Chapter 1 : Christianity - Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Religion

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Sermon on the Mount , The New Commandment , and Ministry of Jesus Christian ethics in general has tended to stress the need for love, grace , mercy , and forgiveness because of sin. With divine assistance, the Christian is called to become increasingly virtuous in both thought and deed, see also the Evangelical counsels. Conversely, the Christian is also called to abstain from vice. They begin with the notion of inherent sinfulness, which requires essential atonement. Christian ethics has a teleological aspectâ€"all ethical behavior is oriented towards a vision of the Kingdom of God â€"a righteous society where all live in peace and harmony with God and nature, as envisioned in the Book of Isaiah. Understanding these commands as part of a larger campaign makes it impossible to interpret Christian ethics as an individual ethic. Other tenets include maintaining personal integrity and the absence of hypocrisy, as well as honesty and loyalty, mercy and forgiveness, rejection of materialism and the desire for wealth and power, and teaching others in your life through personal joy, happiness and Godly devotion. Aquinas adopted the four cardinal virtues of Aristotle justice, courage, temperance and prudence , and added to them the Christian virtues of faith, hope and charity from St. Paul, 1 Corinthians Other schema include the Seven Deadly Sins and the Seven virtues. For more see Christian philosophy and Biblical law in Christianity. This section does not cite any sources. Please help improve this section by adding citations to reliable sources. Unsourced material may be challenged and removed. June Learn how and when to remove this template message Confucianism and Neo-Confucianism emphasize the maintenance and propriety of relationships as the most important consideration in ethics. Notably, though, what you owe to another person is inversely proportional to their distance from you. In other words, you owe your parents everything, but you are not in any way obligated towards strangers. This can be seen as a recognition of the fact that it is impossible to love the entire world equally and simultaneously. This is called relational ethics, or situational ethics. The Confucian system differs very strongly from Kantian ethics in that there are rarely laws or principles which can be said to be true absolutely or universally. This is not to say that there has never been any consideration given to universalist ethics. The Confucian view eventually held sway, however, and continues to dominate many aspects of Chinese thought. Many have argued, for example, that Mao Zedong was more Confucian than Communist. Confucianism, especially of the type argued for by Mencius Chinese: In other words, the ideal ruler does not go out and force the people to become good, but instead leads by example. The ideal ruler fosters harmony rather than laws. Confucius stresses honesty above all. He codified traditional practice and actually changed the meaning of the prior concepts that those words had meant. His model of the Confucian family and Confucian ruler dominated Chinese life into the early 20th century. This had ossified by then into an Imperial hierarchy of rigid property rights , hard to distinguish from any other dictatorship. Traditional ethics had been perverted by legalism. Buddhist influence[edit] Buddhism, and specifically Mahayana Buddhism , brought a cohesive metaphysic to Chinese thought and a strong emphasis on universalism. June Learn how and when to remove this template message Laozi Lao Tzu and other Taoist Daoist authors argued for an even greater passivity on the part of rulers than did the Confucians. For Laozi, Lao Tzu the ideal ruler is one who does virtually nothing that can be directly identified as ruling. Clearly, both Daoism and Confucianism presume that human nature is basically good. Taoist ethics ask for a greater sense of being and less identification with the act of doing. Taoist passivity nurtures, cultivates and prepares an atmosphere that allows the majestic and the real to shine, which influences society for the better. Truly, the greatest gift you have to give is that of your own self-transformation. Hinduism , Yamas , and Niyamas Ahimsa - non-violence in action, words and thoughts - is considered the highest ethical value and virtue in Hinduism. Ethics is called Nitisastra Sanskrit: Kane , the author of the History of Dharmasastra said, the term "Dharma" does not have a synonym in English language. While it is often interpreted as meaning "duty", it can mean justice, right, moral, good, and much more. For example, Apastamba explained it thus: Ethical subjects and questions are debated by various schools of Hinduism, quite extensively, in numerous

texts on what is right conduct, when, how and why. For example, Manusamhita initially listed ten virtues necessary for a human being to live a dharmic life: The shorter list of virtues became: Of ethical mandates among Hindus, a literal translation of his Persian language manuscript includes 1 A man shall not kill; 2 nor lie; 3 nor steal; 4 nor whore; 5 nor hoard up treasures. Some early 20th century literature wondered if ethics was ever a serious topic of study in Hinduism. The Bhagavad Gita â€"considered one of the epitomes of historic Hindu discussion of virtues and an allegorical debate on what is right and what is wrongâ€"argues some virtues are not necessarily always absolute, but sometimes relational; for example, it explains a virtue such as Ahimsa must be re-examined when one is faced with war or violence from the aggressiveness, immaturity or ignorance of others.

Chapter 2 : Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics (13 vols.) - Logos Bible Software

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References and Further Reading 1. We may define metaethics as the study of the origin and meaning of ethical concepts. When compared to normative ethics and applied ethics, the field of metaethics is the least precisely defined area of moral philosophy. It covers issues from moral semantics to moral epistemology. Two issues, though, are prominent: Objectivism and Relativism Metaphysics is the study of the kinds of things that exist in the universe. Some things in the universe are made of physical stuff, such as rocks; and perhaps other things are nonphysical in nature, such as thoughts, spirits, and gods. The metaphysical component of metaethics involves discovering specifically whether moral values are eternal truths that exist in a spirit-like realm, or simply human conventions. There are two general directions that discussions of this topic take, one other-worldly and one this-worldly. Proponents of the other-worldly view typically hold that moral values are objective in the sense that they exist in a spirit-like realm beyond subjective human conventions. They also hold that they are absolute, or eternal, in that they never change, and also that they are universal insofar as they apply to all rational creatures around the world and throughout time. The most dramatic example of this view is Plato , who was inspired by the field of mathematics. Humans do not invent numbers, and humans cannot alter them. Plato explained the eternal character of mathematics by stating that they are abstract entities that exist in a spirit-like realm. He noted that moral values also are absolute truths and thus are also abstract, spirit-like entities. In this sense, for Plato, moral values are spiritual objects. Medieval philosophers commonly grouped all moral principles together under the heading of "eternal law" which were also frequently seen as spirit-like objects. In either case, though, they exist in a spirit-like realm. Sometimes called voluntarism or divine command theory , this view was inspired by the notion of an all-powerful God who is in control of everything. God simply wills things, and they become reality. He wills the physical world into existence, he wills human life into existence and, similarly, he wills all moral values into existence. God informs humans of these commands by implanting us with moral intuitions or revealing these commands in scripture. The second and more this-worldly approach to the metaphysical status of morality follows in the skeptical philosophical tradition, such as that articulated by Greek philosopher Sextus Empiricus, and denies the objective status of moral values. Technically, skeptics did not reject moral values themselves, but only denied that values exist as spirit-like objects, or as divine commands in the mind of God. Moral values, they argued, are strictly human inventions, a position that has since been called moral relativism. There are two distinct forms of moral relativism. The first is individual relativism, which holds that individual people create their own moral standards. Friedrich Nietzsche, for example, argued that the superhuman creates his or her morality distinct from and in reaction to the slave-like value system of the masses. In addition to espousing skepticism and relativism, this-worldly approaches to the metaphysical status of morality deny the absolute and universal nature of morality and hold instead that moral values in fact change from society to society throughout time and throughout the world. They frequently attempt to defend their position by citing examples of values that differ dramatically from one culture to another, such as attitudes about polygamy, homosexuality and human sacrifice. Psychological Issues in Metaethics A second area of metaethics involves the psychological basis of our moral judgments and conduct, particularly understanding what motivates us to be moral. We might explore this subject by asking the simple question, "Why be moral? Some answers to the question "Why be moral? Egoism and Altruism One important area of moral psychology concerns the inherent selfishness of humans. Even if an action seems selfless, such as donating to charity, there are still selfish causes for this, such as experiencing power over other people. This view is called psychological egoism and maintains that self-oriented interests ultimately motivate all human actions. Closely related to psychological egoism is a view called psychological hedonism which is the view that pleasure is the specific driving force behind all of our actions. However, Butler argued that we also have an inherent psychological capacity to show benevolence to others. This view is called psychological altruism and maintains that at least some of our actions are motivated by instinctive benevolence. Emotion and Reason A second area of moral psychology involves a dispute

concerning the role of reason in motivating moral actions. If, for example, I make the statement "abortion is morally wrong," am I making a rational assessment or only expressing my feelings? On the one side of the dispute, 18th century British philosopher David Hume argued that moral assessments involve our emotions, and not our reason. We can amass all the reasons we want, but that alone will not constitute a moral assessment. We need a distinctly emotional reaction in order to make a moral pronouncement. Ayer, similarly denied that moral assessments are factual descriptions. For example, although the statement "it is good to donate to charity" may on the surface look as though it is a factual description about charity, it is not. Instead, a moral utterance like this involves two things. First, I the speaker I am expressing my personal feelings of approval about charitable donations and I am in essence saying "Hooray for charity! Second, I the speaker am trying to get you to donate to charity and am essentially giving the command, "Donate to charity! Although emotional factors often do influence our conduct, he argued, we should nevertheless resist that kind of sway. Instead, true moral action is motivated only by reason when it is free from emotions and desires. A recent rationalist approach, offered by Kurt Baier , was proposed in direct opposition to the emotivist and prescriptivist theories of Ayer and others. Baier focuses more broadly on the reasoning and argumentation process that takes place when making moral choices. All of our moral choices are, or at least can be, backed by some reason or justification. According to Baier, then, proper moral decision making involves giving the best reasons in support of one course of action versus another. Male and Female Morality A third area of moral psychology focuses on whether there is a distinctly female approach to ethics that is grounded in the psychological differences between men and women. Discussions of this issue focus on two claims: According to many feminist philosophers, traditional morality is male-centered since it is modeled after practices that have been traditionally male-dominated, such as acquiring property, engaging in business contracts, and governing societies. The rigid systems of rules required for trade and government were then taken as models for the creation of equally rigid systems of moral rules, such as lists of rights and duties. Women, by contrast, have traditionally had a nurturing role by raising children and overseeing domestic life. These tasks require less rule following, and more spontaneous and creative action. On this model, the agent becomes part of the situation and acts caringly within that context. This stands in contrast with male-modeled morality where the agent is a mechanical actor who performs his required duty, but can remain distanced from and unaffected by the situation. A care-based approach to morality, as it is sometimes called, is offered by feminist ethicists as either a replacement for or a supplement to traditional male-modeled moral systems. Normative Ethics Normative ethics involves arriving at moral standards that regulate right and wrong conduct. In a sense, it is a search for an ideal litmus test of proper behavior. The Golden Rule is a classic example of a normative principle: We should do to others what we would want others to do to us. Since I do not want my neighbor to steal my car, then it is wrong for me to steal her car. Since I would want people to feed me if I was starving, then I should help feed starving people. Using this same reasoning, I can theoretically determine whether any possible action is right or wrong. So, based on the Golden Rule, it would also be wrong for me to lie to, harass, victimize, assault, or kill others. The Golden Rule is an example of a normative theory that establishes a single principle against which we judge all actions. Other normative theories focus on a set of foundational principles, or a set of good character traits. The key assumption in normative ethics is that there is only one ultimate criterion of moral conduct, whether it is a single rule or a set of principles. Three strategies will be noted here: Virtue ethics , however, places less emphasis on learning rules, and instead stresses the importance of developing good habits of character, such as benevolence see moral character. Historically, virtue theory is one of the oldest normative traditions in Western philosophy, having its roots in ancient Greek civilization. Plato emphasized four virtues in particular, which were later called cardinal virtues: Other important virtues are fortitude, generosity, self-respect, good temper, and sincerity. In addition to advocating good habits of character, virtue theorists hold that we should avoid acquiring bad character traits, or vices, such as cowardice, insensibility, injustice, and vanity. Adults, therefore, are responsible for instilling virtues in the young. Aristotle argued that virtues are good habits that we acquire, which regulate our emotions. For example, in response to my natural feelings of fear, I should develop the virtue of courage which allows me to be firm when facing danger. Analyzing 11 specific virtues, Aristotle argued that most virtues fall at a mean between

more extreme character traits. With courage, for example, if I do not have enough courage, I develop the disposition of cowardice, which is a vice. If I have too much courage I develop the disposition of rashness which is also a vice. According to Aristotle, it is not an easy task to find the perfect mean between extreme character traits. In fact, we need assistance from our reason to do this. After Aristotle, medieval theologians supplemented Greek lists of virtues with three Christian ones, or theological virtues: Interest in virtue theory continued through the middle ages and declined in the 19th century with the rise of alternative moral theories below. In the mid 20th century virtue theory received special attention from philosophers who believed that more recent ethical theories were misguided for focusing too heavily on rules and actions, rather than on virtuous character traits. Alasdaire MacIntyre defended the central role of virtues in moral theory and argued that virtues are grounded in and emerge from within social traditions. Duty Theories Many of us feel that there are clear obligations we have as human beings, such as to care for our children, and to not commit murder. Duty theories base morality on specific, foundational principles of obligation. These theories are sometimes called deontological, from the Greek word deon, or duty, in view of the foundational nature of our duty or obligation. They are also sometimes called nonconsequentialist since these principles are obligatory, irrespective of the consequences that might follow from our actions. For example, it is wrong to not care for our children even if it results in some great benefit, such as financial savings. There are four central duty theories.

Chapter 3 : Religion and Morality (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy)

The encyclopedia will contain articles on all the religions of the world and on all the great systems of ethics. It will aim at containing articles on every religious belief or custom, and on every ethical movement, every philosophical idea, every moral practice.

Donate Encyclopedias of General Content in Hebrew and Yiddish Outside of Israel The first Hebrew encyclopedias were translations or adaptations of Arabic works, which were intended as systematic presentations of the sciences in the medieval Aristotelian scheme, not usually arranged in alphabetical order. Only the preface and the beginning of this work have been preserved in manuscript. In Judah b. The first part deals with logic, physics, and metaphysics, in addition to commentaries on passages in Genesis, Psalms, and Proverbs; the second, with mathematics, in addition to a kabbalistic study of the letters of the Hebrew alphabet; there is also an enumeration of Bible passages that are to be interpreted philosophically. Again, only fragments of this encyclopedia have been preserved. In the introduction he states that he used only Hebrew sources or works in Hebrew translation; thus, it is known that at this time some of the works of the major writers of classic antiquity had become part of the Jewish cultural background. His book is divided into three parts: This work is the oldest medieval encyclopedia to be printed, although in abridged form, first in Venice in and several times in the 19th century, as a part of the program of the East European Haskalah to broaden the horizon of the masses. Between the 15th and 18th centuries no major encyclopedia was written by Jews, as their interest in the general sciences declined. In â€"32 the Sephardi physician Solomon b. In the 17th century physicians were the only Jews in Central and Eastern Europe who had an opportunity for secular education. With the rise of the Haskalah, an interest in publishing a general encyclopedia in Hebrew developed. A pupil of the Gaon of Vilna, Phinehas Elijah b. Meir Horowitz, tried to present the general sciences from the point of view of Jewish tradition in his Sefer ha-Berit Bruenn, This work became quite popular, as is evidenced by the publication of several editions in the 19th century. The first alphabetically arranged general encyclopedia in Hebrew was attempted by Isaac Goldmann in Warsaw in ; it was called Ha-Eshkol, but only six parts came out, and even the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet was not completed. Petersburg, Russia, in , but only three parts were published before the venture failed. The most ambitious attempt in Yiddish encyclopedias was Algemeyne Entsiklopedye, published by the Dubnow Fund from , first in Paris and then in New York. After the first five volumes, devoted to general subjects, seven more on Jews and Judaism, arranged according to topic, were published by It was the first such enterprise to be completed to the last letter of the alphabet. With the development of the study of Judaism and Jewish history on a scientific basis in the 19th century, the Jews sought to emulate others in promoting encyclopedias devoted to their interests alone. Some of the articles intended for this work found their way into the general encyclopedia edited by Ersch and Gruber, Allgemeine Enzyklopaedie der Wissenschaften und Kuenste, into other journals, or into separate monographs. It treated biblical and talmudic subjects in two separate volumes with a six-part supplement and appeared in three editions, the latest between and In spite of many defects, it was considered an achievement for its time, since it was helpful in tracing Jewish religious ideas in the Bible and Talmud. He had wanted to present the salient areas of Judaism and Jewish history and literature in a systematic, rather than an alphabetical scheme. There were objections that Hebrew literature was in its beginnings and could not sustain such an ambitious venture. Others believed that a general encyclopedia in Hebrew was needed more urgently than one devoted to Jewish subjects only. Despite the great accomplishments in Jewish studies in Europe during the 19th century, it was not granted to European Jewry to publish the first synthesis of its rich harvest. Instead, it was the American Jewish community, which at the turn of the century consisted of a population less than half its present size, a large proportion of whom were new immigrants, that published this basic work, The Jewish Encyclopedia 12 vols. Naturally it, too, had weaknesses, as in its treatment of modern Hebrew literature and the history of East European Jewry, but many of its entries e. Unlike the Jewish Encyclopedia, which took account both of the traditional and the modernist viewpoints, its approach was more traditional, but it was considered inadequate in many respects. Yet, while omitting some of the material about Jewish life in America that figured so

prominently in the Jewish Encyclopedia, it concentrated on Eastern Europe and gave full scope to modern Hebrew literature. Its ideology was that of the Galut "Diaspora" nationalism advocated by Dubnow, but the Zionist point of view was also presented. Thus, it was in a way a complement to the Jewish Encyclopedia. Because of its size it had to be more limited in scope than the Jewish Encyclopedia and concentrated more on contemporary Jewish life than had the other major Jewish encyclopedias published earlier in the century. A more ambitious project was the Encyclopaedia Judaica 10 vols. It was intended to present a new synthesis of Jewish knowledge some 20 years after the appearance of the Jewish Encyclopedia and to include all those areas neglected in the earlier pioneering work. However, because of the establishment of the Hitler regime in Germany, the plan could not be completed; only ten volumes appeared, through the article "Lyra. An oddity among encyclopedias with Jewish content published in Germany was the Sigilla Veri 4 vols. It was conceived and planned by Joseph Klausner. The special needs of Israel require, in addition to general and Jewish encyclopedias, specialized ones devoted to such fields as the social sciences, agriculture, and education, as well as Bible and Talmud. The young State of Israel has already met the need to a considerable extent. Jews and Judaism in General Encyclopedias Until the 19th century the treatment of Jews and Judaism in encyclopedias as well as in all other reference works was determined by the Christian point of view. Primary attention was paid to the biblical period as a background to Christianity, but very little interest was shown in the period that followed. His article on Jewish literature in its volume in and published separately in English translation in is considered a classic. Since that time post-biblical Jewish history and Judaism have generally received more comprehensive and fairer treatment. It is now customary to assign such topics to recognized Jewish scholars. Quite striking is the difference between the earlier and more recent editions of the Encyclopaedia Britannica. In its third edition of the detailed history of the Jews ended with the destruction of the Second Temple in the year The laws of rabbinic Judaism that followed are dismissed as mere "absurdities" deserving no consideration. In a concluding paragraph the history of the following 16 centuries is summarized with persecutions and massacres duly noted, the more tolerant attitude of the present day emphasized, and mentioning the recent emancipation of the Jews in France in Jewish Encyclopedia, 12 vols. Runes, Concise Dictionary of Judaism ; P. Glustrom, Language of Judaism ; Z. Wigoder, Encyclopedia of the Jewish Religion ; J. Neusner, Encyclopedia of Judaism, 3 vols. Moore, Jewish Women in America: An Historical Encyclopedia, 2 vols. Sherman, Orthodox Judaism in America: A Bibliographical Dictionary and Sourcebook ; P. Nadell, Conservative Judaism in America: A Biographical Dictionary and Sourcebook ; K. Stern, Reform Judaism in America: A Biographical Dictionary and Sourcebook ; A. Steinberg, Encyclopedia of Jewish Medical Ethics, tr. Rosner ; R. Slater, Great Jews in Sports ; R. Posner, Junior Judaica ; G. Bin Gorion, et al. Hamburger, Real-Encyclopaediefuer Bibel und Talmud, 2 vols. Maged, Beit Aharon encyclopedia of talmudic principles and personalities , 11 vols. Weinfeld, Judaismo Contemprano Petrushka, Yidishe Folks-Entsiklopedye, 2 vols. Timor, Enziklopedyah-le Historyah; H. Twersky, Sifrut ha-Olam, Leksikon, 4 vols.

Chapter 4 : James Hastings | Open Library

Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, Part 16 James Hastings. Paperback. $ Encyclopedia of Religion: 16 Volume Set Mircea Eliade. out of 5 stars 5.

But the existence of large and heterogeneous societies raises conceptual problems for such a descriptive definition, since there may not be any such society-wide code that is regarded as most important. This is strikingly illustrated by the fact that both C. But according to the taxonomy at the heart of this entry, all of these are versions of the descriptive sense, distinguished primarily by the size of the relevant group. Etiquette is sometimes included as a part of morality, applying to norms that are considered less serious than the kinds of norms for behavior that are more central to morality. When etiquette is included as part of morality, morality is almost always being understood in the descriptive sense. One reason for this is that it is clear that the rules of etiquette are relative to a society or group. Law is distinguished from morality by having explicit written rules, penalties, and officials who interpret the laws and apply the penalties. Although there is often considerable overlap in the conduct governed by morality and that governed by law, laws are often evaluatedâ€"and changedâ€"on moral grounds. Some theorists, including Ronald Dworkin , have even maintained that the interpretation of law must make use of morality. Although the morality of a group or society may derive from its religion, morality and religion are not the same thing, even in that case. Morality is only a guide to conduct, whereas religion is always more than this. For example, religion includes stories about events in the past, usually about supernatural beings, that are used to explain or justify the behavior that it prohibits or requires. Although there is often a considerable overlap in the conduct prohibited or required by religion and that prohibited or required by morality, religions may prohibit or require more than is prohibited or required by guides to behavior that are explicitly labeled as moral guides, and may allow some behavior that is prohibited by morality. Even when morality is not regarded as the code of conduct that is put forward by a formal religion, it is often thought to require some religious explanation and justification. However, just as with law, some religious practices and precepts are criticized on moral grounds, e. It is also being used in the descriptive sense when it refers to important attitudes of individuals. Just as one can refer to the morality of the Greeks, so one can refer to the morality of a particular person. In the 20th century R. Hare, in his earlier books , , regarded moral judgments as those judgments that override all nonmoral judgments and that would be universalized by the person making the judgment. This account of moral judgments naturally leads to a view of morality as being concerned with behavior that a person regards as most important and as a guide to conduct that he wants everyone to adopt. Guides to behavior that are regarded as moralities normally involve avoiding and preventing harm to others Frankena , and perhaps some norm of honesty Strawson But all of them involve other matters as well. This view of morality as concerning that which is most important to a person or group allows matters related to religious practices and precepts, or matters related to customs and traditions, e. A society might have a moral code according to which practices as necessary for purity or sanctity are more important than practices related to whether other persons are harmed. A society may take as morally most important that certain rituals are performed or that certain sexual practices are prohibited, than that harms are avoided or prevented. Some societies may claim that their morality, which is more concerned with purity and sanctity, is based on the commands of God. Moreover, most normative accounts entail that all moral agents would endorse morality, at least under certain circumstances. And most accounts of moral agency at work in such accounts do not include any negative attitudes toward harmless consensual sexual behavior. Many religions condemn certain harmless consensual sexual behavior as immoral, but other religions, which hold that morality is primarily concerned with avoiding and preventing harm, condemn these attitudes themselves as harmful and immoral. A society might have a morality that takes accepting its traditions and customs, including accepting the authority of certain people and emphasizing loyalty to the group, as more important than avoiding and preventing harm. Such a morality might not count as immoral any behavior that shows loyalty to the preferred group, even if that behavior causes significant harm to innocent people who are not in that group. Acting altruistically, at least with regard to those in the group, might be

nearly equated with acting morally, regardless of its effects on those outside of the group. The familiarity of this kind of morality, which makes in-group loyalty almost equivalent to morality, seems to allow some comparative and evolutionary psychologists, including Frans De Waal , to regard non-human animals to be acting in ways very similar to those that are regarded as moral. It is possible for a society to have a morality that is concerned primarily with minimizing the harms that human beings can suffer. Such a society might claim that their morality is based on some universal features of human nature or of all rational beings. Although all societies include more than just a concern for minimizing harm to some human beings in their moralities, this feature of morality, unlike purity and sanctity, or accepting authority and emphasizing loyalty, is included in everything that is regarded as a morality by any society. Because minimizing harm can conflict with accepting authority and emphasizing loyalty, there can be fundamental disagreements within a society about the morally right way to behave in particular kinds of situations. Some psychologists, such as Haidt, take morality to include concern with, at least, all three of the triad of 1 harm, 2 purity, and 3 loyalty, and hold that different members of a society can and do take different features of morality to be most important. Most societies have moralities that are concerned with, at least, all three members of this triad. Concern with harm appears in the form of enforceable rules against killing, causing pain, mutilating, etc. But beyond a concern with avoiding and preventing such harms to members of certain groups, there may be no common content shared by all moralities in the descriptive sense. Nor may there be any common justification that those who accept morality claim for it; some may appeal to religion, others to tradition, and others to rational human nature. Beyond the concern with harm mentioned above, the only other features that all descriptive moralities have in common is that they are put forward by an individual or a group, usually a society, in which case they provide a guide for the behavior of the people in that group or society. Ethical relativists such as Harman , Westermarck , Prinz , and Wong , deny that there is any universal normative morality and claim that the actual moralities of societies or individuals are the only moralities there are. The harm caused by Christian missionaries who used morality as a basis for trying to change the practices of the societies with which they came in contact may have been one of the reasons why many anthropologists endorsed ethical relativism. As a result, when the guide to conduct put forward by, for example, a religious group conflicts with the guide to conduct put forward by a society, it is not clear whether to say that there are conflicting moralities, conflicting elements within morality, or that the code of the religious group conflicts with morality. Members of the society who are also members of a religious group may regard both guides as elements of morality and differ with respect to which of the conflicting elements of the moral guide they consider most important. There are likely to be significant moral disputes between those who consider different elements to be more important. In small homogeneous societies there may be a guide to behavior that is put forward by the society and that is accepted by almost all members of the society. However, in larger societies people often belong to groups that put forward guides to behavior that conflict with the guide put forward by their society, and members of the society do not always accept the guide put forward by their society. If they accept the conflicting guide of some other group to which they belong often a religious group rather than the guide put forward by their society, in cases of conflict they will regard those who follow the guide put forward by their society as acting immorally. When relativized to an individual in this way, morality has less limitation on content than when it is taken to refer to the code of conduct put forward by a society or group. Still, if the person is rational, this guide will include prohibitions on causing harm. It is not clear whether it refers to 1 a guide to behavior that is put forward by a society, to which that person might or might not belong; 2 a guide that is put forward by a group, to which that person might or might not belong; 3 a guide that someone, perhaps that very person, regards as overriding and wants adopted by everyone else, or 4 a universal guide that all rational persons would put forward for governing the behavior of all moral agents. However, if the individual is referring to his own morality, he is usually using it normatively; that is, he would usually accept the claim that all rational persons, at least under certain conditions, would endorse it. However, Sidgwick regarded moral rules as any rational rules of conduct. Because all moralities in the descriptive sense include a prohibition on harming others, ethical egoism is not a morality in the descriptive sense. Because, as will be explained in the following section, all moralities in the normative sense not only include prohibitions on harming others but also are such

that all rational persons would endorse that morality, ethical egoism is not a morality in the normative sense either. Sidgwick does this, but he is decidedly in the minority in this respect. However, that fact that an individual adopts a moral code of conduct for his own use does not entail that the person requires it to be adopted by anyone else. An individual may adopt for himself a very demanding moral guide that he thinks may be too difficult for most others to follow. He may judge people who do not adopt his code of conduct as not being as morally good as he is, without judging them to be immoral if they do not adopt it. For it may be that the individual would not be willing for others to try to follow that code, because of worries about the bad effects of predictable failures due to partiality or lack of sufficient foresight or intelligence. Many moral skeptics would reject the claim that there are any universal ethical claims, where the ethical is a broader category than the moral. But another interesting class of moral skeptics includes those who think that we should only abandon the narrower category of the moralâ€"partly because of the notion of a code that is central to that category. These moral skeptics hold that we should do our ethical theorizing in terms of the good life, or the virtues. Elizabeth Anscombe gave expression to this kind of view, which also finds echoes in the work of Bernard Williams On the other hand, some virtue theorists might take perfect rationality to entail virtue, and might understand morality to be something like the code that such a person would implicitly endorse by acting in virtuous ways. In that case, even a virtue theorist might count as a moral realist in the sense above. But this appearance is deceptive. And the act-consequentialist J. Smart is also explicit that he is thinking of ethics as the study of how it is most rational to behave. His embrace of utilitarianism is the result of his belief that maximizing utility is always the rational thing to do. On reflection this is not surprising. What is that to me? Even fewer think this option remains open if we are allowed to add some additional conditions beyond mere rationality: Definitions of morality in the normative senseâ€"and, consequently, moral theoriesâ€"differ in their accounts of rationality, and in their specifications of the conditions under which all rational persons would necessarily endorse the code of conduct that therefore would count as morality. These definitions and theories also differ in how they understand what it is to endorse a code in the relevant way. Some hold that morality applies only to those rational beings that have certain specific features of human beings: These features might, for example, include fallibility and vulnerability. Other moral theories claim to put forward an account of morality that provides a guide to all rational beings, even if these beings do not have these human characteristics, e. Among such theorists it is also common to hold that morality should never be overridden. That is, it is common to hold that no one should ever violate a moral prohibition or requirement for non-moral reasons. Though common, this view is by no means always taken as definitional. Sidgwick despaired of showing that rationality required us to choose morality over egoism, though he certainly did not think rationality required egoism either. More explicitly, Gert held that though moral behavior is always rationally permissible, it is not always rationally required. Foot seems to have held that any reasonâ€"and therefore any rational requirementâ€"to act morally would have to stem from a contingent commitment or an objective interest. And she also seems to have held that sometimes neither of these sorts of reasons might be available. Indeed, it is possible that morality, in the normative sense, has never been put forward by any particular society, by any group at all, or even by any individual. That is, one might claim that the guides to behavior of some societies lack so many of the essential features of morality, in the normative sense, that it is incorrect to say that these societies even have a morality in a descriptive sense. This is an extreme view, however. A more moderate position would hold that all societies have something that can be regarded as their morality, but that many of these moralitiesâ€"perhaps, indeed, all of themâ€"are defective. That is, a moral realist might hold that although these actual guides to behavior have enough of the features of normative morality to be classified as descriptive moralities, they would not be endorsed in their entirety by all moral agents. Moral realists do not claim that any actual society has or has ever had morality as its actual guide to conduct. In the theological version of natural law theories, such as that put forward by Aquinas, this is because God implanted this knowledge in the reason of all persons. In the secular version of natural law theories, such as that put forward by Hobbes , natural reason is sufficient to allow all rational persons to know what morality prohibits, requires, etc. Natural law theorists also claim that morality applies to all rational persons, not only those now living, but also those who lived in the past. In contrast to natural law theories, other moral theories

do not hold quite so strong a view about the universality of knowledge of morality. Still, many hold that morality is known to all who can legitimately be judged by it.

Chapter 5 : The Definition of Morality (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy)

Environmental ethics is the discipline in philosophy that studies the moral relationship of human beings to, and also the value and moral status of, the environment and its non-human contents. ebook Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, Part 22 kf8 download Levinas's philosophy has been called ethics.

Mythical accounts Introduction of moral codes When did ethics begin and how did it originate? If one has in mind ethics properâ€"i. This reflective stage emerged long after human societies had developed some kind of morality, usually in the form of customary standards of right and wrong conduct. The process of reflection tended to arise from such customs, even if in the end it may have found them wanting. Accordingly, ethics began with the introduction of the first moral codes. Virtually every human society has some form of myth to explain the origin of morality. In the Louvre in Paris there is a black Babylonian column with a relief showing the sun god Shamash presenting the code of laws to Hammurabi died c. To make up for these deficiencies, Zeus gave humans a moral sense and the capacity for law and justice , so that they could live in larger communities and cooperate with one another. That morality should be invested with all the mystery and power of divine origin is not surprising. Nothing else could provide such strong reasons for accepting the moral law. By attributing a divine origin to morality, the priesthood became its interpreter and guardian and thereby secured for itself a power that it would not readily relinquish. This link between morality and religion has been so firmly forged that it is still sometimes asserted that there can be no morality without religion. According to this view, ethics is not an independent field of study but rather a branch of theology see moral theology. There is some difficulty, already known to Plato, with the view that morality was created by a divine power. In his dialogue Euthyphro , Plato considered the suggestion that it is divine approval that makes an action good. Plato pointed out that, if this were the case, one could not say that the gods approve of such actions because they are good. Why then do they approve of them? Is their approval entirely arbitrary? Plato considered this impossible and so held that there must be some standards of right or wrong that are independent of the likes and dislikes of the gods. Problems of divine origin A modern theist see theism might say that, since God is good, God could not possibly approve of torturing children nor disapprove of helping neighbours. In saying this, however, the theist would have tacitly admitted that there is a standard of goodness that is independent of God. Without an independent standard, it would be pointless to say that God is good; this could mean only that God is approved of by God. It seems therefore that, even for those who believe in the existence of God, it is impossible to give a satisfactory account of the origin of morality in terms of divine creation. A different account is needed. There are other possible connections between religion and morality. It has been said that, even if standards of good and evil exist independently of God or the gods, divine revelation is the only reliable means of finding out what these standards are. An obvious problem with this view is that those who receive divine revelations, or who consider themselves qualified to interpret them, do not always agree on what is good and what is evil. Without an accepted criterion for the authenticity of a revelation or an interpretation, people are no better off, so far as reaching moral agreement is concerned, than they would be if they were to decide on good and evil themselves, with no assistance from religion. Traditionally, a more important link between religion and ethics was that religious teachings were thought to provide a reason for doing what is right. In its crudest form, the reason was that those who obey the moral law will be rewarded by an eternity of bliss while everyone else roasts in hell. In more sophisticated versions, the motivation provided by religion was more inspirational and less blatantly self-interested. Whether in its crude or its sophisticated version, or something in between, religion does provide an answer to one of the great questions of ethics: As will be seen in the course of this article, however, the answer provided by religion is not the only one available. Prehuman ethics Nonhuman behaviour Because, for obvious reasons, there is no historical record of a human society in the period before it had any standards of right and wrong, history cannot reveal the origins of morality. Nor is anthropology of any help, because all the human societies that have been studied so far had their own forms of morality except perhaps in the most extreme circumstances. Fortunately, another mode of inquiry is available. Because living in social groups is a characteristic that humans share with many other animal

speciesâ€"including their closest relatives, the apesâ€"presumably the common ancestor of humans and apes also lived in social groups. Here, then, in the social behaviour of nonhuman animals and in the theory of evolution that explains such behaviour may be found the origins of human morality. Social life, even for nonhuman animals, requires constraints on behaviour. No group can stay together if its members make frequent, unrestrained attacks on each other. With some exceptions, social animals generally either refrain altogether from attacking other members of the social group or, if an attack does take place, do not make the ensuing struggle a fight to the deathâ€"it is over when the weaker animal shows submissive behaviour. It is not difficult to see analogies here with human moral codes. The parallels, however, go much further than this. Like humans, social animals may behave in ways that benefit other members of the group at some cost or risk to themselves. Male baboons threaten predators and cover the rear as the troop retreats. Wolves and wild dogs take meat back to members of the pack not present at the kill. Gibbons and chimpanzees with food will, in response to a gesture, share their food with other members of the group. Dolphins support other sick or injured dolphins, swimming under them for hours at a time and pushing them to the surface so they can breathe. It may be thought that the existence of such apparently altruistic behaviour is odd, for evolutionary theory states that those who do not struggle to survive and reproduce will be eliminated through natural selection. Research in evolutionary theory applied to social behaviour, however, has shown that evolution need not be so ruthless. Some of this altruistic behaviour is explained by kin selection. The most obvious examples are those in which parents make sacrifices for their offspring. If wolves help their cubs to survive, it is more likely that genetic characteristics, including the characteristic of helping their own cubs, will spread through further generations of wolves. Kinship and reciprocity Less obviously, the principle also holds for assistance to other close relatives, even if they are not descendants. A child shares 50 percent of the genes of each of its parents, but full siblings too, on the average, have 50 percent of their genes in common. Between cousins, where only When apparent altruism is not between kin, it may be based on reciprocity. A monkey will present its back to another monkey, which will pick out parasites; after a time the roles will be reversed. Reciprocity may also be a factor in food sharing among unrelated animals. It would seem that the best way to ensure that those that cheat do not prosper is for animals to be able to recognize cheats and refuse them the benefits of cooperation the next time around. This is possible only among intelligent animals living in small, stable groups over a long period of time. Evidence supports this conclusion: In short, kin altruism and reciprocity do exist, at least in some nonhuman animals living in groups. Could these forms of behaviour be the basis of human ethics? There are good reasons for believing that they could. Kinship is a source of obligation in every human society. Duties to close relatives take priority over duties to more distant relatives, but in most societies even distant relatives are still treated better than strangers. If kinship is the most basic and universal tie between human beings, the bond of reciprocity is not far behind. It would be difficult to find a society that did not recognize, at least under some circumstances, an obligation to return favours. In many cultures this is taken to extraordinary lengths, and there are elaborate rituals of gift giving. Often the repayment must be superior to the original gift, and this escalation can reach extremes that eventually threaten the economic security of the donor. Many Melanesian societies also place great importance on giving and receiving very substantial amounts of valuable items. Many features of human morality could have grown out of simple reciprocal practices such as the mutual removal of parasites from awkward places. The person must choose his partner carefully. If he helps everyone indiscriminately, he will find himself delousing others without getting his own lice removed. To avoid this, he must learn to distinguish between those who return favours and those who do not. In making this distinction, he would be separating reciprocators from nonreciprocators and, in the process, developing crude notions of fairness and of cheating. He will naturally strengthen his ties to those who reciprocate , and bonds of friendship and loyalty, with a consequent sense of obligation to assist, will result. This is not all. The reciprocators are likely to react in a hostile and angry way to those who do not reciprocate. Thus, a system of punishment and a notion of just desert constitute the other side of reciprocal altruism. Although kinship and reciprocity loom large in human morality, they do not cover the entire field. Typically, there are obligations to other members of the village, tribe, or nation, even when they are strangers. There may also be a loyalty to the group as a whole that is distinct from loyalty to individual members of the group. It may be at this point that

human culture intervenes. Each society has a clear interest in promoting devotion to the group and can be expected to develop cultural influences that exalt those who make sacrifices for the sake of the group and revile those who put their own interests too far ahead. More tangible rewards and punishments may supplement the persuasive effect of social opinion. This is the start of a process of cultural development of moral codes. Research in psychology and the neurosciences has thrown light on the role of specific parts of the brain in moral judgment and behaviour, suggesting that emotions are strongly involved in moral judgments, particularly those that are formed rapidly and intuitively. These emotions could be the result of social and cultural influences, or they could have a biological basis in the evolutionary history of the human species; such a basis would continue to exert some influence even if social and cultural forces pulled in different directions. Some of this research, however, also indicates that people sometimes use reasoning processes to reach moral judgments that contradict their usual intuitive responses. Anthropology and ethics Many people believe that there are no moral universalsâ€"i. It has already been shown that this is not the case. Of course, there are immense differences in the way in which the broad principles so far discussed are applied. The duty of children to their parents meant one thing in traditional Chinese society and means something quite different in contemporary Western societies. Yet, concern for kin and reciprocity are considered good in virtually all human societies. Also, all societies have, for obvious reasons, some constraints on killing and wounding other members of the group. Beyond this common ground, the variations in moral attitudes soon become more striking than the similarities. They refused to do it at any price.

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Ancient Greek Philosophy We can start with the Greeks, and this means starting with Homer, a body of texts transmitted first orally and then written down in the seventh century BCE. So what does the relation between morality and religion look like in Homer? The first thing to say is that the gods and goddesses of the Homeric poems behave remarkably like the noble humans described in the same poems, even though the humans are mortal and the gods and goddesses immortal. Both groups are motivated by the desire for honor and glory, and are accordingly jealous when they receive less than they think they should while others receive more, and work ceaselessly to rectify this. The two groups are not however symmetrical, because the noble humans have the same kind of client relation to the divinities as subordinate humans do to them. This includes, for example, sanctuaries devoted to them, dedications, hymns, dances, libations, rituals, prayers, festivals and sacrifices. There is a clear analogy with purely human client-relations, which are validated in the Homeric narrative, since the poems were probably originally sung at the courts of the princes who claimed descent from the heroes whose exploits make up the story. The gods and goddesses are not, however, completely at liberty. It is sometimes said that the Presocratic philosophers come out of Homer by rejecting religion in favor of science. When Anaximenes around talks of air as the primary element differing in respect of thinness and thickness, or Heraclitus explains all change as a pattern in the turnings of fire igniting in measures and going out in measures, they are not giving stories with plot-lines involving quasi-human intentions and frustrations DK 13, A 5, DK 22, B But it is wrong to say that they have left religion behind. Heraclitus puts this enigmatically by saying that the one and only wisdom does and does not consent to be called Zeus DK 22, B He is affirming the divinity of this wisdom, but denying the anthropomorphic character of much Greek religion. The sophists, to whom Socrates responded, rejected this tie between human law and divine law and this was in part because of their expertise in rhetoric, by which they taught their students how to manipulate the deliberations of popular assemblies, and so change the laws to their own advantage. The most famous case is Protagoras c. Protagoras is not correctly seen here as skeptical about morality or religion. But as Plato c. His view of what this justice is, namely the interest of the stronger, is disputed by Plato. But the claim that justice operates at both the divine and human levels is common ground. Euthyphro is taking his own father to court for murder, and though ordinary Greek morality would condemn such an action as impiety, Euthyphro defends it on the basis that the gods behave in the same sort of way, according to the traditional stories. Socrates makes it clear that he does not believe these stories, because they attribute immorality to the gods. This does not mean, however, that he does not believe in the gods. He points to the spirit who gives him commands about what not to do Apology, 31d , and we learn later that he found it significant that this voice never told him to stop conducting his trial in the way that in fact led to his death Ibid. Socrates interpreted this as an invitation from the gods to die, thus refuting the charge that, by conducting his trial in the way he did, he was guilty of theft â€" i. Socrates makes it clear that his view is the second though he does not argue for this conclusion in addressing this question, and he is probably relying on the earlier premise, at Euthyphro, 7c10f, that we love things because of the properties they have. But his view is not an objection to tying morality and religion together. He hints at the end of the dialogue Euthyphro, 13de that the right way to link them is to see that when we do good we are serving the gods well. Plato probably does not intend for us to construe the dialogues together as a single philosophical system, and we must not erase the differences between them. But it is significant that in the Theaetetus b , Socrates says again that our goal is to be as like the god as possible, and since the god is in no way and in no manner unjust, but as just as it is possible to be, nothing is more like the god than the one among us who becomes correspondingly as just as possible. In several dialogues this thought is connected with a belief in the immortality of the soul; we become like the god by paying attention to the immortal and best part of ourselves e. The doctrine of the immortality of the soul is also tied to the doctrine of the Forms, whereby things with characteristics that we experience in this life e. This train of thought sees the

god or gods as like a magnet, drawing us to be like them by the power of their goodness or excellence. Mention of the divine is not merely conventional for Aristotle, but does important philosophical work. In the Eudemian Ethics b5â€"22 he tells us that the goal of our lives is service and contemplation of the god. He thinks that we become like what we contemplate, and so we become most like the god by contemplating the god. Incidentally, this is why the god does not contemplate us; for this would mean becoming less than the god, which is impossible. As in Plato, the well-being of the city takes precedence over the individual, and this, too, is justified theologically. It is nobler and more divine to achieve an end for a city than for an individual NE b9â€" Aristotle draws a distinction between what we honor and what we merely commend NE, b10â€" There are six states for a human life, on a normative scale from best to worst: The highest form of happiness, which he calls blessedness, is something we honor as we honor gods, whereas virtue we merely commend. It would be as wrong to commend blessedness as it would be to commend gods NE, a10â€"a The activity of the god, he says in the Metaphysics, is nous thinking itself b The best human activity is the most god-like, namely thinking about the god and about things that do not change. This gives him a defense against the charge sometimes made against virtue theories that they simply embed the prevailing social consensus into an account of human nature. Aristotle defines ethical virtue as lying in a mean between excess and defect, and the mean is determined by the person of practical wisdom actually the male, since Aristotle is sexist on this point. He then gives a conventional account of the virtues such a person displays such as courage, literally manliness, which requires the right amount of fear and confidence, between cowardice and rashness. It is not clear whether the Nicomachean Ethics has a consistent view of the relation between the activity of contemplation and the other activities of a virtuous life see Hare, God and Morality, chapter 1, and Sarah Broadie, Ethics with Aristotle, chapter 7. But the connection of the highest human state with the divine is pervasive in the text. One result of this connection is the eudaimonism mentioned earlier. If the god does not care about what is not divine for this would be to become like what is not divine , the highest and most god-like human also does not care about other human beings except to the degree they contribute to his own best state. This degree is not negligible, since humans are social animals, and their well-being depends on the well-being of the families and cities of which they are members. Aristotle is not preaching self-sufficiency in any sense that implies we could be happy on our own, isolated from other human beings. But our concern for the well-being of other people is always, for him, contingent on our special relation to them. We therefore do not want our friends to become gods, even though that would be the best thing for them. Finally, Aristotle ties our happiness to our end in Greek, telos ; for humans, as for all living things, the best state is its own activity in accordance with the natural function that is unique to each species. For humans the best state is happiness, and the best activity within this state is contemplation NE, b17â€" The Epicureans and Stoics who followed Aristotle differed with each other and with him in many ways, but they agreed in tying morality and religion together. For the Epicureans, the gods do not care about us, though they are entertained by looking at our tragicomic lives rather as we look at soap operas on television. We can be released from a good deal of anxiety, the Epicureans thought, by realizing that the gods are not going to punish us. Our goal should be to be as like the gods as we can, enjoying ourselves without interruption, but for us this means limiting our desires to what we can obtain without frustration. They did not mean that our happiness is self-interested in any narrow sense, because they held that we can include others in our happiness by means of our sympathetic pleasures. The Stoics likewise tied the best kind of human life, for them the life of the sage, to being like the divine. The sage follows nature in all his desires and actions, and is thus the closest to the divine. Such commands come already in the first chapter of Genesis. In the second chapter God tells Adam that he is free to eat from any tree in the garden, but he must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. When Eve and Adam disobey and eat of that fruit, they are expelled from the garden. There is a family of concepts here that is different from what we met in Greek philosophy. God is setting up a kind of covenant by which humans will be blessed if they obey the commands God gives them. Human disobedience is not explained in the text, except that the serpent says to Eve that they will not die if they eat the fruit, but will be like God, knowing good and evil, and Eve sees the fruit as good for food and pleasing to the eye and desirable for gaining wisdom. After they eat, Adam and Eve know that they are naked, and are ashamed, and hide from God. As the story goes on, and Cain kills Abel, evil

spreads to all the people of the earth, and Genesis describes the basic state as a corruption of the heart 6: Then there is the command to Abraham to kill his son, a deed prevented at the last minute by the provision of a ram instead Gen. Under Moses the people are finally liberated, and during their wanderings in the desert, Moses receives from God the Ten Commandments, in two tables or tablets Exod. The second table concerns our obligations to other human beings, and all of the commands are negative do not kill, commit adultery, steal, lie, or covet except for the first, which tells us to honor our fathers and mothers. The Greeks had the notion of a kingdom, under a human king though the Athenians were in the classical period suspicious of such an arrangement. But they did not have the idea of a kingdom of God, though there is something approaching this in some of the Stoics. This idea is explicable in terms of law, and is introduced as such in Exodus in connection with the covenant on Mt. The kingdom is the realm in which the laws obtain. This raises a question about the extent of this realm. The surrounding laws in the Pentateuch include prescriptions and proscriptions about ritual purity and sacrifice and the use of the land that seem to apply to this particular people in this particular place. But the covenant that God makes with Noah after the flood is applicable to the whole human race, and universal scope is explicit in the Wisdom books, which make a continual connection between how we should live and how we were created as human beings. For example, in Proverbs 8 Wisdom raises her voice to all humankind, and says that she detests wickedness, which she goes on to describe in considerable detail. The New Testament is unlike the Hebrew Bible, however, in presenting a narrative about a man who is the perfect exemplification of obedience and who has a life without sin. New Testament scholars disagree about the extent to which Jesus actually claimed to be God, but the traditional interpretation is that he did make this claim; in any case the Christian doctrine is that we can see in his life the clearest possible revelation in human terms both of what God is like and at the same time of what our lives ought to be like. He takes the commandments inside the heart; for example, we are required not merely not to murder, but not to be angry, and not merely not to commit adultery, but not to lust see Ezekiel Jesus tells us to love our enemies and those who hate and persecute us, and in this way he makes it clear that the love commandment is not based on reciprocity Matt 5: This event is understood in many different ways in the New Testament, but one central theme is that Jesus died on our behalf, an innocent man on behalf of the guilty. Jesus describes the paradigm of loving our neighbors as the willingness to die for them. And we are given the hope of future progress in holiness by the work of the Holy Spirit Rom. All of this theology requires more detailed analysis, but this is not the place for it. There is a contrast between the two traditions I have so far described, namely the Greek and the Judeo-Christian. The idea of God that is central in Greek philosophy is the idea of God attracting us, like a kind of magnet, so that we desire to become more like God, though there is a minority account by Socrates of receiving divine commands. In the Jewish and Christian scriptures, the notion of God commanding us is central. It is tempting to simplify this contrast by saying that the Greeks favor the good, in their account of the relation of morality and religion, and the Judeo-Christian account favors the right or obligation. It is true that the notion of obligation makes most sense against the background of command. The Middle Ages The rest of the history to be described in this entry is a cross-fertilization of these two traditions or lines of thought. In the patristic period, or the period of the early Fathers, it was predominantly Plato and the Stoics amongst the Greek philosophers whose influence was felt. The Eastern and Western parts of the Christian church split during the period, and the Eastern church remained more comfortable than the Western with language about humans being deified in Greek theosis.

Chapter 7 : eBook Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, Part 22 download | online | audio tags:Of the three

The Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics by James Hastions breaks things down to it's minute cultural origins and beliefs. It will show you what spirits were in China, Japan, Hawaii, South America.

Definitions[edit] There are a variety of definitions of pantheism. Some consider it a theological and philosophical position concerning God. To them, pantheism is the view that the Universe in the sense of the totality of all existence and God are identical implying a denial of the personality and transcendence of God. He has since become known as a celebrated pantheist and martyr of science, [16] and an influence on many later thinkers. Baruch Spinoza The philosophy of Baruch Spinoza is often regarded as pantheism. He was described as a "God-intoxicated man," and used the word God to describe the unity of all substance. It was later used and popularized by Irish writer John Toland in his work of Socinianism Truly Stated, by a pantheist. Known in German as the Pantheismusstreit pantheism controversy , it helped spread pantheism to many German thinkers. Lessing stated that he knew no other philosophy than Spinozism. This, for Jacobi, was the result of Enlightenment rationalism and it would finally end in absolute atheism. Mendelssohn disagreed with Jacobi, saying that pantheism shares more characteristics of theism than of atheism. The entire issue became a major intellectual and religious concern for European civilization at the time. At one time in his life, to say the least, he was an elevated Pantheist, doubting the immortality of the soul as the Christian world understands that term. He believed that the soul lost its identity and was immortal as a force. Subsequent to this he rose to the belief of a God, and this is all the change he ever underwent. They thought Pantheism was similar to the ancient Hindu [13]: During the pre-Christian Roman Empire, Stoicism was one of the three dominant schools of philosophy, along with Epicureanism and Neoplatonism. In , Dorion Sagan , the son of famous scientist and science communicator, Carl Sagan , published a book entitled Dazzle Gradually: Reflections on the Nature of Nature co-written with his mother, Lynn Margulis. In a chapter entitled, "Truth of My Father", he declares: Degree of determinism[edit] The philosopher Charles Hartshorne used the term Classical Pantheism to describe the deterministic philosophies of Baruch Spinoza, the Stoics, and other like-minded figures. The Columbia Encyclopedia writes of the distinction: There is nothing separate or distinct from God, for God is the universe. If, on the other hand, the conception taken as the foundation of the system is that the great inclusive unity is the world itself, or the universe, God is swallowed up in that unity, which may be designated nature. Philosophers and theologians have often suggested that pantheism implies monism. Metaphysical dualism , which asserts that there are two ultimately irreconcilable substances or realities such as Good and Evil, for example, Manichaeism , [81] Metaphysical pluralism , which asserts three or more fundamental substances or realities. Monism in modern philosophy of mind can be divided into three broad categories: Idealist , phenomenalism, or mentalistic monism, which holds that only mind or spirit is real [81] Neutral monism , which holds that one sort of thing fundamentally exists, [82] to which both the mental and the physical can be reduced [83] Material monism also called Physicalism and materialism , which holds that only the physical is real, and that the mental or spiritual can be reduced to the physical [81] [82] a. Eliminative Materialism , according to which everything is physical and mental things do not exist [82] b. Reductive physicalism , according to which mental things do exist and are a kind of physical thing [82] [note 1] Certain positions do not fit easily into the above categories, such as functionalism, anomalous monism , and reflexive monism. Moreover, they do not define the meaning of "real". Other[edit] In , J. Worman, a theologian, identified seven categories of pantheism: Mechanical or materialistic God the mechanical unity of existence ; Ontological fundamental unity, Spinoza ; Dynamic; Psychical God is the soul of the world ; Ethical God is the universal moral order, Fichte; Logical Hegel ; and Pure absorption of God into nature, which Worman equates with atheism. Feinberg , professor of biblical and systematic theology at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, also identified seven: Hylozoistic; Immanentistic; Absolutistic monistic; Relativistic monistic; Acosmic; Identity of opposites; and Neoplatonic or emanationistic. His use of the word nature to describe his worldview may be vastly different from the "nature" of modern sciences. He and other nature mystics who also identify as pantheists use "nature" to refer to the limited natural environment as opposed to man-made built

environment. This use of "nature" is different from the broader use from Spinoza and other pantheists describing natural laws and the overall phenomena of the physical world. Nature mysticism may be compatible with pantheism but it may also be compatible with theism and other views. Panpsychism is the philosophical view held by many pantheists that consciousness, mind, or soul is a universal feature of all things. According to pantheists, there are elements of pantheism in some forms of Christianity. However, Sikhs view God as the transcendent creator, [] "immanent in the phenomenal reality of the world in the same way in which an artist can be said to be present in his art". Spirituality and new religious movements[edit] Pantheism is popular in modern spirituality and new religious movements , such as Neopaganism and Theosophy. The Universal Pantheist Society, open to all varieties of pantheists and supportive of environmental causes, was founded in The World Pantheist Movement was incorporated in to focus exclusively on promoting naturalistic pantheism - a strict metaphysical naturalistic version of pantheism, [] considered by some a form of religious naturalism.

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