

Individual Paper: “Bridging Religion and Science through Ethics”

My insights on the role of Catholic Ethical thought in medieval society is that the Church was the center of life in medieval western Europe. During the middle ages, the Church was a daily presence from birth to death. It provided education and helped the poor and sick. Their beliefs in middle ages always find sufficient reasons for them to completely support and or strengthen one’s beliefs through their faith and churches. The medieval church had a very significant function. Most people believed in the presence of God, heaven and hell throughout the Middle Ages. People were told from the earliest times of the Middle Ages that if the church accepted them, the only way to get to Heaven would be through the church. The different teachings between Plato and Aristotle is that, Plato maintains a eudemonistic interpretation of ethics focused on morality. That is, happiness or well-being is the highest aim of moral thinking and action, and the virtues are the skills and practices required to achieve it. While in Aristotle's point of view, he came up with the idea of ethical theory as a field contrast from the theoretical sciences. There are points that Aristotle agreed with his idea of ethics as he follows Plato and Socrates' reasoning in virtue as a central concept in living a good life. That the importance of studying ethics is to improve our lives and our whole well-being. However, he disagrees with Plato regarding his concept of virtuous living as a training related to systematical forms such as sciences, mathematics, philosophy, and etc. Thus, he conceived the general idea from learning from

our experiences, practices, and skills that can help us throughout in the ways that are suitable in the situation.

In Immanuel Kant's Kantianism, he claims that being rational is important in making ethical decisions. According to him, human life is valuable because humans are the bearers of rational life. This simply explains that in every situation, one must think reasonably guided by goodwill and duty and not just by being put on our emotion and the happiness of others. Utilitarianism on the other hand centralizes the principle of ethical view as an action must be done considering the lives of many for the greater good. That we must also take sacrifices in our decision making for the well-being of greater people. That the certain decision in choosing the happiness of many is more reasonable because it promotes greater amount of happiness and less misery. While in the Medieval Period, St. Augustine believed in the order of God as a supreme being on all other beings. That all beings are good because they are inclined to their creator. However, man also possesses free will and through man's refusal of being one with God entails evil. Also, Augustine said that one way to perceive God is to look into oneself. God created man in his own liking and image. In St. Aquinas' point of view, he takes philosophy in thinking that an action is good or bad depending on its contribution to our telos (the final goal/end). He is also famous in his argument pertaining to the 5 ways of proving God's existence.

Religion has always had an interrelation with ethics. The actions we do always have consequences, and this is where the religion's concept of good or bad enters. According to

Paul Fitzgerald's (2014) *The Horizon of Faith (Good and Evil)*, "The Christian answer to suffering and death is located primarily in the person of Jesus". Faith is what connects us from God, and we are called to act in a way that connects our faith in our daily living. And in its ethical context, the main concept of it is to do good and to stop doing evil things to one another. The beliefs we have also affects our decision making. The consequences we may face due to our choices can lead us to either suffering or eternal life with God. The systematical approach also has a great impact in morality. Our reasoning can depend on either the good of many or what we think is right and just. In the section of Paul Fitzgerald's, *The Horizon of Faith (The Art of Choosing Well)*, it is said that "A careful weighing of the practical outcomes of people's choices leads to the elucidation of moral norms." A person's decision can be affected from how they perceive it. There are some people that do their decisions for the betterment of all, while there are also who think objectively. All have the reasoning, and they both came down with a process before coming into a conclusion.

Reference: 2014 Markkula Center for Applied Ethics

[https://www.scu.edu/mcae/publications/ie/v9n1/horizon.html?fbclid=IwAR3X8i](https://www.scu.edu/mcae/publications/ie/v9n1/horizon.html?fbclid=IwAR3X8iCvFOYwXPL7Z9z0qHVI956dXJlaKqAN7cJpCvpv1j-1LjcgLZ0jTjY)

CvFOYwXPL7Z9z0qHVI956dXJlaKqAN7cJpCvpv1j-1LjcgLZ0jTjY