to speak about Hegel –

* Reading Hegel is quite difficult, but there has been some important influences from Hegel that remain today.

**To become:**

* Previous discussion on Identity.
  + My identity is made up of things that are not a part of me, but become a part because I have a relationship with it.
  + If you accept the idea that we are not made up by something that we have on our own, but that we are what we are because we have relations with different people, then we accept that we are far more vulnerable.
  + That when we lose our physical body it will have a dramatic impact on our being.
* In the Phaedo the decision was taken to identify a person as something within them – this is the neo-platonic tradition.
* A pre-supposition of the liberal mindset:
  + Often people believe that the way they are is made up of personal characteristics.
  + Independent of the relations we have with other people.

**The Hegelian Tradition starts with radically questioning this:**

* In that period, one realizes that if we have an identity it is because we are part of a system, a community, a family, and that the function we have cannot be defined with mentioning that we are functioning within the system.
  + Our identity is not made up by something which has always been there, but something that becomes our personal identity by accepting things that are originally different from us.
    - We accept a language, a socializing way of thinking: what we think, believe, enjoy, admire, and are things that we have discovered by being part of a system. By being a participant.
  + From this view you see how important culture is. How important a community is. It is necessary to have a good educational system so that you have good training – language, and culture.
    - It is also necessary to have a good understanding of history that is not static, but is changing. This evolution answers a kind of logic, and discovering this logic is to discover some pre-suppositions we are using today.

**Introduction to Ethics is studying history to understand our pre-suppositions today**

If we want to understand ourselves or even our intuitions, then we need to understand where this came up from.

* It is important to understand the particularity of certain pre-suppositions.
* The more you realize pre-suppositions stem from a contingent part of history, the more you realize the variety of pre-suppositions you see that there are many others that may be true.

The Essentialist approach thinks of the identity as a development of something we are in essence.

* Plato says that if you want to understand something you must simply focus on developing yourself and do not *need* to be influenced by the outside.
* You don’t need others, or different things than yourself.

**Famous in Hegel is the notion of the Master:**

* You can only make sense of the notion of master, if there are slaves. You cannot be a master on your own – there needs to be something different. In relation to what is different from us, we get a kind of personal identity.
  + This also applies for *ideas* or *concepts.*
  + If we want to find a meaning for a word, it is not just about finding the essence of the word. If we want to understand the meaning of that concept, we need to understand how that concept functions in that system – words are parts of a system, and there is a logical way to why we organize them.
    - We organize them in a continuous line, because they are put in that diachronic organization that makes sense of it.
    - The meaning of the word is related to things that have not been said.
    - The meaning of the word is no longer something on its own, but is the result of the fact that it takes a certain position in a system.
      * This idea is rather revolutionary compared with the neo-platonic vision.

Our identity is not about finding within us, but by being a part of a system. The identities of these persons is not related with something within them – it is related with the friendships they are taking up.

* Once you understand this, you understand how important this history is.
* In different times people think differently, feel differently, and literally see the world differently. Huizinga and the middle ages.

**In the Hegelian Approach – Hegel tried to understand the development of history and the development of these institutions.**

* Many people were influenced by this kind of thinking:
  + Intellectuals who believed the importance of the Humanist Tradition:
  + Marxists who interpreted the Hegelian system.

**Karl Marx (1818 – 1883)**

* Marx’s position is rather close to the Hegelian approach.
* Marx believes that what is important is related to history – what makes it possible to understand why people move and engage is to understand how a system is functioning.

Marx became convinced that you need to go to the material conditions, and the brute facts of survival of common people – and the way that was organized economically.

* If you want to understand what is at stake in our community, you need to understand the economic ways of how things are organized.
* How power relations are divided.
* Marx is convinced that there is a kind of serious injustice in the way that an economic system runs.
  + That it dominates and oppresses many people.
* Marx is convinced that what seems to be essential, what we need to be aware of, is that we create certain things, and in doing so express ourselves, and in being recognized we are able to develop ourselves.
  + What is important is that people can have the opportunity to create certain things so that they can enjoy life by finding a kind of expression of themselves.
  + The satisfaction you can get as a human being, is by creating or enjoying your creative link.

**In a Capitalistic System, a lot of people are robbed from this, and engage in labor. Labor is not recognized as something worthwhile – it is when you make a product and you pay for it.**

* Labor is not about what you want to express, but how much money you can get for it.
* This is a bit of a pity, because it makes you a stranger to your own creativity – you sell what you are making and there is no longer an appreciation.
* By making labor a product you can buy – you don’t recognize people:
  + It ends up in dehumanization – in oppression by those who own the production systems.

So there will be a kind of injustice, where people rise to restore the original freedom. This is the class struggle.

If we want to understand what happens in a society, there is no need to look to ideologies or philosophies, you need to look closer to how the society is economically organized, and then you will see the power structure. Once the system is functioning in such a way – most often the ideologies are a kind of rationalization of the economic system.

* The main thing that needs to be done in history is to make that economic way of dealing with things in a power structure, such a way that it is fairer.

Marx believed that empirical research was possible for such kind of explorations. He also believed that the mechanisms that develop are bound to certain rules that make this development quite natural. That it answers certain laws.

Marx was confident that you could understand history as a logical development: **Historicism.**

On the one side you have communists who believe in ideology as a system. And on the other side you have social democrats who still believe you need democracy.

**The Influence of Marxism has been Tremendous on our Intellectual Culture:**

* Instead of looking at high culture and ideas, we need to look to the material conditions of our society. \
* For Marx a life is worthwhile when we can create something that expresses our own identity.

**Relation between Hegel and Marx:**

**Francis Herbert Bradley (1846 – 1924)**

* Wrote Ethical Studies explaining the British approach.
  + He is the background.
  + When analytic philosophy started they really tried to oppose Bradley’s way of thinking by starting fresh:
    - Russell, Moore, perceived themselves as opposition to Hegelian tendency.

If you want to understand someone in opposition you need to know what they are opposing.

* Opposed ideas are a feature of someone’s identity, in a negative way.

Even some features of analytic philosophy are related to pre-suppositions related to Bradley.

**Look at Parallel between Bradley and Bernard Williams.**

* Bradley opposes Utilitarianism.
* The original point of departure is ‘what makes a life worthwhile.’ How can I develop myself in such a way that life becomes worthwhile?
* This is not the neo-platonic way, it is development that we engage ourselves in it.
  + Pleasure for pleasures sake is rather empty in this context. It doesn’t give much content to what you want to realize in life.
  + It is unthinkable that pleasure for pleasures sake is the final way of dealing with things.
    - Bradley does not see this kind of life as meaningful.
    - Most of the time it is important to feel good about something that we do ethically. But the focus is on realizing something not the happiness that comes with it.
    - The objective is realization, the happiness is the side effect.
    - If we have the idea that we only want to do it if we get pleasure from it, then it is not really truthful engagement.
* Pleasure for pleasure’s sake seems like it is an inadequate explanation for what gives our life meaning.

The Kantian approach says that we have a duty unconditionally, and that we need to follow certain principles not for the result, or the pleasure, but because these things are simply important.

* We need to be able to choose these things freely.
* In that Puritan way of dealing with Duty, the things you really want to do, are not really recognized as something you need to morally do.
  + The content of what is left is “duty for duties sake.”

For Bradley it is not coming from within – our identity is constituted by things we have with other people. Our identity is linked up with things we have in common with other people. The engagement we have is related to what we accept among us as important things.

* If you want to understand responsibility, do not come up with abstract theories of utility, just look around at what you are doing.
* If you want to know your duties you must take into account your position in your society.
  + Bradley is aware that morality would end up with the answering of social expectations.

For Bradley and Hegel:

* In becoming yourself, you take up what is external to you, as your personal identity.
* There is a deeper identification from within, with what is external.
  + This is taking responsibility externally and making it an internal duty. There is the possibility to fulfill a free choice.
  + Individual responsibility is combined with responsibility of the system.

It is not just the individual or just the society, in most cases there is a mixture of both.

* Is individuality asserted from personal essence?
  + They do it out of illusion.

The whole Hegelian tradition, is based on the relationship between individual and society.

For most people we want recognition.

* If you want to become a philosopher and you want to write a dissertation, what is important is that it is accepted.

**Emile Durkheim (1858 – 1917)**

* At the end of the 19th and beginning of 20th Century, the division between philosophy, psychology, sociology, was not as divided as they are now.
* The divide came about around the 1950s.
* Most intellectuals read across subjects and were aware of a multitude of subjects.
* Sociology was an empirical way of doing research in a society.
  + If you want to understand something like Suicide, then take the suicide figure seriously.
* The recent development has to do with the specialization tendency.

The bigger questions, are narrowed down to be manageable – but you cannot speculate in general because you will never be able to publish your paper.

* There are some Hegelian features in his enterprise.
  + He does not recognize this.
* People were aware of the importance of history and society, when Durkheim studied in Paris.
  + If there are things that are worthwhile, it is because there are things that are recognized as worthwhile within a society.

It is interesting to notice that Durkheim was a Jew, and that Marx was a Jew as well. What is special about it, is that in the Jewish tradition, there is no Aristotelian essentialism. There is no idea of developing something you have on your own – there are not much traces of Neo-Platonic thought.

* What is most important in a Jewish perspective is the Law – answering the will of God.
  + If you want to make your life fruitful it is about answering the law.
* You become worthwhile, by living your life according to the law. This no doubt has an influence on someone’s philosophy and ideas.

The background of a person has an influence on the thinker.

**Durkheim Says**

If you take a person on their own, and you isolate that person from their environment – what will be the result? Durkheim says the result will be emptiness – there is nothing.

If we have ideas, if we are engaged in certain projects, most of the time there are projects coming from a certain environment.

* They are loaded with emotion and value.

A moral rule for Durkheim, has only meaning when there is a kind of collective acceptance for that rule. In his approach Durkheim argues that you need to understand group dynamic features to understand what is meaningful for people.

* Collective attention to an event or person, holds a sense of sacredness or importance which becomes loaded with energy and emotion.
* It seems to be that these things become representations for the ‘we’ of society.
* Observation of Durkheim: things we respect in common, becomes loaded with energy and importance.

**Context of Durkheim**: At the beginning of the 20th Century in France – people feared the fall of the republic and oncoming chaos, the collapse of society.

Durkheim believed that in pre-modern societies, the solidarity is made around conformity. A lot of people deal with the same values same rituals, same moral obligations, same boundaries, and that makes a strong collective consciousness. If the conformity is strong you have a strong collective consciousness. If someone goes outside of the conformity, there is a harsh revenge taken by the collectivity.

* The revenge idea of punishing criminals, politicians and strangers is strong in that collective atmosphere.

Durkheim believed that later on there was a sense of economic solidarity – If you want to study the evolution of solidarity from conformity to economics (mechanic to an organic transition) you need to study history. Durkheim claimed you can see this in the evolution of Law. We do not touch the body much any longer in a case of law, whereas before in pre-modern times we were incredibly violent.

**On the Division of Labor** – After that book, Durkheim realized that people don’t behave only morally, for the purpose of the societal system. Durkheim believed that white-collar people trying to explain ethics may lead to self-delusion. He argues that we still need solidarity on the basis of conformity.

**Conclusion:** You need both the mechanic and the organic. Therefore we need to organize groups that can create conformities, codes of conduct, etc. These will support the ethical behavior of the members of these groups. We need to think of youth movements to artificially cultivate conformity, to make people seem like morality is important.

Durkheim’s evidence:

* Durkheim became famous for his studies on suicide.
  + He uses this study to prove the rightness of what he was already explaining.
  + Why are people committing suicide?
    - We observe that some countries have a far higher suicide rate than other countries.
    - In the long run we see an evolution of these rates – in times of elections suicide rates go down, during war, suicide rates go down, suicide rates go up after war or in bad economies.
      * What is the explanation of this? A common phenomena?
* The idea of Durkheim was that if you have a society without much collective consciousness, people will turn themselves on themselves, and come to the conclusion that life is empty.
  + He calls this **Egoistic Suicide.**
  + **Anomic Suicide**: In busying yourself you feel like you are really moving towards recognition – but you never reach this situation. If you don’t have the feeling that you have been recognized then you need to do something more.
    - You end up seeing what you have done is empty, and you kill yourself.
  + **Altruistic Suicide**: people giving their life for the community – the Japanese in World War II.

Morally, Durkheim was interested in how to teach people to be moral. Durkheim was interested in the educational system in France. In his time they tried to secularize the educational system. He was asked to teach the teachers about morality. Durkheim strongly believes that if we abolish a religion, what we cannot abolish is that idea of sacredness – that is still an important feature of morality.

* Students still need to feel as a member of a community, and there needs to be a cultivated affinity within a group.
* This need to be cultivated so people can deal with their passions.
  + If you follow your passions in an infinite way, you will always be restless.
  + To live a life that is manageable, and comfortable, you need to create in society the feeling that certain positions are worthwhile to take:
    - Marriage for example.
      * Honor marriage.
      * A strong institution will keep people from committing suicide.

You must create the idea that certain institution’s are fruitful to take.

**Lesson 9 December 1, 2015**

**Introduction to Ethics**

**Continue with Durkheim:**

Durkheim was quite confident that we need society. On our own we are not able to deal with our desires, because as human beings our desire is without an end. We are restless. We have the opportunity to use our imagination and this is why there is never a definite ends to our wants. If we are left on our own that creates trouble – we will never find a situation or a position where we can feel that we have accomplished something. Only with a society do we get an impression of value for what we have reached. We can get the idea that we have done something in our life worthwhile. So we need society to make it possible to discipline our own desires – that is the kind of structure we need. If there is no structure then we are in trouble. The second reason, more positive, is that the attractiveness of what we can reach in life is not coming from ourselves, but coming from without us. If we live up to things that are attractive to us, then we have the sense that life is worthwhile. Society is a little bit general – we must realize that society can be your family, a neighborhood, a local community – these projects among these societies appear to us as attractive because we want to do them and be someone. What we want to reach and what we want to be, is that what we love – with society. On the other side society will discipline our desires.

We need morality for structure and discipline, and we need morality for making certain projects loaded with a certain sacredness. If you have a society that does not appreciate any thing – there is nothing sacred in that society…and that results in an identity crisis for many of them. An emptiness in that society. People will try to fill themselves with the lack of society, and will fall into depression and eventually suicide.

Within society there is a kind of collective consciousness which can vitalize people and give them energy.

Durkheim is developing this idea at the end of the 19th and beginning of 20th Century. At the beginning of the 20th many people were influenced by this Durkheimian approach. Many labor unions, youth movements, farmers, educators, they attempted to create a kind of artificial ‘we’ mentality. They tried to create an atmosphere where people were proud of their own identity. There was a kind of artificial way of creating a feeling of the group atmosphere to make people proud, confident, and disciplined. Sometimes it was done in a religious context – sometimes in a socialist one, as also a fascist one.

These people called themselves idealists. They were convinced you needed to create proud strong people, helping each other and doing something for society. That is the beginning of the period of artificial nationalism – an ideology bound group thing.

This is similar to the Neo-Hegelian approach. If you want to have meaning you must find your place and your duty – linked up in a society to feel your life worthwhile. Hegelians were seen as rather conservative people trying to foster loyalty to the state or the king.

Our grandparents were living up to the idea that they would improve society and culture for their children. The idea was that we together were making a better world – they had a kind of strong morality. Compare this to the problems in big cities where there is no ideal to engage in anything. Where everything is appreciated and worthwhile.

One of the problems now a days with these artificial mentalities is we know how it ended. It ends with the fascists – the Second World War is the result of that kind of artificial group dynamic.

**Francis Bradley:**

Bradley writing at the end of the 19th Century was before the First World War. A major critique of the Neo-Hegelian approach was the result it brought about with rampant nationalism.

Most of the soldiers at the beginning were convinced that it was necessary to fight for your country in order to give their life sense and meaning. If you would end the war and say that it’s useless to continue fighting then the death of the many would be no use.

***The Poem of Flanders Fields – look for nationalists feeling.***

***Dulce Et Decorum Est – Bent double, like old beggars under sacks…***

The poems show that history has an influence on the thoughts of the people.

There is a kind of distrust to the Hegelian approach. After the first and Second World War people will stress more critical thinking, and individuality. They will say one must take a distance to the high emotions. After WWII one of the most prominent things that developed in the experience after was the declaration of the human rights – the idea of an international order – the United Nations. It is interesting to see that instead of focusing on morality within the boundaries of the nation it becomes morality of a universal order – where we take into account the whole world rather than local communities.

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The Influence of Durkheim in the early 20th Century was strong.

- Foucault, Derrida – structuralists have inherited some of these ideas of the Durkheimian approach. They were convinced you do not get an identity in an essentialistic way.

1906 – Harvard University

- On the one side you have **Josiah Royce (1855 – 1916)** believed in a kind of Hegelian approach – of taking up your identity for the part of the whole (society) is a way of giving yourself an identity.

Royce defines Ethics as being loyal. To principles – to friends to many things. In his approach, being loyal can be seen as being loyal to the most prominent things. If you build it up you find that you need to do something for this society and that of the future. From Royce’s perspective you have the idea of progression and idea of working towards a better future society.

**William James (1842 – 1910)**

Also at Harvard. William James disagreed with the Hegelian approach. His approach was more down to earth and more linked up to belief in scientific development. One must realize that at this time, scientific development is incredible. People are starting to drive cars, have fast trains, electricity, for the first time. That positive idea of making a society is important in the atmosphere where William James developed his ideas. He believed in the value of science, and thought it was a little bit silly to have one big theory of what reality is. He says this is not useful.

James argues that it is better to deal with reality in a pragmatic way. Instead of having one interpretation – you deal with it pragmatically.

**George Herbert Mead (1863 – 1931)**

It is difficult to catalog George Herbert Mead. Nowadays he is seen as a sociologist. A lot of recent philosophers use quite a lot of George Herbert Mead in their approach. The idea of Mead is that in dealing with reality, most often you have a kind of empirical way of explaining it. This founds your reality.

We give the same name to the same impression and that way we can talk about trees. We have already discussed that it is not that simple. Recall Kant’s Epistemology. When we deal with experiences we structure reality, by things that are not coming from reality itself.

The approach of Mead has something to do with the fact that we have some experience among us of how we react on certain things. The meaning of a dog or a tree has not only to do with the empirical impression you have of that object, but also with how in a community those things are used. When you think of a dog, you are not only thinking of an impression of a kind of animal – most of the time we have a direct idea of what we do with dogs – we walk with dogs, etc. *The meaning of the dog is linked up with what we do with dogs in a certain culture. It depends a little bit of what kind of culture.*

It depends a lot of what you are looking at. If we want to know what reality is, it is not just sensing, but it is also the meaning and use of things in a kind of culture, with the way we arrange and deal with things. Instead of seeing things as they are on their own – we deal with them on how we use them with the interaction patters we have. Within our culture we use them, with the way we interact with them. We give a kind of symbolic value to things from the interaction we have.

Children – we perceive that as more than physical objects. We consider them as human being, and they have a special role in how we organize life. They can play and say silly things and they are innocent in a certain sense. This is due to our common understanding of what a child is. We give that meaning to children. We take into account the spontaneous reaction we have within our kind of culture.

If we deal with reality, we do it always within a kind of specific interaction pattern. For this reason we also understand words. If a word is said, it is reacted to in a specific way. Because we use words in our dealing with things, we can use words in our kind of communication. You need to know the interaction pattern and the way people deal with words and habits, to be aware of what the meaning of things are.

If we deal with a situation, our first reaction is to ask ‘What is happening?’ We need the frame to have a kind of understanding. If something is confusing, we do not have the right frame to interact. Panic is the result of having no special interaction patterns so that we can deal with it properly. Only with a firm frame do we feel confident.

The way we organize the world is done collectively. Here the frame is that there is a lesson – we have expectations and boundaries of what we can do. This is in a certain sense also morality. If we lose our frame we will lose security. Moral reactions have something to do with the fact that the expectations and boundaries are transgressed. When there is something crazy or unexpected done. There is a kind of group reaction dynamic. Morality has something to do with the fact that within a kind of group you have specific boundaries and expectations, within the way a world is bound up and framed in a specific culture.

There is a special notion in Mead’s vision for morality. He is convinced in every dealing with another person, we have an idea of what is expected from us in a general way. We have an understanding of what is expected or not expected within a group. Each group has its generalized other. We spontaneously do this. A consciousness is linked up with the generalized other, and we deal with what is right or wrong from that kind of perspective.

This is the reason also why our self-image is not just the result of the fact that we sometimes look in the mirror and have an idea of our bodily appearance – but we also notice how we appear from the perspective of the generalized other. We have an idea of how we come off to others by taking the position of the generalized other. In this kind of approach you must know the habits of a particular country. You realize how culturally bound how morality is, and you can cultivate the idea that it is quite necessary to communicate and try to understand each other. There is a tendency in this kind of approach to see a development of a generalized other than encompasses the whole of humanity. He believes in the development of a cosmopolitan way of dealing with things. It is because there are rules that we can organize our behavior and give a special meaningful feature towards our own behavior. Rules, expectations, and boundaries give us the possibility to express ourselves in a special manner. You must know the meaning of what you are saying in a relationship with the generalized other.

One of the problems with people who are disturbed in realizing what seems to be expected in the common understanding – artistic people – have difficulties communicating. You need a kind of common understanding to know how to express yourself.

Goffman stresses the importance of the frames we use in common to interpret what is at stake. If you have a right frame to interpret things you have an understanding of how to express yourself in certain circumstances.

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Leipzig – at the end of the 19th Century.

Before the First World War people had a fine way of developing civilization. There was no problem in acting Eurocentric – distinguishing between primitive and humane.

**Friedrich Nietzsche (1844 – 1900)**

Nietzsche is important because he made explicit a problem from Lesson 1. With religion human beings were of ultimate importance. Once you develop science, and once you realize that there is a kind of evolution going on, that we are a part of a natural selection process, that we are not the center of the world, and that we have not been on earth for much time – Nietzsche confronts us with this perspective.

He says that human beings are in a world without anything. We are not important. We must take up our responsibility in a certain place – a heroic attitude. He references the way the Greeks were aware of a kind of tragedy. For Nietzsche – neo –Platonic views were a kind of escape. A comfort of sorts. Nietzsche was trying to halt a position where you don’t give in to comfort because that comfort is in a certain sense – false. It is a lie. If philosophy is a way of trying to comfort ourselves, then it means that it is a kind of lie. We must look tragedy in the eyes and not shy away. Heroic, strong and forceful is the way Nietzsche sees how we ought to act.

He is hostile to the ethical developments where the heroic situation is trapped, by trying to pull strong people down by resentment. He believes that Christian ethics is full of resentment. They pull strong people down. This is the morality of slaves. Nietzsche’s approach has created a lot of turmoil. Still today a lot of people are aware of that kind of idea. It shapes the way we deal with ethics.

Being ethical is not being heroic.

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Vienna – Beginning of the 20th Century.

**Sigmund Freud (1856 – 1939)**

Psycho-Analysis. In the Christian neo-platonic tradition we have the idea that we can be in contact with something more important and beyond us that is connected with the creator. In the Psycho-analytic tradition one is trying to find out the internal unconscious notions. Instead of saying that it is coming from a spiritual entity, we can also say that it is the result of how we have developed. The focus focuses in on children. How we developed as children, how our character was formed, etc. If you analyze your childhood, if you analyze how you came to desire certain things, you can find later problems related to these childhood experiences.

Psycho-Analysis is a kind of tool – a kind of language also that makes it possible to express these prime experiences. Freud is a complex intellectual because he uses different frames at the same time. He says we have wishes and desires that are linked up with experiences we had as children. Our childhood experiences cause issues later on in our lives that become parts of our character. In this kind of account the remembrances of a particular situation are structuring the desires of a person. If you want to know what your character is you need to know how you developed it in the first instance as a child. Freud believed that if you were aware of these things you could avoid neurotic tendencies. If you have a therapeutic session where you try to analyze the origin of your character then you will come close to these first impressions. One of the main ways of discovering your personal character is trying to analyze your dreams. If you associate with certain aspects of dreams and analyze it – you are confronted with your real desire.

Freud doesn’t believe in spontaneous natural development. What we are is the result of all kinds of instances and contingents – perceptions and experiences. There is no true self and no hardcore ‘I’ as defended in the Neo-Platonic tradition.

Nietzsche, Freud, and Marx have attempted to attack this old position.

We are at the period just before the second World War.

**Lesson 11: The Final Chapter**

The idea is we get an idea of what happened in the 20th century. To give some main developments. Make it possible to see the mechanisms behind the development. These philosophers didn’t develop their ideas from scratch, so you cannot deal with them as atomic individuals with very personal ideas. They have a kind of background and start from certain presuppositions – for this reason there is a kind of logic in their ethical approach. If you understand their logic you can understand their direction and why some agree or disagree.

One of the most important things to understand is that if you start from the idea that what constitutes meaning or relevance is the result of a way a cultural value system developed in a society, it is self-evident that you will end up with the idea that it is necessary to understand the relation of the individual with his society. If you understand this relationship then you understand his duties, preferences, hopes and fears. This will end up in a more communitarian approach: ethical behavior can be understood by understanding the relationship between society and individual – this is Hegelian idea, and the same with Bradley (the idea of being a part of the whole).

If you start from the idea that no, there is the possibility to deal with what is very specific for human beings, the nature of human beings, and you don’t see the importance of cultural influence, this approach ends up with the idea that you come up with an ideal of how society can be reorganized in a universal way – not just for a particular culture or period in history. You are convinced that you know what is relevant for human beings, in general. This is sometimes related with the natural right approach – a kind of neo-platonic vision. In a religious perspective it is also related to the idea that you can relate yourself to something higher something spiritual. In such an approach you end up with the idea that ethics can be founded on something that is not changing, not relativistic and important for every human.

Or you can think of human nature corresponding with a specific essence – a specific way of being a creature. If we want to answer the needs of that specific human creature – we know what seems to be relevant. Returning to the question of personal identity – on the one side you can say that the ‘who I am’ is related to my relations with other people – to my society. If you stress this you advocate more a communitarian approach. On the other hand you may say that your identity is something internal, something spiritual – under this you turn to the universalistic aspect of ethics.

**Today we will give an overview of these different approaches:**

Analytic philosophy and positivism grew out of a rebellion against Hegelianism. There is a tendency to make things kind of simple. One must look at the facts – the tendency to believe that if you want to know what things are, you have to make it self-evident that what we can verify with our senses is true. This tendency of positivism was developed with the tremendous scientific discoveries in that moment. The idea was that we progress so well because science is developing so quickly.

**Logical Positivism** – The Vienna Circle – these people believe that we need to end with all this incomprehension. Stick to reality and stay with the scientific point of view. We must invest in logical things and mathematical thinking and base out system on this.

**Mauritz Schlick (1882-1936)** A member of the circle. With the Vienna circle there began a crisis to try and talk about ethical things as it was not necessarily scientific. They were not at all convinced you could develop a reasonable way of doing ethics. Many philosophers tried to find a way out.

A prominent Belgian Philosopher who is developing a theory that it is silly to believe logical positivism is the only way to talk about reality. He believes that this functions in a rhetorical way – it starts from certain opinions within society and you try to convince others to see as you see it. You use a rhetorical side to defend it. When people dialogue they try and use rhetoric. This has nothing to do with science – science is not about convincing people, it is about showing the facts.

What is rational or irrational is the kind of public you are talking to. If you talk to a private community with certain particular opinions within it you will use these kinds of presuppositions to convince them. If you talk to a universal public you will need to find these arguments that are relevant to convince a universal audience. One of the struggles against the logical positivists was that you cannot talk about ethics because people said there was nothing scientific or logical about it.

**The Reaction to Hegelianism**:

**Bertrand Russell (1872-1970)**

Russell and Moore were originally convinced by the theory of Bradley. Convinced about taking account of history and the broader whole. Read the Bryan Magee Chapter on Logical Positivism. This movement opened Analytic Philosophy. Russell’s approach was also related to finding a way of using language in such a way that It is objective and relevant.

**G.E. Moore (1873 – 1958)**

When Moore dealt with ethics he believed that ethics is just evident. It is common sense and natural. What is good manifests itself in the immediate experience. You need to explore how it works. As a theory it is difficult to uphold – one of the reasons why it was quite successful was that it was also a matter of rhetoric. It was presented brilliantly.

**Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889-1951)**

He started a little bit from the same position as Russell, he as well was influenced by the famous Vienna circle – trying to deal with reality in a pure direct way, and finding how language functions in a picture theory. Later on Wittgenstein changed, and his work was never systematically developed. What seems to be apparent is that he became convinced that if we deal with ethics it has something to do with the fact that we play together, we have a praxis together that makes it possible that we have an understanding of kinds of things. You need to have a common understanding and common practice to make ethics work. The idea that the environment and the community and what is called form of life is there – it is somewhat comparable to the Hegelian idea. Only then can you understand what is meaningful. There is the same tendency as Hegelianism to rely on the context. If you want to understand what is good or right or certain, you need to know the kind of game that is played – a language game. This was a tremendous influence and it still is.

**John Austin (1911 – 1960)**

With Austin we begin to enter into the time of Linguistic Analysis. We use language to do things as well as to *assert* things. Philosophers were convinced that instead of dealing with philosophical questions in a metaphysical way you can analyze an expression as a matter of language – understand how they use language and you will understand the sentence. Things exist only because we use language in a certain way. Using language can generalize and give false impressions of certain things such as intelligence – this philosophy is useful for helping us out of such tricks. By clarifying what we mean by our concepts. Sometimes also in dealing with these things they became very boring and pedantic.

**Peter Strawson (1919 – 2006)**

He wrote one article about reactive attitudes. It’s an article about Free-Will. There has always been a kind of discussion about being free or being determined. If someone is doing certain things and you are convinced that they are completely determined – are they responsible.

Strawson’s answer to this was – if we deal in a scientific way with behavioral human beings, we will see that there is a kind of determinism, and people cannot be responsible. All sorts of causal relations seem to be determined. However, no one in practical life is starting from this point of view. You have philosophers who are convinced that free will does not work, yet would rarely argue for a lack of responsibility in action. It seems that in practice, certain people are responsible and we have certain reactive attitudes towards them. The result of our feelings towards them has nothing scientific to do with things – it is in the practice among each other. It is self-evident for instance, that if a little child kills someone else, it is difficult to attribute responsibility to the child. Instead of looking at ethics in a scientific way we must see it from the way we allow people to engage in society – how we play the game. Again this approach goes in the direction of stressing the importance of the common understanding – the practical, experiential way of dealing with things.

From a scientific view you could say that all the things a person done are causally determined. But this doesn’t change our reactive attitudes.

**1970s – John Rawls the Theory of Justice:**

Since this book, a lot of moral philosophers are still busy with this inheritance. The things Rawls put forward has changed the discussion. A lot of books later on were commentaries on the frame Rawls introduced. What is important in Rawls view is that he dealt with Justice and Distributive Justice. He was concerned about how in society, people have sufficient chance to deal with what seems to be good.

**The main ideas of his theory:**

- All citizens should share in a societies wealth and be given equal economic opportunities.

- In a just society, rational individuals under a veil of ignorance about their original position in a society should endorse a theory that:

- It gives everyone as much liberty as possible.

- It allows for the unequal distribution of wealth only when the existence of such inequalities benefits everyone and is accessible to everyone.

This ethical system is more about how society needs to be organized. Many ethicists embraced this theory and approached ethics like Rawls. Rawls is defending liberalism. What made him successful was that he didn’t start from philosophy alone. He started in part from economic approaches. This is a common presupposition from classical economics – people are rational beings trying to improve their personal situation *only* that is the core of the motivation to deal with certain things.

Rawls was attractive in embracing non-philosophical thinking. It is not the philosophers inspiring politicians nowadays. Most of the time it is economics.

When the community people are working in is loyal to certain ideas, and the system is sound, and one knows that everyone will do his or her job, then people are prepared to do certain things for the common good.

One of the reasons why Rawls was so successful was because he made a bridge between Philosophy and economics. The reaction runs on both sides – people defending the idea that you don’t need to give the state the responsibility to redistribute wealth – you need to leave the state small. You don’t need to intervene in a society. The more right wing reaction. Freedom is about being able – about potential. The State is not asked to say what the good life is. In such an approach you will never find the idea that there is high culture of lower culture.

**Robert Nozick (1938 – 2002) published Anarchy, State and Utopia in 1974.**

He says that you need a state that is minimum and limited to narrow functions. **Minimal State:** Limited to the narrow functions of protection against force, theft, fraud, enforcement of contracts, etc.

**Amartya Sen (1933 – 2015)**

**Martha Nussbaum (1947 – 2015)**

They advocate that it is not about money, but about sufficient capabilities. If you spend money around people equally, it will not lead to more freedom. What you need to enforce is education. Improve the situation of women to gain capabilities. This is a kind of example of a universal way of dealing with ethics – you start with the idea that people need to be free and need to be developing in their own way – need the possibility to develop their own life. This again is an approach that stresses negative freedom. Starts from the idea that you need to improve the conditions of people so they can make their own decisions. IT is up to you for how you want to use your liberty. This ends up in a state where there is no sacredness around certain projects anymore. Everything is a matter of choice. Related to liberal ideas in religious wars, and somewhat to Durkheim. The liberals will say that everyone can choose for him or herself. But then the markets and those with money begin to promote their products.

**The Capability Approach:**

- The freedom to achieve well-being is a of primary moral importance.

- Freedom to achieve well-being is to be understood in terms of people capabilities:

- Their real opportunities do and be what they have reason to value.

**Michael Walzer (1935 – 2015)**

*Spheres of Justice:* Responds to Rawls by saying that he defines good in a very narrow way. As a matter of fact Walzer says that money is not the only thing that matters. Another thing for instance would be justice. Or for instance science. He says that in all these spheres you have different kinds of goods. It depends on the sphere you are talking about. What is important in his approach is that you separate and keep separate all of these spheres. If having money becomes dominant that means that you can buy political power. We must reorganize society by keeping spheres separate and make it possible for everyone to enjoy different goods in the different spheres. He stresses the importance of the meaning of good. In this approach he is a little afraid of one way of dealing with ethics. He wants sufficient separation.

**Alisdair Macintyre (1929 – 2015)**

After Virtue – he tends to stress again the Aristotelian virtue ethics.

**Charles Taylor (1931 – 2015)**

Sources of the Self. He defends a kind of mystical relation with your inner self as what seems to be right or wrong and beautiful. In the Sources of the Self he explains the cultural influence.

**Michael Sandel (1953-2015)**

A classical introduction to ethics – look to the Ted Talks of Sandel. The appropriate way to liberalism, utilitarianism, etc.

**Bernard Williams (1929 – 2003)**

A philosopher who is rather critical towards philosophy. He doesn’t believe ethical theory can really do a lot. In Ethics and the limits of Philosophy he comes up with the idea that there is no possible way to find what is definitely right and wrong, and to know what is the only justifiable way of living – utilitarianism and Kantianism cannot do the job. They have all kinds of problems in dealing with ethics. They do not take into account the personal engagement. His critique is somewhat parallel to Bradley.

For Bradley in ethics what is important is finding something you want to realize unconditionally. Something you are moved by, something that is worthwhile. Article by Bernard Williams – Is it interesting to live forever. Sometimes we definitely believe it is a tragedy that people die young. Ethics has something to do with realizing yourself and finding projects with are worthwhile. He stresses the fact that to find certain projects and to engage in them will never assure you that your life is worthwhile. You cannot use ethics to assure yourself. The reason why philosophy is attractive to many people is so they can use it for certainty and justification.

Self-Justification never accepts the insecurity of world.

**Michael Tomasello (1950 – 2015)**

Being busy with ethics is not just a business of philosophers alone. Nowadays it seems that anthropologists and psychologists are also interested in ethics. They don’t start with presuppositions or complex philosophical ethics, they ask brand new questions.

The question of Tomasello was “What makes us different from Chimpanzees.” He comes up with the idea that what makes us different is that we develop something strange. See Summary of Reading.

Ethics appears at the moment that you can evaluate yourself from a common perspective. From this then comes consciousness.

**Question and Answer Session – Introduction to Ethics:**

**Transition from one period to another Homeric to Platonic** – When a closed culture opens relations with another culture, then there is a possibility that the way people think within that culture can be perceived from a perspective that is different. Once this happens, the culture of the closed society will somewhat evaporate.

* By the fact that a tribe is broken up by relations from the outside (especially from Asia) people begin to question their own habits and their own cultures. The self – evident character of the patriarchal way of dealing with things loses its hold.
* From the traditional patriarchal aristocratic way of dealing with things, there is a mix of the Dionysian tradition, Orphic tradition, and the slow beginning of philosophy.
* When the self-evident character of what you can know fades away, people start to question, and philosophy seems to appear.

**Kant and the Free will vs. Universal Categorical Imperative:** It is important to obey the law and do something yourself, it must be a personal decision and made freely. Only then is it worthwhile and only then does it have value. A person is free not to obey the law, but the result is that he in a certain sense is lost. You are free to obey the law, and if you’re reasonable you will do it. There is a possibility to not obey the law, but the result is you are doing things in the wrong way.

* If you link this way of seeing things in this protestant tradition, it is the idea that if you turn yourselves to God and obey God, and humbly give yourself to believing in him, then you will be saved. It is very important to do this freely.
* Kant as a philosopher does not take a theological position, but it is a secularized version of Protestantism that is wearing off on him. The spirit behind the work has a certain affinity.
  + There is an affinity in Locke with that Protestant religion.

**A question regarding the relationship of Society to Ethical systems – Would you say that Ethical systems stem out of the state of societies they are in, or they are reactionary to the society they are within?**

**Aristotle – Gentleman Ethics:** A romantic conservative looking back in the old days. The old days are quite broad and vague. In each city you had prominent families representing a kind of tradition.

* It doesn’t represent strictly what was happening in the middle class. But at least in the intellectual class, you already have a kind of modern flavor.
* What do we really understand by individualism? Aristotle vs. Modernity.
  + In a culture where people cannot think for themselves, and where people are guided by the fact that they obey what seems to be expected from them, we can call this culture non-individualistic.
  + From the moment you are able to realize your own position, you have already a kind of individualism. The fact that Aristotle was free to think and discuss indicates a relation between him and modern individualism.
  + In a traditional group bound society, where it is not self-evident to think on your own, asking people to think for themselves is a very modern idea.
  + Aristotle tends to have a hierarchical way of looking at things.

**Nominalism:** William Of Occam, is a representor to a critique of the essentialist approach, by saying that you don’t need these essences to deal with reality. We don’t need to multiply entities if we can deal with less. Once you break with that kind of Aristotelian perspective, its danger is a slant towards relativism, because of the denying of a certain type of human nature.

* It prepared the Protestant way – we cannot trust in natural principles, but must trust in God.
* Nominalism shows there is a kind of tendency in the discussion between Platonists and Theologians to neglect the world, and focus on God. The nominalist way of dealing with things focuses on God and does not trust in nature.

Deistic Tendencies in Voltaire and Spinoza, Spinoza was already aware of the problems in the religious texts.

From the 17th Century on, people discovered the possibilities of Mathematics – Descartes, Spinoza, and Leibnitz. The idea that instead of thinking that the relation between things are inspired by a finality linked up in the essence of things, they were fascinated that you could explain the causality of things in a mathematical way and could think of entities as pure material things. A deistic approach is mixed up a mathematical way of seeing things.

**Religious Wars – Idea of Karl Schmitt:** His vision was that the liberal way of dealing with conflicts, is to make the issue less important. The conflict didn’t find a solution in a rational debate, the religious wars ended by claiming that religion wasn’t that important at all. Voltaire is the most representative philosopher of this.

**Hume and the Enlightenment:** In the beginning of the 18th Century, there developed all kinds of conversations among the upper classes who had free time. There develops a kind of mentality where people are able by the use of literature to look at their own situation from a distance. It is fun and done in a very stylish and polite way – to an extent it is so polite it is almost ironic.

This type of culture makes it possible to take a kind of distance. It is linked up with this old way of how these Greek intellectuals were able to look around them in a detached way. Inspired by Cicero and other Roman Philosophers. There is a kind of liberty with this.

This becomes a little bit more widespread because of the possibility to read newspapers and these essays. This creates an enlightened way of dealing with things. For Hume it is important to have liberty, but he doesn’t feel well when people like John Wilkes defends freedom, and the right of the people to govern, but making use of the emotion to make himself powerful. Hume was not in agreement with such an approach because it was not sensible.

What we remember of the 18th Century is how it ended. The French Revolution. The defense of Liberty, Freedom of the Press, etc. It is interesting to see that a lot of these Enlightenment philosophers were not supportive of the freedom of the press. They did not want fanaticism of any kind. They were not all defenders of this idea of freedom rights.

What is especially important for philosophers like Kant is that you distance yourself from tradition, and think for yourself. Science is developing with the possibility of a rational discourse instead of a theological one.

Apart from the scientific development, you have also before that, you had a type of literary freedom. This is the perspective from which we must understand Hume.

**Kant distinguished from Hume:** Hume is quite different in the sense that for him the passions predominate. If we behave ourselves ethically we are in a certain sense guided by emotion. That doesn’t take away that we need to take a distance and see things from a certain perspective. Still Hume believes that it is impossible to find a rational explanation for what we need to do. In his approach Hume is not as normative as Kant.

Kant is somewhat hostile to passions and emotions. If someone does something because he feels good, it is not right. You need to do it because it is the right thing to do, against or apart from your emotion. For Kant individual person is important, for Hume there is also a critical awareness of the need think for yourself.

Notes on Bentham and Mill – **An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation and Utilitarianism.**

**The Problem with Utilitarianism:** The consequences of a Moral Elite; dogmatism, alternative motives, etc. leads to potentially fatal consequences of the application of Utilitarianism.

The primary interest of Bentham is legislation. Not purely moral speculation. Mill would have this system implemented into education.

The problem of applying the Utilitarian principle on spatial levels – Personal, family, local, regional, national, international.

How can you keep your motives and actions in line with the principle of utility?

The principle of Utility is based on action and not on intention – not concerned with virtue.

Kant is the complete opposite. For Kant if something is not done from the Categorical Imperative, it is completely irrelevant even if it brings pleasure or negates pain.

Pleasure in Hume vs. Pleasure in Utilitarianism

* In Hume we do not discuss the value of the passions, we use them as criterion for morality.
* In Utilitarianism pleasures play a very important role under the rational principle.
  + Utilitarian’s are very much influenced by Hume. They both share, pleasure and utility.

[…] Jeremy Bentham (1748–1832) is properly considered the father of modern Utilitarianism. It was he who made the Utilitarian principle serve as the basis for a unified and comprehensive ethical system that applies, in theory at least, to every area of life. **Never before had a complete, detailed system of ethics been so consistently constructed from a single fundamental ethical principle. […] One of the strengths of Bentham's position is its honest bluntness, which it owes to his refusal to be fazed by the contrary opinions either of conventional morality or of refined society. He never thought that the aim of Utilitarianism was to explain or justify ordinary moral views; it was, rather, to reform them.**

* **See the objections he makes – not necessarily against another system but against fragmented viewpoints or calls for relativism.**

Utilitarianism by John Stuart Mill – at least the chapter we saw – seemed to be written to emphasize what Utilitarianism actually was – and to dispel certain myths regarding it. Most important it seems to John Stuart Mill is to emphasize the societal concern the principle of utility holds, and that it is far beyond a simple impulsive, egoistical principle (42 his own happiness). **What I think is perhaps more pronounced in Mill’s work, in contrast to Bentham, is the attempt to emphasize the higher pleasures, beyond the lower pleasures. Page 34.**

“The cultivation of the feelings became one of the cardinal points in my ethical and philosophical creed.”[[1]](#footnote-1) (43 – 44)

Bentham:

1. Man is governed by pain and pleasure. Pain and pleasure is the only thing that is able to point out what we ought to do or shall do. Fastened to this governing throne of pain and pleasure, are: 1) the standard of right and wrong, and the “chain” of causes and effects. Pain and pleasure relating to right and wrong, and cause and effect, govern us in all that we do, think and say. Whenever we try to throw off the rule of pain and pleasure over us, we simply demonstrate and confirm that very rule. The **principle of utility,** recognizes the human subjection to the governance of pain and pleasure and assumes this government to be the firm ground of its system. **The object of this system** is to bring up and care for the fabric of happiness by the hands of reason and of law.
2. The Principle of Utility is the foundation – the basis of Bentham’s Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation. Because of the foundation, it is necessary to explain fully what the principle of utility is.

**“By the Principle of Utility is meant that principle which approves or disapproves of every action whatsoever according to the tendency which it appears to have to augment or diminish the happiness of the party whose interest in question: or, what is the same thing in other words, to promote or to oppose that happiness. I say of every action whatsoever; and therefore not only of every action of a private individual, but of every measure of government.”**

The principle of utility approves or disapproves of any action according to that actions ability to appear to be enhancing or diminishing the happiness of the party whose interest is be focused on. This principle applies to every action, and therefore is not only about individuals, but also about how society is governed.

1. Utility means the property in any object, where it produces benefit, pleasure advantage, happiness, etc. It also applies to the property in any object to prevent the happening of mischief, pain, evil to the person or party under consideration. This person or party can be a single individual or an entire community.
2. Because the interest of the community is a very general expression in moral phrases, it is no mystery that the meaning “the interest of the community” has been lost. “Community” means **that a community is a fictitious body, made up of individual people who are considered the members of the community.** Thus, “The interest of the community” is the sum of the interests of the several members who compose it.
3. Because we said that a community is comprised of individuals, we cannot talk about the Interest of the Community, without first talking about the interest of individuals. The interest of the individual, is something a thing is said to promote or be for, when that thing tends to add to the sum of the individual’s pleasures or to diminish the sum total of his pains.
4. From now on the principle of utility can be referred to as simply utility. An action can conform to utility (relating to the community at large) when the happiness brought by that action to the community is greater than the sum total of the pains it brings to the community.
5. A measure of government is dictated by utility, when that measure has the ability to bring more happiness to the community, than it does to diminish it.
6. When a man supposes an action or measure of the government can be conformed to the principle of utility, it may be useful for the purposes of discourse, to imagine a “law or dictate of utility” and to then speak of the action as being conformed to such a law or dictate.
7. A man may be said to be in favor of the principle of utility when the criteria he uses to see an action as good or bad, is based on that actions ability to enhance or diminish the happiness of the community.
8. Regarding an action that is conformable to the principle of utility, one may always say that it is one that ought to be done, or that it is not one, that should not be done. One can also say that if an action is right it should be done, or that if it is not wrong, it should be done. Only in this context do the words, ought, right and wrong have any meaning.
9. Has the morally correct/model of this principle ever been formally disagreed with? It appears that it has been contested by those who do not know what they have been meaning. Can we directly prove the principle of utility? No we cannot, because “that which is used to prove anything else, cannot itself be proved. To try and prove the principle of utility is as impossible as it is unnecessary.
10. By the natural makeup of the human frame, most people throughout their lives, generally embrace the principle of utility without thinking about it. If not how they order their actions, but instead how they apply their own actions and those of others. However, at the same there have been not many, even of the really intelligent, who have been inclined to embrace utility. There are few people who have not attempted to quarrel with utility. This is mainly due to their inability to understand how to apply it, or because of some prejudice that they were scared to examine. In principle and in practice, the rarest of human qualities is consistency.
11. When a person attempts to take action against the principle of utility, it is with reasons draw from the principle of utility (without him being aware of it). If his argument prove anything, they do not prove that the principle is wrong, but that according to the ways he thinks utility is applied, the argument is misapplied. **“It is possible for a man to move the earth? Yes; but he must first find another earth to stand upon.”**
12. To disprove the ownership of the principle of utility by arguments is impossible, but due to some of the above reasons mentioned, or a partial view of the principle of utility, a man may happen to be disposed not to really enjoy the principle. If someone is not disposed to really enjoy utility, he ought to follow the following steps, and perhaps in time he will reconcile himself with it.
    1. 1. Let the man decide for himself, whether he wants to discard the principle of utility altogether, and if so, let that man consider what all of his reasoning can then lead him to.
    2. 2. Let the man who does not relish the principle of utility decide with himself, whether he would judge or act without any foundational principle, or if there is any other foundational principle he could judge and act by.
    3. 3. **If there happens to be another foundational principle he can judge and act by, let him examine the depth of that principle, to see whether it is not merely a principle in words or a kind of phrase which does nothing more than express the affirmation or confirmation of his unfounded, unjustified sentiments.**
    4. 4. If the man who does not relish utility is inclined to think that his own preference of good and bad added to the idea of an act, without any regard for its consequences, is a sufficient foundation for him to judge and act on, then let that man ask himself – **Are my feelings going to be a standard of right and wrong for every single man, or is every single persons feelings have the same privilege of being a standard to itself?**
    5. 5. If the man responds and says that “my feelings are going to be a standard of right and wrong for every single man” let him then ask himself this, “Is my principle despotical, and hostile to all the rest of the human race?”
    6. **6. If the man responds and says that “Every single persons feelings have the same privilege of being a standard to itself” then let him ask himself, “Is this not anarchical, and at this rate, are there not as many different standards of right and wrong as there are men?” Also let him ask himself, “For the same person, regarding the same thing, isn’t what is right today, be wrong tomorrow?” “Is not the same thing right and wrong in the same place at the same time?” “Does not the decision to opt for the second – that every person’s feelings have the same privilege of being a standard to itself – end all argument possible?” “If two men at the same time say, I like this, or I don’t like this, can they say anything more?”**
    7. 7. If this man instead responds to the question, “No, the sentiment which is proposed as a standard must be grounded on reflection.” Then let him ask himself, “On what particulars is my reflection going to turn to?” If his particulars are related to the utility of an act then he must ask himself, “Is this not deserting my own principle, and borrowing from the very principle I began to disagree with?” If the particulars of his reflection are not related to utility then on what particulars will his reflection be based on?
    8. 8. If he decides that he wants to combine the matter – mash the matter together – and adopt his own principle in part, and the principle of utility in part, let him ask himself, “How far will I adopt the principle of utility?”
    9. 9. When he has decided for himself where he will stop applying the principle of utility then he must ask himself, “How have I justified to myself the use of this principle so far? Why will I not use this principle any longer?”
    10. 10. To admit any other principle than the principle of utility, to be a right principle, that is to say a principle that is right for a man to pursue, and to admit that right can have a meaning without reference to utility (which is not true) then let him say, “Is there any such thing as a motive that a man can have to pursue the dictates of the principle?” “If there is a motive, then what is this motive and how is this motive going to be distinguished from the motives which enforce the dictates of utility?” If there is not a motive, then let him ask himself, “What is it that this other principle can be good for?”

**John Stuart Mill on Utilitarianism:**

“Those who know anything about the matter are aware that every writer, from Epicurus to Bentham, who maintained the theory of utility meant by it, not something to be contradistinguished from pleasure, but pleasure itself, together with exemption from pain; and instead of opposing the useful to the agreeable or the ornamental, have always declared that the useful means these, among other things.” (32).

The term is ignorantly misapplied when it is used as though to imply superiority to frivolity and the mere pleasures of the moment.

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.

* What things does this principle include in the ideas of pain and pleasure?
* To what extent is what is included in the ideas of pain and pleasure left an open question?

**The Theory of Life that Utilitarianism is grounded on**: 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.

Is it not detestable that you say the whole of human life has no higher end than pleasure? This seems like a doctrine only of the swine: *It is not I but you who represent degrading human nature, by supposing that human beings are capable of no pleasures beyond that of swine.*

“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 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.”

What makes one pleasure more valuable than another? 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.”

**My questions are directed towards J.S. Mill.**

**If Utilitarianism is about acting to bring about the most pleasure or at the very least not pain, and pleasure is measured both in quantity and quality, then how would you respond to this question: “If you say that greater pleasure is determined by the consensus of those who have experienced both, then how do you avoid dogmatism based on the limited experience of the few?” Dogmatism seems evident when you say, “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.”**

**If someone must *experience* the two pleasures (or the pain for that matter) in order to evaluate which is greater, then does this not put at a disadvantage those of limited experience?**

**My second question goes as follows, “You say that a being of higher faculties requires more to make him happy and is capable of more acute suffering… would you say that all humans possess the same faculties, or that some have higher faculties than others? If some have higher faculties than others, how have you determined what constitutes higher faculties? If they all have the same faculties, then how have you arrived at such a conclusion – because surely you cannot have evaluated each and every human?”**

**When you say:**

**“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.”**

**First question is to clarify: do noble feelings indicate a higher moral aptitude? If this is so, does this not imply an elitism or at the very least a suffocation of circumstances? It seems to indicate that those born into certain circumstances are capable of higher moral judgment than those who are not.**

**How would Mill account for cultural differences in understanding pleasure and pain?**

**If what is good and bad, morally correct or incorrect, is based on pleasure and pain, then why would the first person to exercise their mental capacities, as in a mathematical problem, continue pursuing it if it brought nothing but pain and frustration? In order to learn how to do complex mathematics, one must suffer mentally in order to achieve the pleasure of the resultant knowledge… however, for the first person to do complex mathematics, it was not evident that such a pursuit resulted in the pleasure of resultant knowledge. Thus how can humans be governed by pleasure or pain when they would willingly suffer for something that they do not know results in pleasure?**

“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.”

“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 benefit.”

**The Ultimate End:** 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 a means of comparison.

**Objection: Happiness, in any form, cannot be the rational purpose of human life and action; because, in the first place, it is unattainable; and they ask “what right has thou to be happy?”**

* Men can do without happiness.
* All noble beings have learned from renunciation.

“The happiness which they meant was not a life of rapture, but moments of such, in an existence made up of few and transitory pains, many and various pleasures, with a decided predominance of the active over the passive, and having as the foundation o the whole not to expect more from life than it is capable of bestowing.”

The main constituents of a satisfied life, appear to be 2 – tranquility and excitement

**“When people who are tolerably fortunate in their outward lot do not find in life sufficient enjoyment to make it valuable to them, the cause generally is caring for nobody but themselves. To those who have neither public nor private affections, the excitements of life are much curtailed, and in any case dwindle in value as the time approaches when all selfish interests must be terminated by death…” (39)**

What makes life unsatisfactory?

1. Selfishness
2. Mental Cultivation

“Unquestionably it is possible to do without happiness; it is done involuntarily by 19/20ths of mankind, even in those parts of our present world which are least deep in barbarism; and it often has to be done voluntarily by the hero or the martyr, for the sake of something which he prizes more than his individual happiness.”

“The Utilitarian morality dos recognize in human beings the power of sacrificing their own greatest good for the good of others. It only refuses to admit that the sacrifice is itself a good. A sacrifice which does not increase or tend to increase the sum total of happiness, it considers as wasted.”

“The happiness which forms the utilitarian standard of what is right in conduct is not the agents own happiness but that of all concerned.”

“Between his own happiness and others, utilitarianism requires him to be as strictly impartial as disinterested and benevolent spectator.”

“But also that a direct impulse to promote the general good may be in every individual one of the habitual motives of action, and the sentiments connected therewith may fill a large and prominent place in every human being’s sentient existence.”

“It is the business of ethics to tell us what are our duties, or by what test we may know them; but no system of ethics requires that the sole motive of all we do shall be a feeling of duty; on the contrary, ninety-nine hundredths of all our actions are done from other motives, and rightly so done if the rule of duty does not condemn them.”

“The multiplication of happiness, is according to the utilitarian ethics, the object of virtue.

**David Hume – *Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals***

Ancients 🡪 Morals are derived from taste and sentiment.

Moderns 🡪 Account for differences in morals by Metaphysical reasons/deductions of abstract principles.

Topic 1 – Moral Distinctions are discernible by pure reason.

* Truth is disputable.

Topic 2 – All moral determinations are sentiment.

* Render men distinct from their feelings and they can no longer apply morality practically.

Topic 3 – Reason and sentiment concur in almost all moral determinations and conclusions.

* The final sentence which labels actions a certain way, as vice or virtue, or that which renders morality and active principle – making virtue our happiness and vice our misery:
  + “It is probable, that this final sentence depends on some internal sense or feeling, which nature has made universal in the whole species.”
    - But… in order to pave way for this sentiment it is often the case that much reasoning should procede.

Beauty in the finer arts requires reasoning in order to feel the proper sentiment.

Conclusion: Moral beauty demands the assistance of our intellectual faculties, in order to give it a suitable influence on the mind.

**We Wish to Discover the True Origin of Morals.**

* And if we can do this, we can see how much influence Sentiment and Reason respectively have.

The Method: Analyze that complication of mental qualities which form personal merit.

Page 67 – Hume claims utility is the most known and avowed principle in human nature.

It is possible that some moral affections are created through education without any natural principle.

* But we cannot say that ALL come about from this.

The Social Virtues must, before all education, have a beauty or relatedness which makes them appealing the esteem and affections of humans who have not been instructed.

* The public utility of these virtues at the end, when the utility is reached, must be some way agreeable and take hold of some natural affection.

Page 68 – Hume claims we are drawn to a society out of self-interest.

* What is that to me is almost always pertinent.

Usefulness is agreeable and engages our approbation:

* But useful?
  + Useful for somebodies interests.
    - Not only our own interests, but the interests of those who are served by the character or action approved of.

**Hume argues that Self Love is not the original moral principle.**

“Everything which contributes to the happiness of society, recommends itself, directly to our approbation and good will.”

* This principle accounts in great part for the origin of morality.

The Human Countenance borrows smiles or tears from the Human Countenance.

Page 72 – “It is certain that wherever we go, whatever we reflect on or conceive about, everything still presents us with the view of human happiness or misery, and excites in our breast a sympathetic movement of pleasure or uneasiness.”

* We are guided by our sentiments and passions among fellow creatures.

Page 73 – “We enter, to be sure, more readily into sentiments, which resemble those we feel every day.”

* But no passion is ever unable to be entered, as the seeds and first principles of all passions are inside of us.

“The interest of society appears, on the occasion, to be in some degree the interest of each individual.”

**The stronger and more steadier the excited passion is, the greater influence it will have on our conduct or behavior.**

The few persons interested and the small interest [in an event] fill not the imagination and engage not the affections.

* We consider the character and conduct of men while considering the tendencies of their actions, and the happiness or misery which arises to society from them.

Section 183 – If you are unaffected by images of human happiness or misery, you must be equally indifferent to the images of vice and virtue.

Page 75 – The principles of humanity, if capable of influencing our actions, must have some authority over our sentiments at all times.

* The malicious man flips everything on its head.

Page 76 – When our disposition is not perverted, we are always from our natural philanthropy, to give preference to the happiness of society and virtue about vice.

Section 185 – Page 76 – What is Hume saying in Section 185 when he says, “We may own the merit to be equally great, though our sentiments are not raised to an equal height, in both cases. The judgment here corrects the inequalities of our internal emotions and perceptions; in like manner, as it preserves us from error, in the several variations of images, presented to our external senses.”

General language, must affix the epithets of praise or blame in conformity to sentiments which arise, from the general interests of the community.

On Page 77 Hume Argues that “The intercourse of sentiments in society and conversation makes us form some general and unalterable standard, by which we may approve or disapprove of characters and manners.

Section 188 – The Circumstance of Utility is the foundation of the chief part of morals, which has a reference to mankind and our fellow creatures.

**Kant’s Epistemology and Moral Philosophy:**

**Is it possible to view all humans as an end in itself?**

**I think that we rarely, if ever see humans as an end. Most people use humans as a means. Almost all the time.**

**Would Kant say it is morally impermissible to regard humans as means?**

**If so then we all act morally impermissibly.**

The idea of autonomy – Independence.

**He says act as if there were universal laws. Not that there are universal laws, but that you must act as if they were.**

* He acknowledges that he is influenced by Hume.

Kant’s general project is a reaction to Hume in philosophy.

* Kant acknowledges that all our knowledge comes from experience.
  + “Nihil est in intellectu quod non fuerit in sensu”
  + There is nothing in the intellect that was not previously in experience/the senses. This is said by Locke.
* Leibnitz adds, “Nisi intellectus ipse” – except the intellect itself.

Our experience, is organized by our intellect.

* Intellect gives pure empty forms that organize the content we get from experience.

Content – comes from sense, Forms – already exist in our understanding.

**The Categorical Imperative is the form, and the behavior is like the content. He doesn’t tell you what to do, he is saying the form exists. A priori is the empty form that should direct your behavior.**

Transcendental Deduction – the Method Kant uses to explain how this works.

Kant’s idea is to show how our experience is organized without applying experience.

Transcendental is something that explains the possibility of the fact that we can have experience.

**Empirical Deduction**: All of our ideas come directly from experience.

**Metaphysical Deduction:** it talks about empty forms of understanding, but does not pay attention to the fact that these pure forms of understanding are not just empty forms to categorize our experience, but instead they are the source of our possibility of experience.

**The only experience that we have, is conditioned by our forms of understanding.**

**Transcendental vs. Transcendent**

**Transcendental =** something that describes these a priori forms of experience

**Transcendent =** something beyond our experience.

* God
* Soul
* World

The distinction between understanding and reason.

Kant makes a hierarchy of mental abilities/forms of thought.

**Experience is our forms of understanding and experience.**

* First comes senses – it gives content.
* Next comes understanding (organizes the content with forms) = Categories
  + Understanding establishes connections between things.

**Reason has nothing to do with experience, it has to do with Transcendent Ideas**

* Reason is a higher ability
* Deals with how the world should or ought to be.
  + Telos – Goals
* Reason transcends experience, because we are able to look at how the world ought to be.
* In Kant’s vision there is a universal way of dealing with ethics.
  + You need to be guided by rational principles.
* In the Kantian approach the idea that you do certain things is because it is your duty and the right thing to do.
  + Morality cannot be used to obtain certain things.
  + It must be done for the sake of the thing in itself.
* In the Kantian perspective, morality is about doing the right thing because it is the right thing.

**Kant’s Ethical Theory:**

* Kant’s approach is rather severe. In a certain sense it is linked up with the protestant way of dealing with things.
* Catholics say, If you try to be good, to be allowed into heaven, it is instrumental.
  + You are doing things to get into heaven.
* This is very impious for Protestants.
* What was important was the guiding of God, trusting his words.
  + There cannot be something instrumental in that behavior.
* If you have this kind of behavior you cannot act instrumental.

You need to do things in the right way, because it needs to be done – it is self-evident.

If you are instrumentalizing ethics, then it is a sign that you are not pure.

* The chance that you will be just or not is equal: If you really as a person convert yourself to God or trust yourself to God then everyone can be saved in the same way.
  + The belief is that every human being is as valuable as another human being.

It is not doing something in a certain sense, it is a kind of surrender. It makes you pure. Not an instrumental way of dealing with ethics and not an instrumental way of dealing with religion.

* A sense of equality is developed.
* If you are busy with garbage, or art, you are equal.

It seems the Kantian way of dealing with Ethics is linked up with this kind of tradition. For Kant – doing your duty cannot be instrumental. It must be done categorically – unconditionally.

* You do it because it is something that needs to be done.
* You must make the decision yourself.

In Kant’s perspective, if we want to realize what is really good – what kind of things can we call really good?

* Traditionally we would say virtues, or being courageous.
* Kant says if a person is a wicked person and develops these virtues, and the virtues to not help him to be good = a wicked courageous person.
* If you really want to find out what seems to be on its own good – it is the will of a particular person. It is the unconditional will to do good things. This is related to the idea that indeed, doing things in a good way, cannot be done instrumentally.
  + If people act instrumentally, then it is already wicked.
  + It must be a personal decision unconditionally taken.
* It must be done autonomously and unconditionally.
* To Kant it is very, very important to do the right thing.
  + If you want a successful life, you must do your duty out of free will.
    - This makes morality very, very important.
    - People are obliged to be moral people.
  + If you want to develop art, for artists it is important for them to develop these things.

For Kant, Morality is the only saving thing. Everyone is equal – everyone needs to be able to make his or her own decision – you cannot force people – you must give people space enough to develop it. You need to appreciate the freedom.

* They can discover what is important, by using their reason. If you make it possible for everyone to develop his or her own rational capacity, he or she will see automatically what is right thing to do.

**My question is, does Kant say you have to be aware of the action that you do**

**Notes on Kant – The Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals:**

From the Preface:

The Question: **Is it not thought to be of the utmost necessity to work out for once a pure moral philosophy, completely cleansed of everything, that may be only empirical and that belongs to anthropology?**

A moral law must be sought a priori simply in concepts of pure reason.

Any principle based on experience, even if it is universal in some aspect, can be called a practical rule, but never a moral law.

A law must carry with it absolute necessity.

When the pure part of moral philosophy is applied to the human being it does not borrow the least from anthropology, but gives to him (as a rational being) laws beforehand (a priori) which no doubt still require a judgment sharpened by experience.

* It is sharpened by experience:
  + 1. Partly to distinguish in which cases pure moral judgments are applicable.
  + 2. Partly to provide pure moral judgements entry into the will of the human being and the efficacy for his fulfillment of them.
* Even though humans are affected by the idea of practical pure reason, he is not able to make this idea effective in real life.

From Section 1:

The single Categorical Imperative: **Act only in accordance with that maxim through which you can at the same time will that it become a universal law.**

“**Act as if the maxim of your action were to become by your will a universal law of nature”**

Duties to ourselves and to other human beings, and perfect and imperfect duties.

1. Example of someone wanting to kill themselves.
   1. He asks himself whether it is contrary to his duty to take his own life.
   2. His maxim: *From self-love I make it my principle to shorten my life when its longer duration threatens more troubles than it promises agreeableness.* 
      1. Now could this principle of self love become a universal law?
         1. The law would be to destroy life itself through the means of a feeling. But that same feeling’s destination/goal is to impel [us] towards the furtherance of life.
            1. This is contradictory.
2. Example of a man who needs money, and knows that he will not be able to pay it back.
   1. He asks himself “is it not forbidden and contrary to duty to help oneself out of need in such a way?”
   2. His maxim: *When I believe myself to be in need of money I shall borrow money and promise to repay it, even though I know that this will never happen.*
      1. This is perhaps consistent with my whole future welfare, but the question is whether it is right.
         1. In order for it to be right I need to ask myself whether it can be turned into a universal natural law.
         2. This would never be the case, because it would make the promise, and the end one might have in the promise impossible.
            1. This is because no one would believe what was promised him.
3. As a rational being, he wills that all the abilities in him be developed since they serve him and are given to him for all sorts of possible purposes.
   1. Therefore he cannot will a law, which goes counter to that inherent rational will.

Just because something could be a universal law of nature, does not mean that we can will such a principle to hold everywhere as a law of nature.

* See example 4 on page 14.

**The Canon of Moral Appraisal of Action in General:** *We must be able to will that a maxim of our action become a universal law.*

For some Actions:

“Some actions are so constituted [constructed in such a way] that their maxim [motto/dictum] cannot even be thought without contradiction as a universal law of nature, fare less could one will that it should become such.”

* This is opposed to a strict or narrower duty.

“In the case of others it is still impossible to will that their maxim be raised to the universality of a law of nature because such a will would contradict itself.”

* This is opposed only to wide (meritorious) duty.

From these examples we have seen that all duty, regarding what ones obligation is, have been shown to be dependent on the one principle.

“**Act as if the maxim of your action were to become by your will a universal law of nature”**

If we see ourselves going against any duty, we find that we do not really want our mindset to become a universal law, but instead that we take the liberty of making an exception to it for ourselves (for just this once) to the advantage of what we want.

There is a contradiction in “that a certain principle be objectively necessary as a universal law and yet subjectively not hold universally but allow exceptions.”

* But if we look closer and find that our will is divided by reason and desire (inclination) we find that there is no contradiction but a resistance of our desire to reason.

What has been shown:

* + - 1. If duty is a concept that is to contain significance and real lawgiving for our actions it can be expressed only in categorical imperatives and by no means in hypothetical ones
      2. We have set forth distinctly and as determined for every use the content of the categorical imperative (which must contain the principle of all duty).

An imperative can only be applied to a rational being.

What is derived from the special natural constitution of humanity, can yield us a maxim, but not a law. It can yield us a subjective principle to act should we wish, but not an objective principle which would direct us to act even if we would not want to.

Everything empirical is inept. It is highly harmful to the purity of morals.

* In the purity of morals, the proper worth of an absolutely good will consists just in the principle of action being free from all influences circumstance.
  + Only experience can furnish these influences of circumstance.

**Human reason resting on empiricism in weariness, substitutes for morality, a bastard patched up from limbs, which looks like whatever one wants to see in it. But it does not look like virtue for one who has once seen virtue in her true form.**

Is it a necessary law *for all rational beings* always to appraise their actions in accordance with such maxims as they themselves could will to serve as universal laws?

Is it a necessary law for all rational beings:, to access their actions in a manner conforming with such mottos that they could will to serve, as universal laws?

The law is: To access your actions in a manner conforming to mottos that you could will, as universal laws.

To access your actions as universal laws, conforming to mottos that you could will.

**If such a law exists, then the law must be connected with the will of a rational being.**

* In order to discover this connection it is necessary to move into the metaphysics of morals.

In a practical philosophy where we have to do with objective we do not need to undertake an investigation into the grounds on account of which something displeases or pleases.

The possibility of reason determining conduct – a priori.

**“The will is thought as a capacity to determine itself to acting in conformity with the representation of certain laws.”**

The ground of a possibility of an action is means.

What serves the will as the objective ground of its self-determination is an end.

Subjective grounds are incentive. Subjective ends rest on incentives.

The objective ground is a motive. Objective ends rest on motives.

**Practical principles are formal, if they distance themselves from subjective ends, and are material, if they have put subjective ends as their basis.**

Material ends are all only relative. And the ground of hypothetical imperatives.

Hypothetical = on a condition

Categorical = Unconditional

The human being and every rational being must in every time be regarded at the same time as and end, if he is also regarded as a utility.

Beings whose existence rests on nature still have only a relative worth, as means, and are therefore called things.

Rational beings are called persons, because their nature already marks them out as an end in itself, as something that may not be used merely as a means, and limits all choice and is an object of respect.

“But if all worth were conditional and therefore contingent, then no supreme practical principle for reason could be found anywhere.”

If there is to be a supreme practical principle and a categorical imperative, it must be one such that from the representation of what is necessarily an end for everyone because it is an end in itself, it constitutes an objective principle of the will and thus can serve as a universal practical law.

**The Ground for the Universal Practical Principle is that *Rational Nature exists as an end in itself.***

* I represent my own existence this way – so thus it is a subjective principle.
* But when this same rational ground is used by every other rational being to represent his own existence, it becomes an objective principle.

The Practical Imperative: **So act that you use humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of any other always at the same time as an end, never merely as a means…**

This is not borrowed from experience.

The third practical principle of the will: *Of the will of every rational being as a will giving universal law.*

* According to this all maxims are null if they are inconsistent with the wills own giving of universal law.

**Introduction, Section III**

*Obligation:* The necessity of a free action under a categorical imperative of reason.

An Imperative: is a practical rule, by which an action in itself contingent is made necessary.

How is an imperative different from a practical law?

* A law represents an action as necessary, but takes no account of whether this action already inheres by an inner necessity in the acting subject, or whether it is contingent (as in the human being).
* There is no imperative where an action is necessary but takes no account of whether this action already inheres by an inner necessity in the acting subject.

An imperative is a rule which when represented, makes necessary an action that is subjectively contingent and thus represents the subject as one that must be constrained to conform with the rule.

**A Categorical Imperative is one [a rule?] that represents an action as objectively necessary and makes it necessary not indirectly, through the representation of some end that can be attained by the action, but through the mere representation of this action itself (its form) and hence directly.**

* Categorical Imperatives refer to no other property of choice (by which some purpose can be ascribed to it) than simply to its freedom.

*Duty is that action to which someone is bound. It is therefore the matter of obligation, and there can be one and the same duty (as to the action) although we can be bound to it in different ways.*

**Moral personality is therefore nothing other than the freedom of a rational being under moral laws.**

**Psychological Personality is the ability to be conscious of one’s identity in different conditions of one’s existence.**

A persona is subject to no other laws than those he gives to himself.

“A deed is right or wrong in general to the extent that it conforms with duty or is contrary to it, the duty itself can be of any kind. A deed contrary to duty is called a *transgression*.”

Unintentional Transgression = Fault

Intentional Transgression = Crime

What is right in accordance with external laws is called just.

What is not right in accordance with external laws is called unjust.

A collision of duties and obligations is inconceivable.

**Chapter 2 – The Human Being’s Duty to Himself Merely as a Moral Being**

1. On Lying

The greatest violation of a human beings duty to himself as a moral being is lying.

* A lie can be an external lie, or an internal lie.
  + External lie: A human being makes of himself an object of contempt in the eyes of others.
  + Internal Lie: He makes himself contemptible in his own eyes and violates the dignity of humanity in his own person.

Lying does not need to be harmful to others in order to be repudiated.

**For Kant, do you need to be aware of your duty, in order to do your duty correctly?**

**If so, then don’t you need to utilize your reason?**

**Are all humans at a place where they can utilize their reason?**

**If not, what are the implications of this for them? And their ability to act morally?**

**The Will itself is giving the Law to itself – Page 19.**

1. Mill, John Stuart. “[Crisis in my Mental History. One Stage Onward](http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/10378/pg10378.html)” *Autobiography* 1865. Project Gutenberg EBook #10378 produced by Marc D'Hooghe. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)