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RGS6036.E1
EXERCISE 7

THE ISLAND OF KORA acts as the case designed to bring all the points discussed in this class together. Therefore, this case calls for an application of all the points that have been previously discussed. After reading the case, design a plan for solving the islander's problems. Your plan should include the theoretical basis your plan uses, the decision making procedure you would use, as well as the specific action you would take to resolve the problem. Also, do not forget that in the islander's eyes you are the Supreme Being. 8-10K (4-5 pages)

The island of Kora is in dire need of a plan that will solve the islanders' many problems. Among the problems are disease, starvation, fighting, stealing, diseased farm animals, and a greatly reduced amount of land. Varying theories of ethics need to be applied in an attempt to save the island of Kora, as utilizing only one ethical theory would be even more detrimental to an island in crisis. Such an attempt would be incomplete and would lead Kora's inhabitants to further harm. From normative ethics to the Ethical Conduct Paradigm and ethical egoism to Divine Command theory, the island of Kora could benefit from different modes of thinking. However, the different ethical theories cannot be applied haphazardly. They must be applied in a certain order to put Kora on the right track.

First of all, control over the island must be established to create discipline among the islanders. As Supreme Ruler and Lord over the entire island, my word will determine what is to happen with the natives. Seeing as they are gentle and obedient by nature, the islanders can be manipulated by the use of Divine Command theory to establish initial order. Since the islanders recognize me as their ruler, my decisions are to be followed faithfully by them without any questions or refusals. The natives will blindly accept what I decide as good or bad and right or wrong. They will accept my commands, because I am above reproach and, from their perspective, I am supposed to lead them to better days. As Divine Command theory posits,

a moral code is set by God. (Frankena, 1973, 29) Thus, the moral code that I set forth must be designed to not only establish discipline, but also set Kora on the path to a more sustainable future. Among the priorities for establishing morals will include making stealing punishable by death. In addition, fighting will be punishable by death. These laws may appear to be extreme, but given the plight of Kora, emergency procedures must be taken to ensure the security and safety of the island's inhabitants. My power can be used to establish a moral code in a way that also utilizes normative ethics. By asking myself how I will decide what is morally right for the island of Kora, I will be able to put the theory of normative ethics to work.

(Frankena, 1973, 12) The idea is to constantly ask myself questions about the possible outcomes in weighing potential decisions about Kora. Based on my own internal dialogue, I can implement my own plans for the survival of the natives of Kora.

My survival on the island of Kora will depend upon the natives even though they do not recognize it. Working to promote my greatest good, or practicing ethical egoism, means aligning my interests with the islanders' best interests. If all of the natives were to die of starvation, disease, or be murdered, existence on the island would be more difficult, if not lonely. Ethical egoism provides the framework for deciding what is in my own best interest on the island and instructing the islanders to make it a reality. By working with the natives to improve the welfare of the island, my own greatest good is being promoted over evil. (Frankena, 1973, 15) Doing so also enhances their lives in a case of where ethical egoism can lead to improving the lives of many individuals.

To determine the best interests for the island of Kora, I would have to think about the circumstances from a teleological point of view. Doing so would help me to have a better idea as to what the best outcome would be for

the natives. To produce the greatest outcome for Kora's inhabitants, certain sacrifices will need to be made. All of the diseased farm animals will be slaughtered and buried. Doing so will eliminate one source of malnutrition among the natives. If the animals that look physically poor get any worse, they will need to be disposed of as well. Due to the crowded conditions on the island, the people who are dying or who are very sick will be put to death as humanely as possible. Doing so is cruel, but it also puts people out of their misery. It also helps to alleviate the over-crowding problem. This disaster is Kora's version of a nuclear holocaust. In the developed world, a nuclear holocaust would force people to be chosen to live underground over others. The people that are still relatively healthy will be put to work cleaning up the sanitation problems and also gathering food. To get the population of Kora to the more reasonable level of 250 people, as Supreme Ruler and Lord over the island, I will demand that a certain number of people every few weeks sacrifice their lives for my wellbeing. As well, some of the healthy islanders will be instructed to build boats that are sturdy enough to allow them to leave the island for more fruitful destinations. Again, these tasks are painful, but necessary to ensure the long-term survival of the island and its inhabitants. It could be argued that Kora's people are battling a great many evils as they struggle to keep their civilization intact. Using teleological theory, the Kora people deserve to have the greatest good brought about over their current evils. (Frankena, 1973, 14) In order to bring about the greatest good over these evils, tough decisions must be made by the person they consider to be the Supreme Ruler and Lord.

Having an idea as to what constitutes the best outcome for the island of Kora helps me to stay focused on the good intentions that I have for the islanders. This means applying deontological ethical theory in an attempt to

keep the best intentions in mind. To get to this outcome, sacrifices will need to be made, and they will seem gruesome at first. People from the outside world might view my tactics as cruel and inhumane. However, the long-term survival of the islanders and me is of utmost concern. It's the good intentions that I have for Kora's inhabitants that may not actually solve the overall problems that require my most immediate attention.

(Frankena, 1973, 15) The sacrifices will be made on a situational basis, and situational ethics will provide the framework for determining which particular individuals should be part of the sacrifices and which ones will not. I will not randomly select individuals to die for the better of the entire island. Rather, using situational ethics, I will make judgments on the particular cases of each individual. (Frankena, 1973, 3) In this manner, I will be able to keep the most worthy individuals alive to carry on the new civilization of Kora, which will make progress toward this goal much more expedient. To eliminate the moral decay, the individuals that have stolen or fought with one another will be put to death as soon as possible. Doing so will show the rest of the population that civil disobedience will not be tolerated going forward. Those particular situations are more easily dealt with than others. In situations where individuals are near-death from illness or malnutrition, it would be best to put them out of their misery and kill them humanely. Judgments in these particular cases are relatively simple. Situational ethics play an especially important role when deciding on who lives and who dies among the individuals who are more likely to survive. Ideally, I would prefer to keep all of them alive, but it might not be possible given the land constraints.

In my plan for the island of Kora, the pursuit is the greatest good for all as the ultimate end, which is also known as utilitarian theory.

(Frankena, 1973, 16) If I can rid the island of disease, malnutrition, and

moral decay, the major obstacle to survival for the natives and me is ensuring that there is enough food to eat in the immediate future and enough to consume in the long run. To achieve this goal, I will immediately put the healthy islanders to work in separating the healthy farm animals from the unhealthy ones. The people will be instructed to get the animals to breed more to produce more livestock. The natives will also be required to create more farms to grow more fruits and vegetables for sustenance. Part of my policy will be to force the natives to once again spread out their civilization over the entire island rather than remaining huddled together in their current state. Using utilitarian theory, the greatest good for the people will be to require them to maintain their own land and to keep the products of their own labor. Once the projects are going, I will work on organizing the island to split the existing land among the remaining families and individuals. I will also work on dividing the farm animals among the inhabitants. In this way, they will be working their own farms and livestock for their own existence and not the common good. This form of private ownership will encourage the remaining inhabitants to produce as much food as possible. Of course, fishing will be encouraged, as fish will always be the most plentiful source of food for the islanders. A protein-rich diet that includes fish will improve the health of the islanders. Some people will specialize in building boats, while other people will be required to build tools that can be traded to others islanders. Any fighting that ensues will be punishable on a case by case basis, using situational ethics. Depending on the nature of the fighting, death is one penalty that remains an option to maintain civil order. This part of the long-term plan will demonstrate to the natives that, through Divine Command theory, I am a kind and loving Supreme Ruler and Lord and not simply an oppressive entity who demands continual sacrificial deaths.

The Warner Ethical Conduct Paradigm will be applied to understand the behavior of the islanders. Their nature before the natural disaster was to be gentle, peaceful, and tranquil with their neighbors. From an Ethical Conduct Paradigm perspective, this harmony formed the basis for Kora's values and beliefs. (Warner, 1984, 5) Their social norms were based on a peaceful existence for the better of the entire island. Since resources were plentiful, selfishness and crime were most likely nonexistent. They probably also did not worry about over-populating the island. The values and beliefs of the people will need to be altered to help them survive in their new post-apocalyptic world. Due to the smaller amount of land, population growth will be very limited. Having children will be mostly discouraged. An adoption of China's policy of one child per couple will be utilized to prevent over-population. Couples that have more than one child may be required to leave the island on boats. Due to the limited resources initially, the remaining islanders will learn about economics, as they gain an appreciation for the reality of scarcity among resources. With everything being plentiful prior to the natural disasters, the islanders never had to fathom scarcity, but it will serve to encourage them to work hard and produce as much as they possibly can for themselves and their families. According to the Ethical Conduct Paradigm, the wants and needs of the islanders were met due to the paradise they enjoyed. (Warner, 1984, 11) The island satisfied their basic physiological needs, and the peace among neighbors provided for their social needs. In the new world, the islanders will have to work to fulfill their needs and wants. They will have to work harder to produce their own food for themselves, as collectivism will be eliminated. Their social needs will include respect and trade among one another. Part of the plan will be to encourage differentiation of work among the islanders. Some households will raise cows, while others will raise pigs. Certain households will be encouraged to grow different crops. Other households will be instructed to

specialize in fishing. This method will encourage the islanders to specialize in their own specific areas, allowing for a society of traders. They will become experts at their work, allowing a greater amount of overall production. There will be multiple households that specialize in raising chickens, for instance, or fishing. These households will compete among each other, to make the best bargains for trade. Another Warner Ethical Conduct Paradigm component, relationships, will be significantly altered for the islanders. Previously, they enjoyed simple, easy-going relationships among their neighbors, as the island provided a plethora of goods for living. In their new world, the islanders' relationships will be in transition. (Warner, 1984, 13) Each household will have barriers separating it from other households. Relationships will be more structured and formal to get the islanders to focus on their own work. Much of the relationships will be centered around trade and the new marketplace that opens up on the island. Islanders will be allowed to pursue their romantic relationships. However, adultery will be punishable by death, in order to uphold moral standards on the island. The other components of the Warner Ethical Conduct Paradigm, intelligence and discipline, will be at the forefront of the new lives for the islanders. They will be required to be diligent in their own specialized labors, which will encourage them to improve their work and become more intelligent in their practices. Thus, discipline and intelligence will become the human capital that the islanders use to barter and trade among one another in their new marketplace. Lazy, undisciplined islanders may be forced to leave the island on boats.

Ideally, the sacrifices made in the early going in my plan and the new form of organized civilization will allow the surviving islanders to practice a more enjoyable form of ethics that is described as hedonism theory. After the islanders become fruitful in their labors, they will be able to pursue a

greater balance of pleasure over pain. (Frankena, 1973, 83) Such hedonism might include games or social gatherings. With their new more structured society, some islanders may decide that pleasure includes gaining education about ways to improve their livelihood. Such pursuits are acceptable, as they improve the overall welfare of the island of Kora. It's the idea of individuals pursuing self-interest that was less formalized for the natives prior to the natural disasters. Before, they might have pursued their own self-interest without realizing it, as their needs were easily provided for by the island. Hedonistic theory will show the islanders that these more pleasurable pursuits are also the pursuit of good in their new society. (Frankena, 1973, 84)

Once the island is on the right track, Immanuel Kant's formalism theory can be used to strengthen moral standards according to universal maxims. Although there will always be instances for making judgments based on individual cases, thereby using deontological theory, the islanders will live according to the universal maxims that I have set forth, as their Supreme Ruler and Lord. The morals that I have established, which include hard work, the pursuit of self-interest, and personal responsibility, will provide long-standing maxims that allow the natives of Kora to make decisions for living healthy and prosperous lives. (Frankena, 1973, 30) The principles that I established for Kora have the chance to stand the test of time long after my own life on the island ends. The island will produce generations of strong, moral citizens. It will also produce people who will spread out to other lands beyond Kora. These principles will serve as universal laws well into the future, and my legacy will be celebrated by future generations of Kora inhabitants. The varying ethical theories that were used to improve the lives of the islanders required death in the beginning to allow for better lives among the survivors. In the event of future natural disasters, the

islanders will be better equipped to adjust to the problems that ensue than their ancestors were. No longer will they live carefree lives characterized by limitless resources. Their minds and abilities will be more fully developed, and their lives will be enriched as a result.

References

Warner, Douglas W. The Basis for Ethical Conduct/Ethics for Decision-Making Case Studies. 5th ed. 1984.

Frankena, William K. Ethics. 2nd ed. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1973.