



PROGRESSIVE VALUATION

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HUMAN PROGRESS

HUMAN BEINGS SEEM TO HAVE MADE PROGRESS WITH
RESPECT TO OUR FACTUAL KNOWLEDGE

ALSO IN IDENTIFYING WHAT IS VALUABLE

CLEARER VIEWS OF WHAT GOALS TO PURSUE, WHAT WE
SHOULD DO, HOW WE SHOULD LIVE

AIMS

TO UNDERSTAND VARIOUS TYPES OF VALUE PROGRESS AND HOW
THEY INTERACT WITH ONE ANOTHER

MORAL PROGRESS

ETHICAL PROGRESS

PROGRESS WITH RESPECT TO "PERSONAL" VALUES

TALK ABOUT VALUES

WHAT ARE VALUES?

DO WE NEED A PECULIAR ONTOLOGY?

'VALUE' IS BOTH A NOUN AND A VERB

I TAKE THE VERBAL USAGE TO BE PRIMARY

VALUING

VALUING SEEMS LINKED TO WANTING

BUT NOT ALL OUR WANTS GENERATE VALUES

DO PEOPLE VALUE CHOCOLATE?

OUR VALUES RELATE TO OUR "IMPORTANT" DESIRES

PRIORITIES

BEST TO THINK COMPARATIVELY

OUR VALUES ARE EXPRESSED IN OUR PRIORITIES

THE FUNDAMENTAL NOTION: *A SCHEME OF VALUES*

SCHEMES OF VALUES

PARTIAL ORDERINGS OF OUR DESIRES

TYPICALLY CONTEXTUALLY SENSITIVE

EXPRESSED IN OUR DECISIONS AND REVISIONS

CONCEPTUAL GEOGRAPHY

MORALITY FOCUSES ON WHAT WE SHOULD DO

ETHICS FOCUSES ON HOW WE SHOULD BE

WE SHOULD BE PEOPLE WHO ACT RIGHTLY

MORALITY IS THUS SUBSUMED BY ETHICS

PERSONAL VALUES

SHOULD BE COMPATIBLE WITH MORAL AND ETHICAL VALUES

YET PROGRESS IN ETHICAL AND MORAL VALUES IS OFTEN
ADVANCED THROUGH TAKING A PERSONAL VALUATION SERIOUSLY

IN THE PROGRESS OF VALUATION, THERE IS A DYNAMICAL
INTERACTION AMONG ALL THREE TYPES OF VALUATIONS

TWO KINDS OF PROGRESS

TELEOLOGICAL PROGRESS: MEASURED BY THE DECREASING
DISTANCE TO A LONG-TERM GOAL

PRAGMATIC PROGRESS: GAUGED BY OVERCOMING PROBLEMS AND
TRANSCENDING LIMITS

ORTHODOX UNDERSTANDINGS

PROGRESS WITH RESPECT TO VALUES LIES IN DISCOVERING WHAT THE VALUES ARE ...

... IN WAYS THAT TEND TO MODIFY CONDUCT

A NATURAL READING: THERE IS A REALM OF VALUES AND WE MAKE PROGRESS BY RECOGNIZING ITS FEATURES

MY HERETICAL VIEW

PROGRESS IN ETHICS AND MORALITY CONSISTS IN MAKING VALUE JUDGMENTS THAT OVERCOME THE PROBLEMS OF OUR PREVIOUS PRACTICES

WE ARE JUSTIFIED IN VIEWING A TRANSITION AS PROGRESSIVE WHEN WE RECOGNIZE HOW OUR NEW PRACTICE OF VALUATION RESPONDED TO A PROBLEM IN OUR PREVIOUS PRACTICE

PROGRESSIVE TRANSITIONS ARE THOSE IN WHICH THE JUSTIFICATION SURVIVES IN THE INDEFINITE LONG RUN

BOTH APPROACHES FACE QUESTIONS

FOR THE ORTHODOX: WHAT IS MEANT BY 'DISCOVERY'? BY 'GETTING SOMETHING RIGHT'? HOW DO WE JUSTIFY OUR SENSE THAT WE HAVE GOTTEN SOMETHING RIGHT?

FOR THE HERETICAL: HOW ARE PROBLEMS IDENTIFIED? WHAT COUNTS AS A SOLUTION TO A PROBLEM?

TWO VIEWS OF META-ETHICS

THE ORTHODOX VIEW: META-ETHICS IS CONCERNED WITH THE SEMANTICS AND ONTOLOGY OF ETHICAL JUDGMENTS

THE HERETICAL VIEW: META-ETHICS IS ABOUT THE METHODOLOGY OF MORAL AND ETHICAL INQUIRY

METHODOLOGY EVOLVES

WHAT THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY PIONEERS SUPPLIED WAS THE BEGINNINGS OF SCIENTIFIC METHODOLOGY

WHAT THE HERETICS OF TODAY SHOULD STRIVE TO SUPPLY IS THE BEGINNINGS OF THE METHODOLOGY OF MORAL AND ETHICAL INQUIRY

DEVELOPING METHODOLOGY

WE CAN LEARN FROM HISTORY: HOW WERE THE SUCCESSES OF THE PAST ACHIEVED? HOW WERE THEY BLOCKED OR STALLED?

THE SHORT HISTORY: RECENT EXAMPLES OF PROGRESS -
ABOLISHING SLAVERY, EXPANDING WOMEN'S OPPORTUNITIES,
APPRECIATING SAME-SEX LOVE

THE LONG HISTORY: HOW DID ETHICS EMERGE IN THE DEEP PAST?

GENEALOGY

REGIMENTATION OF DESIRES BEGINS IN THE VERY DEEP PAST:
INDIVIDUAL PRUDENCE ("MACHIAVELLIAN INTELLIGENCE")

MORALITY ENTERS 50K - 100K YBP

COLLECTIVE REGIMENTATION OF DESIRES THAT LEAD TO SOCIALLY
CONSEQUENTIAL ACTION

THE ORIGINAL MORAL PROBLEM

LIKE CHIMP AND BONOBO SOCIETIES, ANCESTRAL HUMAN SOCIETIES ONLY FUNCTION BECAUSE OF A PSYCHOLOGICAL CAPACITY

RESPONSIVENESS TO OTHERS

RESPONSIVENESS IS LIMITED

AND THAT GENERATES SOCIAL TROUBLE

THE AMPLIFIER

MORALITY AMPLIFIES BEHAVIOR THAT TAKES OTHERS INTO ACCOUNT

IT THUS SOLVES SOME PROBLEMS OF SOCIAL LIFE

AND, OVER TIME, MAY AMPLIFY THE PSYCHOLOGICAL CAPACITY

HOW DOES IT WORK?

THROUGH *COLLECTIVE* REGIMENTATION OF DESIRES

ACHIEVED VIA ATTEMPTS TO GENERATE A SOLUTION ALL CAN LIVE WITH

“IN THE LONG COOL HOUR” - THROUGH DELIBERATIONS WHICH INCLUDE ALL AFFECTED PARTIES, THAT ARE WELL-INFORMED, AND THAT STRIVE FOR *MUTUAL ENGAGEMENT*

MORALS OF RECENT HISTORY

THAT METHOD IS VISIBLE IN THE MORE RECENT PARADIGMS OF MORAL PROGRESS

PROBLEMS ARE IDENTIFIED THROUGH A PROCESS OF INCLUSIVE, INFORMED, MUTUALLY ENGAGED DELIBERATION

SOLUTIONS ARE IDENTIFIED THROUGH SIMILAR PROCESSES

COMPLICATIONS

MORAL PROGRESS TYPICALLY TAKES A LONG TIME

IT IS MESSY, BLOODY, CHANCY, VULNERABLE TO REVERSALS

BECAUSE THERE IS NO COMMITMENT TO BUILDING SPACES IN WHICH THE RIGHT KINDS OF DELIBERATIONS CAN TAKE PLACE, AND EDUCATING PEOPLE WHO ARE GOOD AT PARTICIPATING IN THEM

ETHICAL LIFE

IS MUCH MORE RECENT

IT CAN ONLY EMERGE WHEN "HOW SHOULD I LIVE?" BECOMES A GENUINE QUESTION

MOREOVER, TO THIS DAY, THAT QUESTION IS ONLY GENUINE FOR A MINORITY OF HUMAN BEINGS

IDEALS OF THE SELF

UNDERLIE THE ANSWERS FORTUNATE INDIVIDUALS CAN GIVE TO
THE ETHICAL QUESTION

WHETHER OR NOT THEY ARE EXPLICITLY FORMULATED

BUT CHOICES ARE INEVITABLY SHAPED BY *SOCIAL* VIEWS ABOUT
WHAT IDEALS ARE APPROPRIATE FOR WHICH GROUPS

FURTHER COMPLICATIONS

SOCIAL SHAPING OF ETHICAL CHOICES CAN INTERFERE WITH MORAL PROGRESS

SOME MEMBERS OF A GROUP MAY "ADAPT" TO CONDITIONS OTHER MEMBERS FIND OPPRESSIVE

THE "MODEL VICTORIAN WIFE"

ETHICAL METHODOLOGY

MUST PROBE *SOCIAL* JUDGMENTS ABOUT *INDIVIDUAL* IDEALS OF THE SELF

BY MIMICKING MORAL METHODOLOGY

AGAIN, THROUGH AN INCLUSIVE, INFORMED, MUTUALLY ENGAGED DELIBERATION

INDIVIDUAL DECISIONS

CAN'T USUALLY BE MADE BY CONVENING ANYTHING LIKE AN IDEAL DISCUSSION

MUST ATTEMPT TO *SIMULATE* SUCH DISCUSSION

USING CAPACITIES OF SYMPATHETIC IMAGINATION

WHICH ETHICAL EDUCATION SHOULD STRIVE TO INSTILL

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO PERSONAL VALUES?

PERSONAL VALUATION VASTLY OUTRUNS THE VALUATIONS THAT ARE GENERATED BY AN INDIVIDUAL'S ETHICAL VALUATIONS

PEOPLE TYPICALLY HAVE MANY OTHER GOALS AND AIMS BEYOND THOSE DICTATED BY THEIR MORAL COMMITMENTS OR THEIR IDEAL FOR THEMSELVES

AND THERE CAN BE CONFLICT

AN EASY ASSUMPTION

“PEOPLE SHOULD ALWAYS ATTEMPT TO REGIMENT THEIR
PERSONAL VALUES BY THEIR ETHICAL VALUES”

IS THAT CORRECT?

OUR ETHICAL VALUATIONS ARE FALLIBLE
PERSONAL VALUATIONS CAN CORRECT THEM

LEARNING HOW TO LIVE

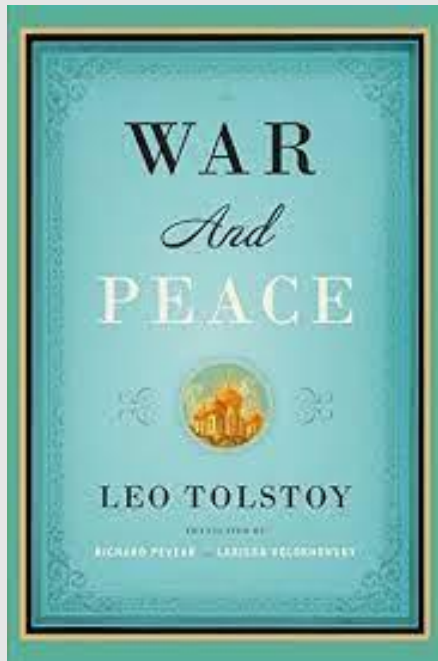
AN IDEAL OF THE SELF IS RARELY ADOPTED EARLY IN LIFE, AND
RETAINED THEREAFTER

PEOPLE LEARN AS THEY GROW

IN LIGHT OF THEIR EXPERIENCES

ESPECIALLY THE MOST VITAL EXPERIENCES

TOLSTOYAN WISDOM



RESONANT EXPERIENCES

SOME EXPERIENCES CONTINUE TO PLAY A ROLE IN OUR PSYCHOLOGICAL LIVES OVER THE COURSE OF YEARS AND DECADES

TWO SOURCES OF RESONANCE:

RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE

AESTHETIC EXPERIENCE

THE DYNAMICS OF VALUATION

WHEN CONFLICT BETWEEN OUR ETHICAL VALUATIONS AND OUR PERSONAL VALUATIONS OCCURS, HOW SHOULD WE DECIDE WHETHER TO SUPPRESS THE PERSONAL VALUATION OR TO MODIFY OUR ETHICAL VALUATIONS?

PROPOSAL: THROUGH ATTEMPTS TO SIMULATE HOW AN IDEAL DELIBERATION WOULD COME OUT

NOT LIKELY WITHOUT AN EDUCATION FOR SYMPATHETIC IMAGINATION