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Desire and Human Flourishing

Perspectives from Positive Psychology, Moral Education and Virtue Ethics

Springer

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Preface

Desire is the true driving force of all civilizations, from which all decisions, whether trivial or meaningful, emerge. At the same time, there is currently an increasing interest in personal growth. Terms such as "flourishing", "character education" or "strengths and virtues" are present in many academic and non-academic publications and forums. Desire is one of the most intensive elements in our personal life, the most decisive in all behaviours and the most important for the development of the whole of society.

Both topics desire and flourishing are related to personal improvement and constitute key questions in the field of moral education. However, it is not usual to recognize this relationship since it is not common to apply an interdisciplinary approach including ethics, education and psychology. This new approach is essential and enriches the discussion enormously. Education of desire for flourishing is the root of many subjects already studied and discussed, but not yet completely solved. It is, at the same time, a matter of ethics and a matter of well-being, success and self-improvement.

Our new contribution consists of considering an already open question in greater depth. Partial explanations put forward so far fail to provide total satisfaction. A holistic analysis is still missing. Our proposal is doubly holistic: all the authors take into account a holistic understanding of human beings, and the wide diversity of approaches achieves a particularly holistic examination.

This study aims to provide new approaches to an old problem: moral education. Likewise, it aims to become an international reference work on a fundamental ethical problem, which is the difficulty of doing good. Sometimes people want to do something but are not in the mood to do it. Therefore, education for human flourishing must be approached as education of desire.

More specifically, the first part of this book is devoted to key concepts related to the topic, and in the course of its ten chapters, the most controversial and interesting questions are answered: the role of desire in constructing self-personality, how desire decides action, whether desire is oriented towards flourishing, how desire is able to bring about joy, what the relation between desire and freedom or sensitivity is, if

there is any ethical value in operative desires, in which condition harmony between desires of reason and emotion could be possible, how desire is related to beauty and, finally, if the best education of desire lies in its intensification.

The second section contains ten chapters on the most significant authors who have discussed desire—from Socrates to Freud with very different and original approaches, really rediscovering new aspects beyond their historical value: desire and madness, desire and eros, desire and vices, the desire to be good, the way in which reason could help or not to assume our own actions, love as donation (self-giving) or emotion, desire as salvation, the very nature of desire, desire as a form of attention or desire as an impulse.

Finally, the last section offers a vivid, realistic and pragmatic analysis of diverse aspects of desire in practical life: Is there any way to achieve education of desire for healthier family styles? What role does desire play in using ICT? Are some specific emotions like shame or admiration special forms of desire? Is advertising not a powerful way of driving desires? How could we consider the desire factor in teaching? Is desire not the only true way of learning and loving? Are love and desire in accordance or are they opposed? Is it at all possible to rectify a desire that we do not like?

This book brings together the expertise of a group of scholars who have been courageous enough to face these questions and offer their deepest thoughts, brilliant argumentations and clear explanations to be useful to everybody interested in desire and flourishing.

Barcelona, Spain   Magdalena Bosch
30. 11. 2019

Contents

Part I
Key Concepts of Education of Desire

Chapter 1
To Be What One Desires to Be. The Notion of Habit and Its Educational Value

José María Barrio Maestre

Abstract Habits are crucial to the development of what could be referred to as the most human facet of mortals. Habit is an operational device, a way of thinking or acting, which predisposes us, or makes it easier concerning thinking and behaviour, to go in the direction we have decided upon.

Strictly speaking, habit is not the same as custom or routine, and it does not arise through a repeated action. While habits bring stability to our way of thinking and acting, they do not save our having to plan nor take decisions. Consequently, it becomes easier for us to feel better about ourselves, to feel more at ease as to our habitual way of living, and so our behaviour accordingly adapts to suit our being.

At its core, educating consists of encouraging intellectual and moral habits, stable patterns of behaviour which condition us with regard to specific ways of thinking and acting which end up becoming very much "ours", also emotionally: we recognise ourselves easily through those patterns because they are part and parcel of our natural being (first nature) causing the behaviours in question to ensue spontaneously; though this does not always happen effortlessly, it does so with lesser or minimum effort. That being the case, thanks to the consolidated habit, the way we conduct ourselves is no longer "forced".

Keywords Habit · Second nature · Education and desire

1.1 What Is a Habit?

It is difficult to say anything more significant about education other than namely consisting of encouraging the growth of that part of man, which is specifically more human. On saying this, I refer to the fact that an educator should help to establish and develop what the pedagogues in ancient times referred to as *habits*, a notion which in

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recent decades has practically disappeared from educational theory discourse and, in general, from the educational sciences. I am of the belief that this loss is significant, as it is difficult to find amongst the substitutes currently used in pedagogic language—abilities, skills, and especially, the much-touted *competences*—a notion which is as noteworthy as that of habit. After all, education does not lie in providing skills and competences. Obviously, even though they are not excluded from educational activities, they only affect the human being in a peripheral manner. On the contrary, intellectual and moral habits concern the innermost, the most genuinely human part of a being.

As *habitually* occurs in Castilian Spanish, "*hábito*" comes from Latin; in this case, from the noun *habitus* and the verb *habere*, to have. There are two basic forms of *have*: the more basic form refers to possess, to be endowed with something, and a second form, which will be specially referred to as to be but not merely as being, but rather a specific manner of being which is the sediment, the depot, the typical result of doing. In other words, related to the manner of being that we forge as we go through life-being as the outcome of our habitual way of behaving, especially from the intellectual and moral perspective. Spaemann ([2012](#)) comments on these two kinds of having, which he alludes to in German, respectively, with the expressions *besitzen* and *Haben einer Natur*, which may be loosely translated as "possess" and "natural having". Indeed, a first kind of *to have* is to possess which, in the most basic sense, is a merely descriptive and rather simplistic definition of "having things". This category of having is changeable, fragile. In line with this meaning, one may lose all their possessions. Likewise, ownership can also be applied to animals. For example, a fox may have its den and a stork its nest where it shelters its fledglings. Nevertheless, they only have those things, provided a stronger animal does not wrest these belongings away from them.

A further type of having, referred to by Aristotle as *second nature*, wells up from the depths of our being. On the other hand, Spaemann identifies it with the curious expression: *Haben einer Natur*, to have a nature. This deals with a category of having where we condition ourselves to the extent that it becomes much more "ours" than mere material possessions. Habits are habitual kinds of thinking and acting which we assimilate, and on becoming so familiar, we have difficulty recognising ourselves without them. Once habits become firmly entrenched in our personal and specific way of thinking and living—*modus cogitandi, modus vivendi*—they lead to the spontaneous upwelling of corresponding behaviours.

The dichotomy I propose here is intentional; in other words, it is pedagogic; I am not saying that these two forms of having—possessing and *haber natural*—are interchangeable, excluding each other. Neither does this distinction coincide exactly with the distinction between a person's material wealth and spiritual wealth. This distinction, being rather descriptive, may be of help to arrive at an initial meaning, but it is also important to understand that, in this case, the dichotomy is not a thesis but rather a method. In no way does either of these two forms imply impoverishment or the detriment of the other. While material possessions do not have to impoverish us spiritually, neither does spiritual wealth mean emptying our pockets. This can happen, but does not happen because of what they are—*per se*—but rather for a

reason which differs from the very essence of these two kinds of having *(per accidens).*

1.2   Habit, a Vital Mode of Having

We can only appropriate a thing from which we have expropriated its very self, and there is nothing quite "itself" than what is alive, with its own activity and which is not merely passive. Life is the prototype of what the ancient philosophers referred to as *inmanencia.* Habits can be taken to be alive. *Natural having*—second nature or habit—reaches beyond the tomb. On the other hand, material wealth, all that we may be able to accumulate in a lifetime, at most, ends up in the grave. Only a lifeless thing can be possessed.

Habits are a vital way of having. Precisely, since natural having is alive and vital, it is subject to growth. Dilthey pointed out that the tendency of every living thing, due to its very nature, is to approach fullness and is therefore always destined to grow, to become more. Indeed, as Aristotle maintained, no living being settles for merely living or surviving, as the tendency is to live well.

Material gain can disappear, for example through spending it—as occurs in the case of money—or because it is either expropriated or snatched away. Whatever the case, death implies its loss. But that other form of *natural having*—this being that we have naturalised by way of our intellectual and moral behaviour—is more difficult to lose. It is not impossible, because by definition, everything that one has or obtains—and most habits are acquired—can get lost. We are fully aware that the habits we have managed so painstakingly to entrench in our behaviour, if allowed to remain inactive for a long time, can get lost. Let us take the habit of studying. Perhaps not all of it gets lost if the initial effort made to get it to take root has been very intense. In this case, such *modi vivendi* or *modi cogitandi* has left a profound track, which makes us act or think in a specific way. Besides no matter how deep the track is, if we do make use it more often, or let a lot of time go by without treading on it, it gets covered up by dust or thistles thereby making it difficult to recognise, even though it is still there.

It is possible to lose a habit, but it is more difficult for that to happen than to lose money. Habits constitute human wealth. Although this does not mean that material wealth impoverishes us in human terms, it can be said that spiritual riches—intellectual and moral habits—are of a particularly human nature or are more intensely human in the sense that they make us better persons. At the basic level, we are all aware that a person's fundamental wealth does not refer to the amount in their current account, even though it is undeniably personal wealth. However, there is a kind of more eminently personal wealth, which cannot be measured with the same yardstick. Ultimately, this is what education is about.

1.3   Habit Is Not a Skill

It appears that pedagogy has lost track of this over time. Currently, it seems that the tendency is for the educational system to provide children and youngsters passing through the system with tools to help them "forge ahead" in the battle of life. Light should not be made of the instrumental value of people relying on skills which give them an edge to cope with life in adulthood. That said, if that is all this is about, then the educational system can easily be reduced, to borrow from Nietzsche, to training "skilled beasts" capable of strategically getting ahead of social depredation, which means knowing how to be the predator before becoming the victim of depredators or, as it is aptly put at times, tread on someone else before you get trod on. In some contexts, these things can be encountered sheathed in the highest level of prestige and value. According to their meaning in pedagogical terms, notions such as "strategies" and "skills" often evoke the idea that the most important thing concerning training or instruction is to equip people to be *competitive* in a jungle-like context, where the capacity to adapt is all that matters.

Note should be taken as to what occurs in the case of the concept of competence. It is paradigmatic. The following distinction might seem very artificial—overly theoretical, some might say, even though I am greatly in favour of the theory—but for me it is fundamental to understand a concept which is important in life. Thus, I propose a distinction between the following two concepts: to be competent and to be "competitive". The first one means being efficient at work, doing one's work well, to have the capacity to provide quality service to others through one's profession; consequently, we say that a person is professionally competent when they do their work well. The second—being competitive—is to be better than another person; for example, to accomplish more, win more medals than one's colleagues, beat the "competition", or even be better than before, make more money than the previous year, to outdo oneself, to beat one's own record.

I do not wish to underestimate the value all of this may have in relation to economic relationships in life. Among other things, it is not for me to say so as I have absolutely no idea regarding economics. (I do not pride myself concerning this; my absolute ignorance when it comes to economic matters is not a source of pride). Perhaps "competitiveness" makes sense in a free market context, as reportedly occurs in our case: It is all well and good for markets to be competitive, to have courts who see to ensuring that unfair competition is avoided, that healthy competition between companies is possible... That is all well and good. Nevertheless, in another sense, which is not related to economic matters, this is not as good as the former. As Alejandro Llano highlighted, accepting competitiveness as key criterion is quite an efficient way of embittering life, of being perpetually unsatisfied with what one is, does, or owns (Llano 2003: 86). Maybe this has positive effects, but all the effects are not necessarily positive.

Citius, altius, fortius, the motto of the Olympic games, clearly reflects a championship mentality. I am ignorant where football is concerned. However, I know people who are keen football followers. Naturally, they want their team to win

matches. Nevertheless, if they are genuine football enthusiasts, they would also appreciate seeing their team play well. It hardly makes sense for a person to participate in a tennis match just to lose: one takes part in a match with the aim of winning; otherwise, the very praxis of tennis would not be consistent. But for the genuine tennis or football lover, participating in the game is more important than winning, as the saying goes. Aristotle made a similar comment when he referred to *praxis téleia.* There are actions which have value in themselves, actions which are done for their own sake, and therefore their goal or purpose *(telos)*, at least their main purpose, is none other than to carry them out. A classic example of *praxis téleia* is precisely a game. From personal observation, a person who loves football does not enjoy himself if his team wins when they are playing badly, for example when all the players swarm around the goalpost to prevent the other side from scoring a goal. No. Keen football enthusiasts prefer their team to run the risk of pressing onwards.

1.4   To Live Well Does Not Mean to Triumph

It is good for things to "turn out well", but it is better "to do them well". When one sets out to do things well, they do not always succeed because not everything depends on the person. I am directly responsible for what I do and undo—my actions and my omissions—but not responsible for making the world a better place. Concerning that I am indirectly responsible, at best. In any case, what makes life meaningful are the assets and goals I contribute to existence—to mine and to the existence of others—through what I do. The most important thing for the human being does not lie in *triumphing in life*, in the sense that this is often understood, in other words, for things to work out well. Though this is difficult to learn, it is crucial.

That said, mature people know from experience that there are achievements that can only be expected after tenacious and sometimes prolonged endeavour over a long period of time, and for which there are no shortcuts. "Everything, now!" is the typical motto of immaturity. Some things can be attained "now", and technological civilisation has conditioned us to believe that we can obtain many of them rapidly by pressing a button. When I press the switch, something happens immediately: the light comes on or goes off... So all of us drudge away at thousands for tasks which we carry out very efficiently in a technically similar manner with immediate returns, every single day. It is wonderful and implies evident progress. However, it is necessary to become accustomed, right from childhood, to understanding that there are things which cannot be achieved immediately and easily, but rather through effort which is normally plagued by failure, effort which needs to be repeated several times, commencing and recommencing. Through "trial and error" one hits the nail on the head, after failing several times.

This entails human learning which is becoming increasingly difficult because with so much "strategic" and competence discourse, from a very early age children are exposed to the idea that the most important thing in life is to know how to press

the appropriate button at the appropriate moment, stalk opportunities, not let the train leave them behind, and so on. However, when a child only sees that things are resolved by pressing buttons they are bound to come down with a bump and it often hurts more upon abandoning the glass dome inhabited by so many people during their schooling years, where everything boils down to abilities and skills. When faced with real life, people realise that there are numerous things which do not work in such a manner. The most important aspects of human existence are subject to different rules.

To my mind, one of the flaws of educational systems of developed countries is the difficulty on the part of young children to generate tolerance in the face of frustration. Educational legislation does little to help children and adolescents to learn the following essential lesson: not to rebel against the cosmos when anything turns out badly for them, or even when they do it badly.

I previously made mention of two kinds of good. Correspondingly, one may refer to these two types of bad: the first one is when something *turns out badly* for someone, for instance, an unsuccessful technical procedure. There are people whose world collapses around them if their computer or telephone stops working. However, the second kind of evil is more difficult to bear: malice, ill will. In life, one sometimes comes across this second type of evil, and rather than skills, something else is required to fight it. What is required is some empowerment, first of the intellectual kind to try to comprehend, and afterwards, of the moral kind to try to cope as best as one can with human imperfection without ending up becoming accustomed to it, that is, by fighting it. There are others who think that everything must turn out perfectly or that, by definition, everybody is good. Probably this is true, but people being good does not rule out the fact the they may be going through a bad time or having a bad day; that can happen to anybody.

Some efforts can be given a helping hand, and at the beginning it is good to provide the help, but people do not necessarily have to be always saved the trouble of making the effort. Young people are done no favour whatsoever when they are saved all the trouble of making the effort. It is enough to open their eyes. Anyone who has children, or who has spent time in a classroom, is aware of this. The Greeks understood this clearly: If you want to make a person unhappy, give him everything he requests.

Another aspect highlighted by Greek wisdom is the stoic precaution as to chrematistics, the art of getting rich. (In Greek, the noun *khrémata*, "riches", and the adjective *khré*, meaning "necessary", exist). Stoic wisdom—formulated as an ethical ideal—consists of going through life without clinging to anything, suppressing our desires, not owning anything which is deemed vital. The greater the desire—according to the stoic—the greater the awareness of lack and imperfection thereof, since there is a desire for what one does not possess. Consequently, if you want a peaceful life, stay away from love, do not have friends, do not love anyone nor anything: live in an apathetic manner, without *pathos*, without passion nor desire for anything. It is a utopian ideal which no human being can endorse. Yet there is some wisdom to be found here: the less we need, the freer we are and less dependent.

A further thing to be learned is related to the structure of maturity and consists of the natural result of culture, of *paideia*: to know how to get repeatedly satisfied, not expecting immediate results for everything we do. Great accomplishments take time, often materialising after a long wait. Thus, learning to plan for the medium/long term is part of the vital baggage of the person who has a pinch of maturity.

In view of the scale of such learning, I consider the suppression of the notion of habit from pedagogical discourse to be a grave mistake because it is important for the comprehension of the innermost part of human enrichment, in the second sense I mentioned earlier on.

1.5 Habit Is Not Routine

The main difficulty regarding this notion gaining ground once again in pedagogical discourse lies in the association, which is more iconic rather than conceptual, which almost everybody automatically makes between habit and routine. This is a serious mistake. Routine can be associated with the other concepts I mentioned earlier on, which are substitutes for habit: abilities, strategies, and competencies. These things can be attained through "drills", as Americans prefer to put it, and they become part of a routine. But this is not the case with habits.

A routine can be induced concerning myself, in that it is all very well that the driving school instructor can help me to etch a series of automatisms into a neuro-vegetative structure to enable me to drive an automobile, without having to pay constant attention to each and every operation that must be carried out according to the situation. Nevertheless, these routines can be induced from without, while a habit can only be acquired by the person in question—nobody can do so for him—by taking certain steps and decisions. Habit is always the result of a specific kind of self-awareness and self-determination, which naturally has to be reiterated. Normally, an operational habit is not acquired in one attempt, but each time I go through the motions to affirm that habitual tendency I have adopted—I repeat, freely—calls for a renewal of my resolution.

By way of illustration, when it comes to the habit of studying, perhaps the second time I settle down to study, I find it less difficult than the first time, the third time slightly less difficulty than the second, and so on. Indeed, habits economise effort in such a way that the initial energy outlay required to study three hours in a row, for the first time, need not be as intense, on the second occasion... But in any case, "one must get down" (to studying). That never stops requiring an effort, even though it becomes increasingly less. In any case, it is necessary to repeat the initial decision, and further decisions in line with the first must be taken. The decision which, at the outset, led to my trying to consolidate continuity of the habit, more or less implicit, at the least remains present in this implicit manner provided I do not countermand it—which I can also do.

It is mistaken to think that habits save us thinking and free us from want. They make it easier but they do not spare us the trouble. Specifically, they make it easier

for our thoughts and desires to go in the direction we wish them to go after responsible reflection regarding our lifetime project, and not to head in the direction others want us to take.

A habit cannot be "inculcated"; it can only be *encouraged.* A further conceptual error frequently encountered in relation to this notion, deriving from its relationship with the issue of familiarisation, lies in thinking about it—to imagine it—as the result of an outside impulse generating certain inertia, somewhat similar to the *impetus* of ancient cosmology.

1.6   Habits and Values

I would like to stress the importance of going back to a notion which is certainly now far removed from pedagogical correctness discourse, but which undoubtedly remains in the subconscious—perhaps also in the conscious, although not in language—of those persons involved in the real world of education. Teachers and parents are fully aware of what a habit entails. It is a real paradox that double language exists, the dichotomy between what is said, for example, so that one appears more of a scientist or ground-breaker—with the goal of fitting in at forums where such labels are rife, where the word "competences" must frequently fall easily off one's tongue—and which ultimately anyone who tries to educate their pupils or children knows.

Up to this point, I have only dealt with the psycho-ethical structure of habits in general terms; neither have I concerned myself with the issue of how to educate (I will not deal with the latter on this occasion). I have limited myself to the very modest task of vindicating the value of this notion to enable understanding of what lies at the core of education. From now on, I am going to attempt a brief explanation to shed some light on how habits may increase our personal *having.* To accomplish this, the first thing is to determine as accurately as possible the habits of the so-called values, another concept which, owing to its relatively semantic proximity, may cause confusion. It is impossible to go into all the necessary details but some clarification will be possible.

The first clarification is to differentiate habit *(héxis)* from virtue *(areté).* The former refers to type genus and the second one to species. Good habits are virtues while bad habits are what we call vices. Likewise, Aristotle made a distinction between two types of virtuous habits: intellectual or *dianoetical* virtues, and the moral or *ethical* ones. This deals with ways of accommodating, of conditioning thinking and action to develop them better.

That is different from what Max Scheler refers to as *value (worth).* While it is of value to have certain virtuous habits, good habits are not exactly "values" (nor bad habits "counter values"), at least in the sense in which the said expression is used in the language of phenomenological axiology. There is perhaps, in a very descriptive fashion, a difference which can be established by saying that virtues are practicable

while, strictly speaking, values are not. In general, habits can be obtained while values can only be admired: they pertain to another world; they are utopias.

Scheler claimed that rather than being, values consist of their worth *(die Werte sind nicht, sondern werten)*. This statement is interesting but considering the obvious meaning, for me it is false because the first thing necessary to have the quality of worthiness is to be; nothingness is worthless. Nothingness cannot attract admiration. Interpreting the meaning of his claim, I think what Scheler attempts to clarify is that values belong to a sphere which differs from the praxis sphere. This does not mean that they are of absolutely no consequence. By way of illustration, from the educational point of view it is interesting that a person expresses amazement faced with a show of solidarity, if we consider it to be a value. So, it is one thing to be able to experience emotion in the presence of solidarity, and an entirely different matter to show solidarity. The first instance is a value and the second is a virtue. The difference between both things is analogous to the difference that could be established between attitudes—a matter which is often discussed in pedagogy—and *aptitudes.* Less mention is made of the latter but they are as important or more so, than the former.

Evidently, it is impossible to show solidarity without valuing solidarity positively and, in this sense, there is no room for an aptitude, a habit mechanism—which makes the subject do something—without the corresponding attitude. More so, the opposite does not necessarily follow. That said, the following should be asked: What purpose does it serve to have the capacity to feel emotion when faced with solidarity—have a positive attitude—without the capacity to get out of an armchair to do something for others? It is undoubtedly of vital importance to adopt positive attitudes vis-à-vis positive values, but the task of educating would be thwarted if it were not ultimately aimed at encouraging the respective habits. If someone is unable to overcome their laziness, or their greed, or they become angry if they think their free time is being encroached on when a favour is requested of them, then it cannot be said that the educational purpose has been achieved in that person's case. The point of education does not lie in people being able to feel emotion and having positive attitudes, but rather in being able to also generate an aptitude, an operational readiness. This is what is referred to in Aristotle's language as virtue, *areté.*

The word *areté* may mislead one slightly because in Greek it means excellence, while virtue, understood as an operational habit, as a vital way of having, suggests the idea of something destined for growth—I return to Dilthey—and therefore it can be taken to be imperfect. Values are also models, prototypes *(typoi).* In any case, there is an essential difference between virtue and value. While a value cannot be more valuable, virtues can grow—and for similar reasons, they can also wane— because they are ingrained at a personal level. A person who is very supportive can be more supportive (or less). On the other hand, solidarity cannot be more (nor less) supportive, ultimately because it is not supportive at all.

The condition of the possibility that something may escalate is also that it can lessen. It occurs in life at almost all levels: growing and waning. In fact, wherever input is found, output is also present.

Virtue calls for action, while value asks nothing of us. Merely an affectionate response. It is not a question of values making us fearless: they jolt us out of our

indifference, unquestionably, but they do not ask for more than our affective acknowledgement. On the other hand, facing up to virtue is a task, a risk. Moral improvement always involves taking action and decisions. "The condition for possible self-improvement (and all improvement is self-improvement) is the possibility of ending up worse off. Only this—*libertas indifferentiae* for the good *and for the bad:* indifference does not mean here that it makes no difference, but rather refers to equal possibility only—has to be considered wholly on account of *agens*" (Inciarte 2014).

Faced with values, one can only be filled with awe: How nice! However, as to habits, one can react in a different way. One never attains fulfilment, but one can "start", take a step, and then another: grow. From the educational point of view, the most interesting thing is that habits highlight a very real aspect of the human being: no achievement is definitive; all human progress is truly progress in so far as it broadens the horizons for further achievements. There is no running out of possibilities of *being more* like a person, of growing where wisdom and virtue are concerned. As Eduardo Nicol indicated, man is not born whole nor does he ever finish *learning*. He is always unfinished. There is much more left ahead of us than what we have already achieved.

This also allows one to approach the last stages of life in an anthropologically productive manner. Even though for chronological reasons, one might be led to think that at a certain point the chances are that there is less time remaining to live than the time that has already been lived, from another perspective much more remains ahead than what has already been left behind. This is always true for the human being. There is no ceiling with respect to growth.

That human nature with its limitations makes us always aspire for more and also helps us better understand the intrinsic difficulty of the job of educating. Teaching involves more than just providing skills. That is what horse trainers do, and undoubtedly it is a noble undertaking. That said, the difference between training an irrational being and educating a child lies in this: the person who carries out the former can be satisfied with the skills and get the horse to caper beautifully in the circus, or get a very skilled and competent monkey to perform cute tricks in a spectacular fashion This, however, is less difficult than getting a child to acquire certain habits which we know will help them to grow as a person. This is more meritworthy, despite our having to take off our hat to the horse and to rider who manages to teach it some marvellous skills.

1.7   The Goodness of Life

How can the human being improve, aspire towards perfection, grow as a person? Is perfection attainable from the human perspective? This does not appear very clear. Moreover, excellence *(areté)* feels "inhuman" to us. However, without knowing what human perfection entails, it would be difficult to understand what it would mean for man to approach perfection, improve himself.

What is it that makes man good? At this juncture, it becomes necessary to make some distinctions.

There are various types of human good. *Having a good time* is certainly one of them. It is a good thing to be fine, or have a good time. At least it is better than the opposite. But it is easy to see that it is not the highest ranking in relation to human good. *Doing something well* appears to have more of goodness. Anybody who is slightly mature realises that when it comes to good, humans feel more satisfied being active rather than passive. Indeed, the good things that "happen to us", more or less, cause an immediate but *fleeting* satisfaction, while those things we do well produce greater pleasure, ultimately because they entail a profound structure of what we are. Like all living things, the human beings tend to be more active than passive, finding greater contentment—more goodness *content*—in the good they do than in the good that happens to them.

At the same time, there are two cardinal kinds of good human action: the technical good and the practical good (moral). Both kinds of good make the human being good, but in a different way: one makes him good in a relative manner and the other, shall we say, in an absolute manner. To be good as a pianist or as a cobbler, if that is what one does, is doubtless a form of goodness, but a lower level of being merely good, a good person. These types of good are not incompatible, but they pertain to different classes of good, of different degree or intensity. The technique or art is the ability to do good in accordance with the first type, while virtue is the capacity to do good in line with the second kind.

In absolute terms, ethical good considered to be human good does not mean that man can be completely good, but rather that the good referred to is what makes the person "simply" good, not simply "good for something". To be good for something, or to be good at something, is a relative sort of goodness, because it is somewhat restricted and medial: to be a good pianist means to be good at playing the piano, that is "to be good at" doing that well. On the other hand, ethical good bestows goodness on the endowed person, in the sense that it makes him good "as a person", in relation to which being a good pianist evokes an undoubtedly restricted meaning, although it remains fully compatible.

1.8   Being Good and Doing Good

Ethical good does not exclude other human good such as pleasure or ability. Having a good time or being useful is undoubtedly good—rather more valuable than its opposite—but they are not the highest form of human good. Man may aspire not only to being well or to doing things well but also—even through those "medial" goods—to be good, which has a deeper practical meaning.

Moral enhancement does not only consist of being subject to a series of rules of conduct. In addition to the rules, it means being furnished with virtues which enable us to achieve major human good. The synergy between those three elements—rules, virtues, and goods—is vital to comprehend the specific dynamism of ethical life.

Mere subjugation to rules, without taking into account the moral enhancement to which the rules apply, promotes puritan attitudes. Nevertheless, paying close attention to virtue, which is an attitude of the subject—and in this sense, rather *subjective*—while disregarding the objective goods implied in the case of each praxis would easily lead us to arrogantly think that we are good no matter what we do, in other words, if we make the effort independently of what we may do, be it good or bad. Such reasoning ignores the fact that an individual becomes ethically good and improves his moral capacity (strength, *vis*) according to how he places it at the disposal of the good in question. Finally, it would also be mistaken to think that the moral good can be achieved without conforming to certain principles or laws, or without generating a stable subjective disposition towards it.

It is not enough to know moral law and, truth to tell, this remains unknown as long as the moral enhancement that it dictates has not been attained. Apropos moral training, it is not only important to avoid the laxness concerning the person who is allergic to all rules, but also to avoid the rigidity of one who scrupulously adheres to them. A person becomes good by doing good, not by obeying rules. Moral good is practical and can only be included in practice if it becomes second nature, if it becomes an acquired habit which causes actions to surface in a natural way, actions which are neither ad hoc nor disjoint, but rather articulated through constant practice, adding stability, reliability, and coherence to behaviour.

This requires adapting life through stable consistent behaviours, in such a manner that it is directed, on a long-term basis, towards what contributes to the fullness of human life, or that life can redirect itself without too much difficulty when that direction bends or is thrown off course.

1.9   Habits Make Human Existence Habitable

The fact that our behaviour can reflect our being—that we can behave *humanely*—is not a "given", simply because we are human. Although irrational animals or plants always behave in accordance with their nature, man can nevertheless agree or disagree with his being; he can be his own "friend" or enemy; after all, through his actions, he can affirm or deny what he is. In this respect, Pindar's old motto: "Become how you are", considered by classic tradition to sum up ethical undertaking, makes sense. Besides, there is no other way to achieve this except freely and proactively, by proposing to do so. That refers to adjusting one's behaviour with the help of guidelines that each person has to propose to draw up, because they are not provided beforehand, at least as regards those behavioural aspects which are more specifically and uniquely human.

The mentioned "adjustment" or conditioning is the subject matter of ethics. In Greek, one of the meanings of the term *ethos* is precisely the following: house, dwelling, patria, the place where I live and feel at home, being in my place. Moral habits make up the habitability—*habitaculum*—of existence itself. A person with no habits is a "stranger" unto himself. Whoever lacks a stable and coherent guide concerning thinking and acting will find it difficult to recognise himself by means

of what he does or thinks. If our life consists of improvisation, and twists and turns—today life has brought me to this point, tomorrow who knows where it will take me—we cannot be friends to ourselves because we would not be "reliable".

Unquestionably, it is impossible to foresee the path life may follow, down to the very last detail. "Critical" moments can cause the convictions we consider to be firmly rooted to come tumbling down. If we cannot trust minimally in what we will be and do, we will be unable to undertake any kind of large-scale project, unable to make promises and commitments. This accurately sums up the most wretched aspect of the humans that entails the incapacity to engage in friendship, characterised by the basic ingredient of trust or reliability. We cannot have friends if, above all, we cannot be friends to ourselves.

In line with classic—and Christian—tradition, virtue is a practical way of attaining self-fulfilment, of acquiring the fulfilment life makes possible to obtain, within the limitations of the human condition. Indeed, it is the way human growth occurs.

Partially being the master of one's self implies not being a puppet in the hands of blind destiny or subject to our surrounding circumstances. It entails not being a slave to trends or to "corrections" which happen to be in vogue, to certain lifestyles which at times appear innovative and reflective of a strong personality, but which can also often be attributed to "industrial design".

Virtue reinforces personality. It bears no relation to that namby-pamby, prudish image of spinelessness and legalism with which it is sometimes portrayed. Quite the opposite: virtue enables one to embark on projects, to undertake large-scale tasks *(aggredi)* and, above all, to "keep a stiff upper lip" when difficulties arise *(sustinere).* Virtue means excellence and capacity, open-mindedness, and large-scale deeds.

Since they are procedural, virtuous habits lend coherence to what we do and think, and they point us in our chosen direction. The said coherence is not at all related to anything which may be likened to stereotyped uniformity. Habits are not principles of fixed behaviour, but rather fixed principles—fixed—of behaviour which is not fixed, comprehensive, and varied. For example, a person who is in the habit of studying does not always do the same thing; depending on the subject, and perhaps on other more circumstantial factors, at times there will a need to use memory more, at other times one's imagination, in other cases there will be more development concerning the individual's capacity for analysis, synthesis, or analogical intelligence when comparing the subject matter under study with other matters, or considering the diverse approaches possible with the same goal, etc. But in any case—and this is what the corresponding ability consists of—he will carry out the task by paying attention and applying himself carefully, conscientiously *(studium).* This knack for "buckling down", paying attention to what one is doing at a given moment, is what unifies everything done by a person endowed with this virtue, known as *studiositas.*

On the other hand, virtuous habits, provided they are virtuous, have an internal structure which also involves sentiments. An indication of maturity is the way in which one manages to *accommodate* themselves to certain practices, that is, adjust oneself to said practices. According to Aristotle, a good education and good laws, internalised in the form of virtues, contribute to a person's moral improvement so

that what is good appears good and what is bad seems bad to the person in question. To be attracted to what is appealing—what is noble, true, just, beautiful—and to loathe that which is disgusting—ignoble, unworthy, unjust, false—denotes moral and affective maturity. This description brilliantly portrays what being a good person means and at the same time embodies the central aim of education: to get people to have sentiments that align with reality.

Having said that—and herein lies a significant paradox—when a person is capable of stabilising their intellectual and moral behaviour in such a way that they manage to extract what is really valuable, when they are capable of doing what they understand, what they have to do because it is good, and they *feel this as their own*, that person is at their own disposal and can then place themselves at other people's disposal. Accepting self-ownership in the manner it has been done until now, that is, be able to freely have one's own life at their disposal, and to enrich it with the most profound *having*, from the anthropological and ethical standpoint, is achieved only when one is prepared to "dispossess" oneself to the benefit of others. Saint Augustin expressed it in an emblematic manner: my love is my weight *(amor meus, pondus meum)*.

What is not given is lost, and this clearly points to a deep paradox. Fulfilment or the vital achievement of the human being is proportional to his capacity for good. Genuine human wealth is that which man accrues and which enables him to shed his selfishness and immerse himself in a major project for the benefit of others.

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Chapter 2
The Role of Desire in Action

Miquel Bastons

Abstract In this chapter, the role of desire in action and the relationship between rationality and desire is reviewed. We focus on two approaches: the Aristotelian, which integrates desire into action establishing a "virtuous interaction" between rationality and desire, and the Kantian, which changes the classical understanding and presents this relationship in terms of "subordination" of one (the desire) to the other (the reason). Such a comparison provides a vision of the change produced from the classical to the modern understanding of the role of desire in action and also allows us to clarify relevant questions involved in ethics, specially the interaction between rationality and affectivity in decision-making.

Keywords Desire · Rationality · Decision · Action · Aristotle's ethic · Kantian ethics

Abbreviations

EE	Eudemian ethics
Grundlegung	Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten
Kr. p. V.	Kritik der praktischen Vernunft
Kr. r. V.	Kritik der reinen Vernunft
Metaph	Metaphysics
NE	Nicomachean ethics
OS	On the soul
TR	The republic

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2.1 Unity of Knowing, Wanting and Doing. Aristotelian Approach

2.1.1 Knowing and Doing

In the myth of *Symposium* (20la 202e), Plato presents an image of the human being as a reality divided between overabundance and self-sufficiency of the life of knowledge (who does not desire or need anything (Aristotle, *OS* 432 b 26–29), and indigence which forces him to desire, to go beyond himself. Man is a needing and indigent being, who shares in wealth and grandeur, and a material being, who shares in the spiritual. The attitude to this situation may be limited to resigned recognition of the "divided" nature of human reality or, as Aristotle did, seek how these different dimensions are integrated into the unity of man. Aristotle said that the unity of the human being is not a given, but it must be made. In fact, this is what the success of human life comprises: the correct combination of knowing, desiring and doing.

Aristotle began correcting Plato, indicating that the good of the human being is not an "idea", as he maintained (*TR*, IV, VII). To Aristotle, good is an objective, a "purpose" (*telos*), and, as such, something *practical* (*NE* 1097 a 18–24; Gauthier and Jolif 1970; Bastons 2017). Moreover, if it does not exist outside doing it, nor is it known if not by "doing it". This introduces a significant reservation about the effectiveness of the "pure theory" for the success of human life. Knowing about good is not contemplating it theoretically, but doing it. Contemplating it does not make us good, because it is as if, in an illness, someone carefully listen to the doctor's instructions, but does not put them into practice (*NE* 1105 b 12–18).

It is not about reducing or limiting the importance of theoretical knowledge, but rather an "expansion" of knowing: recognising the limits of reason in theoretical use is what opens the way to practical knowledge. This is the meaning of the enigmatic phrase according to which *"to know what has to be done, we have to do what we want to know" (NE* 1103 a 33–35). *The practical nature of the purpose of the human being leads to a* knowing-doing compromise in which knowing is made practical and doing is made wise. Therefore, the development of the human being is not either knowing, or merely acting, but "knowing how to act". This "knowing how to behave" is what the Greek authors called "*praxis*".

2.1.2 Knowing and Wanting

"Praxis" is a space of interaction between knowing and doing. How are both related to each other? This is where desire comes into play and where two basic intellectual approaches are presented.

An initial approach is that of Plato, one of the first philosophers to present an opinion in this respect. He said that the relationship between theoretical knowledge

and action is defined by the "*immediately*" operative nature of the theory (Spaemann 1977). As we will see later, Kant proposes the same type of relationship. Human action is the direct "application" of rationality.

The criterion of "direct application *knowing-acting*" is not assumed by Aristotle. Precisely, the consideration of good as *practical good* led him to the belief that the theory cannot be *immediately* practical, but that desire must come into play (in the same way that desire cannot be intelligent if not connected to rational knowledge). His position could be expressed by saying that *to bring an idea into practice, it is necessary not only to know it, but also to want it.* The purpose of life is not known; above all, it is "desired" (MacIntyre 1984). In the end, it involves emotion. "Knowing how to act" is not an "application" of one to the other, but rather a game of reciprocal interaction between three concepts: knowing, wanting and doing.

The reason for desire coming into play is that the theory is incapable of identifying purposes: "In fact, the purpose of theoretical intellect is not to contemplate anything that has to be put to practice or to make any statement about what has to be sought or fled from" (*OS* 432 b 26–29; Inciarte 1974). It can be said that to want something you need to know it, but to know it "in practice", you need to want it. The human faculty that identifies purposes is not the theoretical intellect, but the desire (*orexis*) (*NE* 1111 b 26; 1113 a 14; *OS* 433a 18–20; see also Ruggiu 1973). Therefore, no theoretical knowledge can become practice "directly", but by linking it with desire, which is what is directly connected to a purpose. And, therefore, reason could be involved for practical purposes, but at this time it is no longer theoretical, but is "*practical knowledge*" (*OS* 433 a 14–16; Muller 1982). This *knowing-wanting* connection occurs in the decision. By deciding, theoretical knowledge, which in itself is not practical, becomes practical, and the will, the tendency, which is not in itself intelligent, becomes intelligent. Therefore, Aristotle defines the decision as *desirous intelligence or intelligent desire* (*NE* 1139 b 1–6; Inciarte 1974).

The Aristotelian position is not dominated by suspicion about interests, inclinations and emotion, but rather by the aspiration to take advantage of them to achieve the purposes we set ourselves (Inciarte 1974). This is very different to what, as we will see, occurs in the Kantian approach, in which they fall under the suspicion of egoism and are seen as an "obstacle" to achieving authentic freedom (which is only rational). Aristotle does not reject interests, desires and human emotion because, although they may be an obstacle to achieving a moral life, he is convinced it is possible to rectify them, to redirect to what is truly interesting.

A consequence of the understanding of conduct as "direct application" of knowledge is its "technification" (and also that of organisations). In technical production, in fact, the purpose is "prior data", something given that is taken as a starting point, but is excluded from the decision. The technical supposedly only concerns itself with how to achieve it, that is, the means; therefore, it can be resolved in terms of pure rationality: the technical is knowing how to achieve an objective given (Arregui 1980), without questioning the good or bad of such an objective. However, when it is not about the construction of an artefact, but the success and development of one's own life (that is not an artefact), then identification of the purpose is not something

given, but forms part of the decision problem. For this reason, Aristotle puts as much or more emphasis on distinguishing moral behaviour from pure theory as in distinguishing it from a technique (Gadamer 1965, 1974). In fact, to succeed in life it is not sufficient to know, but it is also necessary to be right about the purpose and that no longer depends on reason, but on emotions, inclinations and desires, since it is desire which identifies purposes *as purposes.*

According to a technical paradigm, being right about behaviour depends only on intellectual capacity. Conversely, for Aristotle, this is not sufficient, because rectitude of desire is also necessary in determining personal purposes, that is, moral virtue (*NE* 1144 a 6–9; MacIntyre 1984). To him therefore only the decision is morally good. The choice, as was previously said, is "desirous intelligence or intelligent desire". Therefore, a decision is morally correct if intelligence (what is known) and desire (what is wanted) are correct (*NE* 1145 a 4–6; 1139 20–30). A *correct* decision requires prudence and moral rectitude (*NE* 1144 b 30–32; Kenny 1978).

2.1.3   Knowing, Wanting and Doing

Goods, human purposes, are above all something that is wanted, something of interest (*NE* 1155 b 20–26). Aristotelian ethics is far from a purely "rational" logic that is directly imposed, with no concession to emotions, based on suspicion and fear of desires, in which the defence of the power of "the rational" hides the inability to govern them (as seen in Kant). Nor is it hedonistic ethics. Aristotelian ethics is led by a lesser fear of desires and inclinations and, paradoxically, greater confidence in the capacity of reason. Aristotle defends the role of desire and will in action, almost until the limit of relativism, when he asserts that good is that which each one feels is such according to their interests.

Good is what is wanted; therefore, it is always known subjectively. However, this does not mean that an objective mode does not "exist". "Absolutely and truthfully good is subject to the will, but for each person what they see as such" (*NE* 1113 a 21–25). Aristotle is not a relativist, but overcomes relativism on its own ground by claiming the value of objectivity within the scope of subjectivity: *it is precisely necessary that what is of subjective interest is what is of objective interest.* That what "seems" good to one is in accordance with what is really good depends on the formation of interest, that is, a moral virtue (*EE* 1237 a 10–18). Human good is not something external obeyed due to obligation, but something internal that is wanted (Inciarte 1974). Moral standards do not *overcome*, but rather they *convince.*

The knowledge of good depends on what personal desires make "appear" to be good but not for this reason does it need to be only "pure appearance", because what interests make appear to be good may be what "is" authentically good. In fact, it is not a matter of "objective" knowledge, like theory. It is "subjective" knowledge, but not for this reason should it be less truthful. There are different types of knowledge

and different forms of truth. This is about knowledge and *practical truth* (*NE* 1139 to 26; Roca 2007).

We know what we want and know if we really want to. Practical knowledge is not objective and disinterested, like theory, but, depending on the will, is subjective and self-interested. But this does not mean that it may not be true, because the will may be *subjectively* interested in the more interesting *objectively.* That what "appears to everyone to be good is what is effectively good or a mere appearance depends on the virtue—moral quality—of desire". Therefore, Aristotle does not propose as a rule of morality an objective standard, but rather a "subject", a "model", and this model is the "good man" (*spoudaios*). Good is what makes a *good man*, he who "judges well all things and in all of them the truth is shown to him" (*NE* 1113a 24–25; 1113a 28–35; 1106b 36–1107a 2; 1176b 25). A virtuous man sees as good what in truth is good; conversely, he sees anything as bad. As a result of the rectitude of his desires, a good man sees as good what in reality is good. This "appearance" is as personal and subjective as that of others, but it has much more value than that of others, because truth "is shown" in it. Therefore, Aristotle puts it forward as a model for others. Not because he is *wiser*, but because he is *better* (*NE* 1103 a 6–10).

Aristotle makes a complete turnaround in his apparent relativism, defending the value of truth as "*aletheia*" in the very field of appearance: an appearance in which truth appears. This is an example of the use of the concept of truth in the most original sense of "disclosure" of the real, as was proposed in particular in Heidegger (1996). This means that the values of truth among which practical knowledge moves are not so much those of truth or falsehood, but those of presence or absence, *unconcealedness* of good or *complete concealedness* (Gadamer 1965).

Good is seen or not seen in absolute terms. The immoral man remains blind to the true good. What he sees as good is a simple misleading appearance, a fictional good. Conversely, the appearance of the good man "shows" what is truthfully good.

Aristotle does not accept homogeneity of opinions with respect to practical things. Although concerning personal opinions, they do not all have the same value. Those of the wise man are more "realistic" than the others. Realistic does not here in truth mean "mere appearance", but that the truth "is manifested" in them truthfully. For this reason, they have more value. And this value does not come to them for being wiser than others, but for being more good (*Metaph* 1010b 11–14; *NE* 1094 b 34–1095 a 3; 1113 a 25–27; 1113 a 30–35; *EE* 1236a; 1237a 5; Bien 1974). The opinion of a *good man*, his wisdom, is not based on logical opinions, but on an aesthetic opinion (Gadamer 1965), about *good taste*: he knows how to find what is truly pleasant.

Aesthetically successful actions are not only good, but are also pleasant (*NE* 1176, a 15–20; 1099 a 20–25). The reference to purposes is made through taste, which is in no way something arbitrary and whimsical or, at least, does not necessarily have to be, but can be trained. *Taste* becomes something arbitrary if it is immoral because, in this case, what presents as good—that which is liked—is not good, but an appearance. For Aristotle this is not the case. Taste is the means of access to a purpose, which will be good if he is good and upright, and bad if he is

bad, devious. Corrupted taste can be fickle, but that of the good man is not, as he has been able to train it to direct it to what is truly good.

2.2 Knowing Without Wanting. The Kantian Approach

2.2.1 Knowing Without Doing

Like Aristotle, Kant has a theory of action and a doctrine on the role of desire. But his approach, giving rise to many of the ideas making up the theory of action and modern ethics, is very different from Aristotle's, and he has a very different conception of the role of desire. To begin, action is no longer understood as a "meeting point" between reason (self-sufficient) and the physical nature of the human being (*needer*), as Aristotle saw it. Practical activity is now perceived on the basis of an irreconcilable separation between the rational and the material. The "practical", he says, is that which is possible by means of freedom (*Kr. r. V.,* A 800, B 828),[1] and freedom presupposes the separation of the human being as an empirical *phenomenon*—physical nature—and as *noumenon*—pure rationality. In fact, every *phenomenon*, when subject to the formal conditions of space and time, is determined by mechanical causality. There is no freedom there. According to Kant, it is only possible to continue talking about freedom if a differentiation is made between the existence of a thing as *observable phenomenon* and its existence as *thing in itself* (*Ding an sich*), which is not observable. Freedom can be attributed only to the latter (*Kr. r. V.,* A 532–558, B 560–586; A 798, B 826; *Kr. p. V.*, V, 48–49, 94–98; V, 93–94).

Through this, the internal unity of human activity proposed by Aristotle in his doctrine of action is broken down and replaced by a categorical separation between the *rational* and the *natural*, the foundations of the *Critique*, which is based on a process of gradual liberation of the rational from nature.

The "process of liberation" of reason begins in *Critique of Pure Reason* with the well-known *Copernican turn*, and makes it possible for reason to be liberated from the determinations of physical nature, with the laws of nature subject to it and not the reverse. By means of the "liberating action", reason is liberated from nature, to gradually take an interest in itself. However, this "interest of reason" (*lnteresse der Vernunft*) cannot be satisfied fully in the theoretical Critique, because in its theoretical use reason still has a compulsory reference to empirical data (*Kr. r. V.,* B XVI-XVII; A 409, A 462, B 490; A 680, B 708; Llano 1973). In practical philosophy, in *Critique of Practical Reason*, all the claims of Pure Reason are expanded and realised. In it, the process of liberation of reason culminates in a full rationalisation of freedom (Bastons 1989).

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[1]The numbers for Kant quotations correspond to the work, volume and page, respectively, of the Berlin Academy edition.

Kant coincides with Aristotelian ethics by situating action within the sphere of freedom. However, the exercise of freedom is not a form of *connecting* reason to nature, but a "liberation" of one from the other. And "action" consists of this *process of liberation*, idea expanded on later in contemporary ethics, for example in the thinking of Habermas (1968). Nature, determined mechanically, is seen as a limitation on realisation of the autonomy of reason, which should be free of any commitment to it to guarantee its autonomy; in the *Critique of Practical Reason* this autonomy becomes absolute freedom of reason. When Kant talks of *praxis*, he does so in a different way from Aristotle. *Praxis* is now the action of liberating reason (Zubiri 1980).

2.2.2 Doing Without Wanting

For Aristotle, practical reason is distinguished from the theoretical due to its *connection* with desire. For Kant, reason becomes practical when freedom is exercised, which is not complete in its *scientific use*, but is completed in *moral use,* where reason does not depend on nor is it determined by anything (*Kr. r. V.*, A 548, B 576).

Kant's practical philosophy is a defence of the exclusivity of the rational in determining action. Reason is *immediately practical*; it alone is the cause of free action (*Kr. p. V.*, V, 31–32; *Kr. p. V.,* V, 25). Desire, or tendencies, will lose relevance and meaning in the moral realisation of the human being until, in the end, the concept of desire is without content.

In the discussion of the *Third Antimony of Pure Reason*, he seeks a place for will between the rational and nature, a *tertium quid*, between the two. For Kant, moral freedom and physical need may be compatible, because a single effect, like giving charity to a poor person, can be explained in terms of *phenomena* based on the natural mechanism and *intelligibly* based on the free causality of reason. A single act can have an unconditional and free cause, the causality of reason, with respect to the effect of an intelligent being and, at the same time, have a conditional and necessary cause, with respect to the effect of a sequence of empirical phenomena. According to him, there is nothing stopping a cause of phenomenon effects from existing, without it being phenomena-based, but rather intelligible. Thus, a certain *empirical effectiveness* of reason can be admitted, and Kant refers to this, calling it *will*. Will is apparently between the intelligible and the empirical or, as he says in *Grundlegung* (IV, 400), a *midpoint* (*mitten*) between the a priori and the a posteriori.

The question is knowing what it means to be "in the middle" of the rational and the natural while generally, taking into account the clear separation established between them, there is nothing. Kant, who realised that he could not continue upholding this ambiguity, tries again in *Critique of Practical Reason* to give reality to the concept of will (which has become empty). It is necessary to distinguish in man an inferior desire faculty that he shares with animals and a superior desire faculty that is specific to man and belongs to him in that he is a rational being. The

latter could be will (*Kr. p. V.,* V. 22–23; Rousset 1967). This could be subscribed by Thomas of Aquinas, who already distinguished between *voluntas ut natura* (spontaneous natural desire) and *voluntas ut ratio* (rational desire). However, Kant ends up accepting the logic of strict separation between reason and nature on which his ethics is based: will is the superior desire faculty but, he adds, the superior desire faculty is reason, in that it itself determines the action (*Kr. p. V.* , V, 25). In the end, will is no more than reason.

In Aristotelian philosophy, the play between intellect and desire made freedom possible but, with this, also limited it. By breaking with this dialogue, dividing the person and separating the rational from the natural, Kant logically loses the basis of the freedom in nature but, conversely, he can escape from the limitations the latter imposes. Thus, reason has no limits. It is absolutely free and autonomous and only it underpins and determines its freedom, as "*faculty of absolute spontaneity*" (*Kr. p. V.,* V, 48). Therefore, Kant's theory of action is also, like Aristotle's, a response to the paradoxical division of the human being between the dignity of the rational and the indigence of the natural; however, in this it makes this division a foundation on the basis of which transcendental philosophy begins a process of gradual *liberation* of reason from nature and which culminates in a complete *rationalisation* of freedom. Action is only reason and nothing to do with desire.

Yet residues of what Kant has discussed concerning will still remain in his work. They are included in what he calls "*pathological will*" (and which must be distinguished from *rational desire).* *Pathological will* is that which cannot be determined other than by sensitive stimuli. Kant also calls it *animal desire (arbitrium brutum). Free desire* (arbitrium liberum) is, conversely, independent of such stimuli, and is only determined by reason. Only the latter is *practical (Kr. r. V.,* A 802, B 830).

Pathological will is will as desire, to which an important role is assigned in the traditional theory of action because it has the responsibility of *identifying* the purposes. As a result of the mediation with *this desire,* reason becomes practical and desire becomes rational. However, while reason is practical *immediately*, no space is left for this desire (*Grundlegung*, IV, 394). This is what lies beneath the distinction between "autonomy" and "heteronomy of will", which has its roots in the categorical division in the human being between physical nature and reason: "The sensitive nature of rational beings in general is the existence of them under empirically conditioned laws, therefore, heteronomy for reason. The oversensitive nature of these same beings is, conversely, their existence according to laws that are independent of any empirical condition, therefore, they belong to the autonomy of pure reason" (*Kr. p. V.,* 74–75).

The desired good, the personal purpose, which was the origin of moral action in classical philosophy, is outside morality in Kant; it loses moral value, because it is something material or empirical, which makes will heteronymous (Kr. p. V., 38, 58). Naturally, once the material is excluded—the empirical purpose—it must be said that the determination of action is simply formal. But, in what form? Well, obviously, the form of reason. And what is the form of reason? The form of reason is *universality. Free* reason has no limit whatsoever; it extends to everything or, in other words, its "law" is *universality* (*Kr. p. V.*, V, 27).

To be free, it is only necessary that the action standard can be *universal*. This is the principle of moral behaviour, what Kant calls "categorical imperative": "*acts in such a way that the maxim of your behaviour can be converted into universal law*" (*Grundlegung*, IV, 402; *Kr. p. V.*, V, 30). If a universal form can be given to action, then the action-rationality connection and the moral value of action are guaranteed. Reason becomes *law* immediately (*Unmittelbar gesetzgebend*) (*Kr. p. V.*, V, 3; Rousset 1967). The recourse to universality as common form of reason and action means that Kant can ensure the connection between the two and the fact that one has a practical bent and the other a rational bent in a philosophy in which tendencies have disappeared, which was what, in classical practical philosophy, held this mission.

However, some problems begin to appear. The possible connection of the action with moral law (thanks to universality) is assured, but the connection of universal law with the individual person is not as secure, because it is not certain that the universal law of reason will be taken as individual rule of action. The difficulty in connecting the universal and the private appears here. For Aristotle it was much easier to resolve this question. The connection of reason and choice makes the connection between wanting (individual) and knowing (universal) possible.

However, when will and desire disappear, the connection between the universal and individual behaviour—the question of *internalising* a moral/general law— becomes complicated. *Why must I be subject to a general law?* Kant's response is as follows: I am not subject to the universal law for any interest, I am subject due to *duty*. "An action carried out due to duty has its moral value, not in the purpose to be sought by means of it, but in the maxim for which it has been resolved; it does not therefore depend on the reality of the object of the action, but merely the principle of wanting, according to which the action has taken place, disregarding all the objects of the faculty of desire" (*Grundlegung*, IV, 399–400; Cf. *Kr. r. V.*, A 547–548, B 575–576). The division between desire and the rational relentlessly continues to impose its logic.

Kant cannot disregard a supposition that lies belief his theory of action and makes him suspect that any personal interest is devious, egoist or, as he says, *love of oneself* (*Eigenliebe*). The individual and personal wanting is always a "wanting for me", desire is irremediably devious and corrupt, and its interest is in all cases an "interest for me" and, as such, a form of simple and vulgar egoism (*Solipsismus*) (*Kr. p. V.*, Y, 73). Taking desire for principle of the action, what Kant also calls "principle of happiness", is contrary to morality (*Kr. p. V.*, V, 35), given that happiness is nothing other than "the satisfaction of all our desires" (*Kr. r. V.*, A 806, B 834; *Grundlegung*, IV, 399, 405; *Kr. p. V.*, V, 73, 124).

There is still another consequence of the condemnation of desire in Kantian ethics. In an ethical model, as the rectitude of action depends on the rectitude of knowledge, which is caution, and the rectitude of will, which is moral virtue, it is assumed that it is not possible to be cautious without moral virtue or to be virtuous without caution. If caution is disconnected from moral virtue (from desire), then it is nothing other than simple ability to know how to achieve a purpose proposed outside of good or bad; that is, caution is nothing other than *guile*. What we normally call

caution is nothing more than guile or "intellectual astuteness" (*Geschiclichkeit*) (*Grundlegung*. IV, 415–416; *Kr. r. V.*, A 806, B 834; A 823, B 851; *Kr. p. V.*, V, 20, 25, 41).

It is a theory of human action formulated under the fear of inclinations and natural and personal interests of man in which the exaggerated dominance of reason hides its inability to govern them and direct them: how will can be twisted; morality does not consist of rectifying it, but eliminating it. Paradoxically, the Aristotelian position shows less fear of reflexivity of the will and greater confidence in the capacity of reason.

For Aristotle, the will can and must be trained and this is what justifies confidence in it. It is Kant who does not trust training of the will. A theory of action that accepts the will permits what, in comparison with Kant, is a naive daringness: propose as *moral standard* to an individual, to the *good man*, because, despite being an individual and acting according to what "appears" good to him, in this "appearing" the truth emerges, precisely due to the training of his interests. His is a personal but *true opinion.* Aristotle thus knows how to defend the presence of truth. For Kant, the moral standard is not a *good man*, but the universal and necessary *categorical imperative.* The standard is not individual, but universal, and it does not connect individual desire with the universal law, but it imposes the universal on the individual: *it acts in such a way that the maxim of your behaviour can become a universal law.* What makes a standard *moral* is its potential universality. Such potential universality as a criterion of morality will last in the ideas of Habermas' "free speech community" or Rawls' "idea of justice", for example.

By training his tendencies, a good man knows how to take an interest in what is truly interesting and find agreeable what is objectively agreeable. And his knowing is not so much underpinned by a logical opinion, but by an aesthetic opinion, about "good taste": he is interested in what is really interesting. Kant also calls on a sentiment as a link uniting the individual with the law in an attempt to narrow the distance opened between them. But this sentiment is not taste, but *respect* (*Achtung*) (*Kr. p. V.*, V, 71). What is this respect? Well it is nothing more than the effect on an individual of being subject to the universal law. The universal law does not have to cause liking, but respect, even fear (*Kr. p. V.*, V, 75). *Respect* is the effect of annihilation of desire.

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Chapter 3
Education of Desire for Flourishing

Magdalena Bosch

Abstract This chapter analyses the key points of an interiorised moral education which is more incisive than a theoretical education or one based on norms, or only focused on training the behaviour.

In recent years, remarkable works about emotional intelligence and character education have been disseminated and have significantly improved our contemporary understanding of moral education. However, the challenge of internalised morality remains. Something else is still needed: a moral education from the inner subject, an education that teaches all agents to tend towards the good from a basis of freedom and enjoyment.

Keywords Desire · Education of desire · Moral education · Flourishing · Ethics

3.1 The Myth of Reason vs. Passion

For centuries, we have considered that the greatest difficulty in moral education is the conflict between reason and passion: reason wants something that passion does not. As a result, moral education has focused on intellectual and cognitive education but has neglected emotional education. In the twenty-first century, we have seen great advancements in regard to the knowledge of emotions and to various types of desire. Now, like Aristotle, we are able to see that true moral conflict does not take place between reason and passion, but between two different ways of wanting: the will, a desire linked to understanding, and another, more instinctive type of desire, that is not directly linked to reason.

This allows us to make possible the internal harmony of a virtuous agent. While we consider that reason is opposed to passion, and while we believe that passion decides action and reason does not, we are not able to establish internal dialogue for

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aiming at the good. There is no possible communication between reason (rational knowledge) and passion (emotional desire). Instead, when we discover that internal opposition between both actually creates a tension between rational and non-rational desire, we are able to try a dialogue between the two because they are both a way of desiring.

Understanding and reason are cognitive, while the will is appetitive as well as rational not in the sense that it is a function of reason, but because it is linked to reason. The intellectualist interpretation of the Aristotelian ethic has obscured this aspect and has obviated the desiderative dimension of the intellectual powers. Again, we must not restrict the intellective towards functions that pertain exclusively to understanding but to recognise the various functions and powers with which it is associated.

A different kind of desire corresponds to each type of knowledge:

> In addition to these there is the part capable of desire, which is held to be different from all in definition and potentiality. And it would surely be absurd to split this up; for in the part that can reason (*en to logistiko*), there will be wishing (*boulesis*), and in the irrational part (*en to alogo*) [there will be] wanting and passion (*epithumia kai* or *thymos*); so if the soul is tripartite, there will be desire in each (*ei de tria e psique, en ekasto estai orexis*)· (Aristotle 1988)

Therefore, ethical learning requires integrating knowledge and reasoning with the different types of desire, so that the behaviour could be harmoniously oriented towards the good.

However, the education regarding ethical conduct demands as a first condition the formation of moral judgement. This is a theoretical education, which enables the subject to make practical judgements. Practical judgement, for its most complete learning, requires training and experience because individuals must adapt to specific circumstances that qualify theory and introduce variations in criteria. Judgement education belongs to the field of knowledge, be it theoretical or practical. But moral education loses effectiveness if it remains only in the realm of knowledge. It must involve the will and the desire to reach the personal and internal level. In order to do good deeds, both correct judgement and righteous desire must concur.

Both conditions—correct knowledge and right desire—are necessary for personal involvement. Authors who work in virtue ethics see that education achieves moral commitment as valued for itself: "(...) virtue ethics has clear advantages over the theoretical bases of rival accounts of moral education (...) it is reasonable to suggest that insofar as it is generally proper to construe education as a matter of initiating young people into a recognition of the intrinsic rather than merely extrinsic or instrumental significance of any form of knowledge, experience or understanding—as a highly influential modern movement in educational philosophy has claimed (Peters 1966)—it should be a crucial aim of moral education to assist young people to an appreciation of the value for its own sake of moral engagement" (Carr and Steutel 1999). Only the integration of desire and knowledge makes possible the righteous desire, which is oriented towards good because it understands that it is good.

3.2 A New Harmonic Education

But the question is not only to understand what is good. The purpose of education of desire for human flourishing is indeed novel because it addresses all types of desire and seeks their integration. Such integration is not an education of the will nor an education of affectivity. It is an education that pretends to be inclusive of all forms of desire: those that are linked to reason and those that are not.

It has long been evident that rules are not sufficient for moral education, although the preference for norms has remained since Kant, Durkheim and even Piaget. Piaget's starting hypothesis is that "all morality consists in a system of rules, and the essence of morality is to be sought in the respect which the individual acquires for these rules". Piaget sees this point as solidly established by Kant and shared by the Durkheimians; disagreements "appear only when they try to explain how consciousness achieves respect for those rules" (Piaget 1971; Rubio Carracedo 1996). Compliance with standards is based on authority and duty. Reason understands the established duty, and the will abides by it. The faculties involved are exclusively rational and neglect the attention that emotions deserve.

In recent decades, Goleman has highlighted the negligence that emotions have experienced for centuries. In addition, he has provided arguments for their re-evaluation (Goleman 1998, 2011) He has offered a point of reference for numerous authors in different areas such as psychology, philosophy, education. Further, the literature on emotions has multiplied. However, in the last 20 years, studies on the role of reason and other desires that are not specifically emotional have decreased. Also the concern of integrating reason, will, emotions and understanding has been neglected. A new approach, which consists in harmonising all internal faculties involved in human action, is necessary. Both reason and desire must be integrated into the set of factors related to decision-making. If desires are neglected, moral education easily resorts to repression. Nor would it be a comprehensive moral education if it focused only on emotions; it would be a partial, biased, moral education.

A truly comprehensive moral education demands the aforementioned righteous desire, in which knowledge and will converge. However, this righteous desire is not enough, because still remains alone in the realm of rationality. Rational desire must be harmonised with other desires not associated with reason, which may even contradict it. But good, insofar as it is, is desirable. If something is good, the righteous desire must recognise it as such. Thus, some kind of conciliation with other types of desire can be achieved. This way of understanding moral education searches for internal harmony and it is based more on persuasion than on imposition. This internal complexity of the individual, which involves different ways of desiring, has an unavoidable consequence: that good has the capacity of rising joy. This is because every good action satisfies one kind of appetite, and since the agent has an internal unity, the joy of one faculty has an effect on other appetitive faculties. In this way, sensitive and intellective pleasure will be both enjoyed by just one agent. And intellective joy may be the way of persuading sensitive appetite.

However, what happens when the true good appears as very difficult or unattractive? This is a problem to be considered.

3.3   The Arduous Good

One of the most important problems in moral education is the arduous good. It means that something is good and the agent recognises it, but feels that it is too difficult to be done: "I want to do it" but I think it is too difficult, so "I don't feel like it".

On the one hand, the general opinion that the moral improvement requires effort. However, on the other hand, the effort is not enough to be morally excellent in a consistent and permanent way. Some internalisation and motivation comes from the inner will. If good behaviour usually needs an excessive effort, it means that the moral education is deficient. The effort has its own role on self-enhancing, but must not be the only or the principal way of moral improvement.

We assume three conditions to understand correctly the education of desire:

First, we consider that the problem we are analysing needs to be distinguished from any pathology or psychological conflict. The arduous good must be a difficulty which is proportional to reality. It presupposes a balanced personality in which emotions do not always follow reason spontaneously. Is not related to special trouble caused by a mental disease or non-common experiences.

Second assumption is that the understanding judges rightly about what is good. The difficulty we are analysing is not a theoretical one and does not come from a mistake on judging. On the contrary, it assumes that the understanding recognises as a good what is truly a good.

Third, we also assume that the will usually desires what the reason shows as a good. On the contrary, it would be another problem: a lack of consistency between reason and will. This is not really frequent. It would be quite shaking if we say "I know it is good, but I don't want to do it" or "I know it is evil, but I want to do it". Or even "I don't care if it is good or bad". This would be a problem of bad will. The solution for this is reasoning about good and justice. This is a previous question to the education of desire for flourishing.

Most common questions are something like this: "I know it is good and I want to do it, but my feelings are against it". It could be because of fear, pride, sloth...In practice, what is evil could appear together with some concrete elements that are pleasant. And, similarly, good actions could appear with some non-attractive features.

Arduous good is recognised as such good by the intelligence, but emotions are not in accordance with it. The real conflict is not between attractive evil and boring good, but between good for reason and bad for emotions. Take a simple example: I know that I must go to the gym; I know it is good for my health. But I am really lazy.

There is no conflict between good and evil; but it's just that what appears as good to my intellective faculties appears as difficult or non-attractive to my emotions.

Emotions do not react to the imperative of intelligence, but to the representations of imagination. Inner images of actions make passions in order to tend to something, or to escape from it. This is why they are not always in harmony with reason and will. True education of desire consists in offering the analysis, narrative and images, as clear as possible, in order to make the internal representation easy, in accordance with real value of actions.

3.4 New Solution for Arduous Good

As we mentioned at the beginning, it is common to consider that the difficulty to do good lies in the conflict between reason and desire. We mentioned that it is rather an opposition between rational and non-rational desire: the practical difficulty of performing an action that, in theory, is convenient. In other words, desire is fragile, although the criterion is correct. This fragility makes the education of non-rational desires become necessary, so that they can reconcile with a correct criterion. Frequently, we try to resolve the fragility of desire and the difficulty of doing good deeds (of the arduous good) by promoting effort capacity or by focusing on training and formation of habits. Without neglecting these two effective educational models, something else is necessary: to educate desire.

If good actions are just the result of some imposition or coercion, they are not really the way towards flourishing. To develop a strong capacity of effort is positive and allows us to do things that are both valuable and difficult. Effort is the capacity of doing things that we really want to do but are not easy in practice. However, it is perfectly possible, and this is the point, that we want to do something but we do not wish it enough to push ourselves so much. The harder the good action, the stronger the willing is needed. The solution is not to try such an effort till exhaustion, but to learn better why this action is so valuable: to have clearer reasons for desiring it. Desire becomes especially important if we consider that it is the step prior to action and that it intervenes in a less tangible, but more crucial, way in decision and behaviour.

Similarly to effort, training the acquisition of good habits is also positive indeed but not enough. Trying to create habits without educating desire would leave individuals in a situation lacking moral quality and internal coherence: "...some people habitually act well in a situation although their motives are far from pure. They refrain from theft in order to avoid getting caught, stand fast in battle in order to impress their girlfriends, etc. Such people act better than the incontinent, although at least in one sense they are morally worse, for they lack the desire to perform virtuous acts for their own sake. Some of these people go on to become virtuous, I suppose, but others make no moral progress at all. They habitually act rightly, but for the wrong reasons. They show that habituation alone is insufficient to instil the desire to

perform virtuous acts for their own sake" (Curzer 2002). Moral education is not only about action and behaviour; it is also about motives and intention.

Another way of learning virtue is possible. We may rather look for persuasion instead of mere effort. The question is not to face the arduous good with all our strength, but to face it from the perspective in which it looks not so arduous. The clarity of the good is enough to minimalise the arduousness of it. This is desire education: to teach emotions and feelings in order to aim towards something which is worth it. And this requires working on an internal representation of the action and its consequences.

To understand the foundations for the education of desire, it is necessary to approach the subject in an interdisciplinary way, from a background of ethics, education, psychology and anthropology. It is fundamental to address the various aspects involved in wanting. Therefore, we need to identify the various types of desire and their own dynamics, to develop appropriate educational tools and programmes that apply such tools. This new way of educating consists in looking for internal harmony.

3.5   The Attractiveness of the Good

Moral education has to face a fallacy that is as old as human existence itself: the belief that good is or may be not completely unattractive. That is similar to say that good is not good enough to be desirable. In fact, experience shows that sometimes there is a lack of consistency between the goodness of an action and its lack of attractiveness, or between a bad action and its attractiveness. As a result, we look for resources which are alien to the action in order to conduct the subject to the correct action despite the lack of attractiveness.

> Good is always the goal; however, we do not always know how to identify it or distinguish it from something that seems good. If desires can be reconciled, and if reason (*logos*) and desire (*orexis*) are contradictory, it is because in "animals that can perceive time" that the intellect's foresight does not always opt for immediate satisfaction. (Margot 2008)

It would be more precise to speak about rational and non-rational desire. When the discord between both occurs, allusions to "duty", law and even punishment come, in order to achieve good behaviour. Of course, we cannot forget some occasions in which the references to these elements are unavoidable to maintain the social order or the family pace. But these must be the exception, not the purpose of moral education. Moral education may be focused in a more complete perspective. This requires being confident in the good. Why are we teaching something as good? Clearly because we believe that it is really good. We should never teach anything that we do not believe in. Usually, we need to offer some explanation as to why the good is good. This is education: to help the moral agent to see the reason of a good action.

From metaphysics and ethics, one could affirm that if something is good, it will be desirable: "all things tend towards a good" (Aristotle 2004). Tendencies of each faculty go naturally to search its own good. But we do not always feel attractiveness according to the real value of the action. This lack of accordance is due to our difficulty to apprehend the complete meaning, consequences and all aspects of the concrete action. Somehow, we may say that this reveals the moral scarcity of the subject, even its moral illness. Another sentence of Aristotle states a similar idea: we don't believe something to be sweet or bitter because it seems so to sick people (Aristotle 2004). If something good is not attractive to someone, we do not stop considering it good, but that the subject needs to learn to recognise it as such. This is a possible learning for all human beings: to discover the truly enjoyable beyond false appearances.

Again, reason for good action is not only intellectual. It could be also emotional; it must be also true practical motivation. Therefore, we need ideas, reasoning, images, stories, visual resources: all possible elements to persuade rationally and emotionally.

This is the challenge of moral education: to teach that good deeds may be recognised as such and as attractive. If an action is really good, there will be reasons to recognise it as so and therefore elements of persuasion to direct desire. Explaining that any given action is good is not enough (teaching to know); it is necessary to find ways of arousing the orientation towards that good (teaching to desire). "In any virtue, both cognitive and motivational elements are central" (Audi 2012). The convergence of the two makes the ethical behaviour possible with internal coherence and harmony.

But internal harmony needs intellectual and emotional coherence in addition to cognitive and motivational coherence. As we pointed out, at the beginning it is not the same. Cognitive and motivational elements refer to cognitive or appetitive faculties. Intellectual and emotional refer to rational (intellective) or sensitive faculties. Intellectual may be cognitive (to understand something) or appetitive (true will), and also sensitive could be knowledge (the object of senses) or appetitive (sensitive ways of desiring). Therefore, harmonious education must promote balance among the four groups of faculties. The moral quality of every human being, in normal situations, indeed consists in the ability to lean without violence towards the good.

There is a crucial element that must be not ignored: the internal representation. All possible ways of building an adequate internal representation of the good are necessary and useful. Images, examples, stories… All are ways in which making "visible" the goodness of the good is required. The challenge is to introduce the good in a touchable, sensitive, emotionally compressible way.

It is interesting to consider that it could be worse to present the good in an unpleasant way than to present the evil in an attractive one. Actually both are the ways in which most people are led towards evil. Sometimes evil is just the consequence of a wrong image of good.

3.6   The Role of Beauty

Beauty has the power to reconcile intellectual and sensitive faculties. This is because it is enjoyed by both sensitivity and intellect. "Corporal vision is the principle of the sensitive love, and likewise the contemplation of the spiritual beauty or goodness is the beginning of the spiritual love" (Aquinas 1994). To enjoy both ways of beauty contributes to the internal harmony of the human being.

Schiller suggests that this is a special state of freedom which is equally free from reason's imperatives or from the physical needs. "Since the spirit, when contemplating beauty, is at a fortunate midpoint between law and necessity, it is thus subtracted from the coercion of both one and the other, because it is shared between both" (Schiller 2002). This is why he proposes moral education throughout beauty, because what is beautiful attracts the senses at the same time as it is linked to intellect. In the *Letters on the Aesthetic Education of Man*, Schiller develops an education theory based on the conciliation of sensitive and intellectual faculties.

His starting point is to deny that there is a necessary opposition between the reason's stimulus, what is freedom and the impetus of sensitivity or nature:

> If we affirm an original, and therefore necessary, antagonism between the two impulses, then there is no other means to maintain the unity of man that to unconditionally subordinate the sensitive impulse to the rational one. However, it can only result uniformity from this subordination, but not harmony, and man will remain divided forever. However, there must be subordination, but a reciprocal subordination. (Schiller 2002)

Moral education consists precisely in looking for the harmony between the two. "In the event that the moral character can only be affirmed by the sacrifice of the natural character, then a degree of formation which is still deficient will be evidenced" (Schiller 2002). Moral character is guided by reason; the "natural" one is spontaneous and comes from the sensitiveness. The challenge of moral education is to go beyond the confrontation and achieve the harmony between the two. This is also an important aspect of the freedom: to be able to follow the desires of the spirit instead of the material necessities (Schiller 2002). This is achieved by reconstructing the way that has travelled only from the instinct (Schiller 2002) in order to place a new end on nature from that reason (Schiller 2002) and not become a savage, either to lose the proper space for feelings and emotions.

The harmony between reason and sensitivity is possible when we show the beauty of the good revealing that it is agreeable and pleasant.

3.7   The Role of Imagination

Roger Scruton has studied the phenomenon which considers that sometimes we do not feel what we want. He proposes to develop an education "to feel in the appropriate way". We could say also "to feel like we really want to feel", or to

feel in harmony with reason and will, assuming that reason and will are directed towards what is appropriate.

One of his examples to explain it comes from a crime novel: "Dr. Steiener was trying to feel sorry but he knew he was afraid. However, He was only fully aware of feeling disgust... suddenly, He was prey to an irresistible nervous laugh".

This shows that some emotions are appropriate and other are not:

> Scruton believes that we can learn to have an appropriate emotion rather than an inappropriate one; we can learn to feel what we ought or want to feel when we cannot seem to feel anything at all. He describes "knowing what to feel" in terms of practical knowledge like knowing what to do. For practical knowledge, success is certainty in knowing what to do or feel; the result is happiness. Happiness, in this sense, is a kind of satisfaction in exercising morality; it is the guiltlessness that results from knowing what is expected and reacting in that way ; one may suffer externally , Scruton says , as when someone loved dies but one will not be the victim of confused feelings or behavior Happiness means success in choosing the correct emotion or behavior , having deliberately sought to make the right choice. (Pecover 1986).

Scruton considers emotions as a way of acting. And this is a key question. Emotions emerge spontaneously and without our decision, but at the same time, we note the possibility of giving them more or less expansion, of making them grow or moderating them to act in accordance with them or against them.

What Scruton proposes, like it suggests his explanation, is that we may focus our imagination in what is appropriate, and we may make that our view of each situation was the most human possible. Before a tragic event it is not really human that I stay focusing my attention to a concrete hilarious aspect of the whole story. I have to think, because this is the most important from the human point of view: someone is suffering. If I pay attention to the sorrow of others involved in the event, my funny emotions dissipate. This is empathy and compassion, and two of the most human emotions.

We may analyse a real example to see what we may do to lead our emotions towards empathy. In March 2016, there was an accident in which three young aged people between 22 and 27 died. It was a tragedy. They travelled in a light aircraft that came from Sabadell's aerodrome and was twenty five minutes from its destination. But the way in which the accident happened, because it was not common and rare, produced some hilarity: the aircraft crashed with an enormous vulture that tangled with the airscrew. By knowing the news, many people felt an impulse to laugh. However, the feeling of humanity in knowing the death of these young people made anyone who realised the tragedy of losing these three lives in this especially unexpected way think about their families. These thoughts which were full of meaning changed the first instinct of joke into an emotion of sorrow and compassion. No repression was necessary to change the feelings.

This is the key of education of feelings: to choose the most human thoughts, the more constructive ones, those that make us better and happier. Fortunately, since the ethical attitudes are those that lead us to the good, they always include good reasons to think on. If before the arduous good, there are no good thoughts to think on it, this means that something is wrong. Either we are mistaken towards the judgement on

the good, or we are just blind to what is good. It is not a question of being "more" sensitive but a question of feeling in accordance with intellect. This is to achieve the harmony between will and sensitivity.

3.8 When It Is Unavoidable to Push in Order to Be Ethical

There is an important difference between the "normal" education of sensitivity and the realisation of good that requires extraordinary effort. This distinction may occur for two reasons: an important lack of moral quality in the individual or the special difficulty of specific circumstances.

The first case consists, simply, in a lack of virtue. If I am really lazy, it could be extremely difficult for me to get up in the morning when the alarm clock rings. Maybe I have no creative resources enough to convince myself how good it is to get up early, how many interesting things I may do, or the great value of this effort in order to help someone else. If so, then, there is no other remedy than force myself to get out of bed in order to be able to do the good action that is to get up on time. The simplicity of this kind of difficulty makes it easier to learn to overcome them. We need to work on both motivation and training, and usually we'll succeed.

The other case is more complex and depends on some external pressure. If the external context is really perverse something pushes us beyond the normal capacity of resisting. For example, as Kant suggests in the *Foundations of the metaphysics of morals*, "If a tyrant forces you to condemn an innocent". . . In this situation, the agent must choose between being an indirect murder (someone will be executed because of it) and to be killed, even tortured, because of not responding to the tyrant's demand. When acting badly under extraordinary pressure, the moral value of the action is not the same as in normal circumstances. There is some lack of freedom to be considered. But when capable of overcoming justified fear, assuming extreme risk and doing good, then a peculiar character emerges: the hero. However, heroism cannot be demanded from everyone: everybody can behave but not everybody can be a hero.

Still, there is another way of heroism: when heroic actions arise from an unusually strong desire to do the good beyond one's own duty, over and above what justice requires. In both cases, the heroic action can only emerge from a spirit trained in the daily and free choice of the good, the constant option for the good even if it requires effort, the continuous process by which the value of the good is noticed even in the gloom, even in the pallor, when it is still only being insinuated.

3.9 Another Myth: Passion Tend to the Evil

The need for moral education is as old as human existence. However, should this education be based on punishment? Plato raises the question, among other occasions, in the narration of the tale of Giges (Plato 1997): if wrong actions went unpunished and had advantages, would not we carry them out? Plato endeavours to explain that ethical education must focus on love: education should not be based on fear of punishment but on the love of justice. Aristotle also places human action in a teleological framework: everything tends towards the good (Aristotle 2004). This concept comes from *physics*, from the observation that in nature each element tends towards its own perfection. The observation of this trend instils confidence in the attractiveness of the good. This trend is something that is implicit in Aristotelian ethics but that is clearly stated in the teleological theory of action. Everything tends towards its own good.

What passion needs to be ordered to the good is to be integrated in the whole ensemble of all human faculties. If passion maintains a good relationship with the rest of the faculties, cognitive and appetitive, then is possible to take the correct place, taking into account all other factors involved in human action.

There is a weakness in moral education over time: by noting that passions may lean towards evil, we easily used to consider that they naturally tend towards evil. But it is not so, it is just the trend to its natural object of pleasure. We have already explained that true conflict emerges for the different natural trend of rational and non-rational desire. Actually, non-rational desire is not naturally evil. It is just a natural tendency to what is pleasant in a spontaneous, sensitive, immediate way. Bodily pleasure is the most common object of spontaneous desire. Pleasure is good when well ordered. And this is the point: most times the evil action is just a disorder. It does not mean that the pleasure is evil, but that looking for it we may commit intemperance, injustice or whatever wrong deeds.

It is not wrong to look for pleasure. On the contrary, it is intrinsically correct. What could be wrong is looking for it in an isolated way: aiming towards pleasure and forgetting the global meaning and consequences of the action. When there is a conflict between rational and non-rational desire, then we must follow the rational to assure we are acting correctly. The correct is the global good, what is good for all elements that compound the action: the deeds, the intention, the involved subjects, the consequences. Pleasure alone does not see the global context of the action but instead only the particular object of pleasure.

The challenge of moral education is to show how good the good is to the sensitive passions and to make possible the accordance between rational and non-rational desires. But since contemporary European culture has a strong Kantian influence, we assume that it is better to ignore the passions. Sometimes not even the educators believe that good can be done willingly and that it can be pleasant. This belief is why effort is emphasised, habits as mere technique, self-control, instead of insisting on "how good the good is" and helping to recognise that it is. If doing the good is hard, it is because there is a sensitive good in conflict with a greater good that does not

attract sensitivity. Moral education finds ways to persuade sensitivity to desire to do good.

3.10   The Importance of Pleasure

Aristotle speaks of pleasure in different texts, giving it different meanings. However, when there is no different specification, he addresses it as bodily or sensitive pleasure. Allusions to intellective pleasure are always followed by a specification. Sensitive pleasure is outside the intellective sphere. It is not a knowledge either. It is a passion or emotion. In the passage (Aristotle 2004) it is clearly stated that pleasure and pain cause good or evil attitudes. Pleasure has also been defined as a joy that follows an action (Aristotle 2004).

Pleasure is not the focus of the education of desire, but it is a key question because it is all about educating the way to enjoy and, therefore, about trying to make the good both pleasant and attractive. Virtue means to be able to have both pleasure and pain, but in an appropriate fashion (Aristotle 2004).

Pleasure and desire are alike, but they are not the same. In the Aristotelian context, they are closely linked. Pleasure is not an action: in any case, it is the result of an action. It can be desired by exercising an act of desire, but one cannot perform an act of pleasure. Pleasurable actions can be performed, and one expects the result to be pleasure. Still, it is interesting to see that this characteristic is not always true.

As studies closer to our time show, pleasure slips away when one seeks pleasure by itself: "...if we move away from the object to turn towards the trend, we no longer perceive an object, but a state. The place of intentionality is occupied by facticity, and instead of the intention (followed by pleasure) of a value, the fact of" pleasure "appears, which is absurd in itself. Therefore, something that can cause pleasure is no longer possessed, but pleasure itself; although pleasure without support, disappears" (Frankl 1994).

Every pleasure is the satisfaction of some desiderative faculty, whether bodily or intellectual. It also occurs when there is no previous tension and it appears as a pleasant surprise, when it was not sought: there is always some desiderative power that is perceived "in fullness". The same occurs with something as simple as satisfying thirst, or something more subtle, like enjoying a surprising beauty, or even something sublime, like performing a heroic action for gratitude.

Education of desire does not focus on the relationship of pleasure to virtues, but it does consider this relationship. In recent years, there has been a growing interest in the education of the affections and virtues. Previous studies published on this topic will both contribute to and support the research. The research we propose goes beyond the topic because it involves all appetitive forms and the methods used for their guidance.

"The virtuous life is pleasant". This is one of Aristotle's statements that opens the way to conciliation between pleasure and virtue. If this conciliation can be understood as harmony between desire and good deed, then it does relate to education of

desire. "The virtuous life is pleasant" is a statement that, so far, does not enjoy all the credibility it deserves. It remains to be shown how this link between the good and the pleasant can be achieved in practical life. In contemporary Western culture, there is still an intellectualist cloud that obscures such a possibility of inner harmony and joy of good.

3.11   Prior to Decision: Desire and Imagination

The term desire has different meanings within the academic field. However, we will give it a broader sense than the concept restricted to passion and instinct. In common language, desire refers, in a somewhat reductionist approach, to the appetite associated with bodily needs, especially to sexual desire, and it generally implies intense, short-term ways of wanting, related to the somatic dynamics of emotions.

By educating desire, we will discard this restricted approach. The various study fields on cognitive science summarise human action as *desires* and *beliefs*. This approach confers both elements with a very broad meaning. Beliefs refer to all kinds of knowledge. Desires and beliefs have only two conditions: the verb that refers to knowledge or appetite and the specific content of the action. This is a view shared by many contemporary philosophers of the mind: "According to this view a mental state such as a desire or belief can be analysed in two components: its content, which corresponds to the object clause in sentences such as "John believes that it is raining," "Mary desires that it stop raining", and another element, "which corresponds to the psychological verb in such sentences" (Tuozzo 1994).

Desires, specifically, include all kinds of appetite, whether instinctive, emotional or rational. Desire is all activation of an appetite or inclination, whatever its nature, whether it gives rise to a tangible action or not. Mainly, we will distinguish two types of desire: intellective appetite, related to reason, and sensitive appetite, characteristic of feelings and emotions (inclinations not directly related to reason: passions, instincts, emotions, feelings...).

Moral education is primarily aimed at improving behaviour. Therefore, in recent years, multiple authors and research groups have focused on the education of character and virtues (Carr and Steutel 1999; Carr et al. 2017; Kristjánsson 2007). This is currently consisting in an abundantly effective field of research and application of virtue ethics. However, the analysis of behaviour also highlights the decisive importance of an element prior to action: desire.

Most behavioural research starts with behaviour and addresses behaviour. Education of desire aims to go beyond the scope of action and anticipate behaviour by entering the scope of decision prior to action. A more incisive education is possible if centred on the ways of desiring and, therefore, of deciding. Education of desire aims to teach how to modulate the various desiderative modes, to promote ways of wanting and to promote decisions that are consistent with good deeds from within the individual.

The focus is no longer on the result of good deed—virtue—but in its cause: the righteous desire of the individual who acts. Consequently, this education will deal with four elements: the object of desire, the way of presenting it, the individual who desires and his/her ways of wanting. Regarding the individual, education is about learning to promote the best desires. In turn, the educator must propitiate a learning of the desiderative ways that integrate and harmonise all the instances involved in wanting: knowledge and reflection, imagination and narrative, feelings and emotions.

Aristotle attaches great importance to desire within ethical education: "pleasure (*Hedoné)* and pain (*Lype)* as it should be, this comprises, indeed, good education" (Aristotle 2004). The context of this affirmation and the sensitive dimension of pleasure and pain which is referred to here is clear. Moral education aims to make passions (pleasure and pain) consistent with rational desires: will (*boulesis*) and choice (*proairesis*). Rational desires "understand" or "see" what is truly good and, thus, are oriented to the good in an almost indefectible way.

The harmony between rational and non-rational desire is not always warranted, but it is possible. Desire needs to be educated to prefer what is good. Non-rational desire may learn from the rational throughout different ways of persuasion. Imagination is the key faculty that may connect both. It offers us a way to persuade the sensitivity to prefer what is really good by constructing positive internal representations. This education consists in showing that good action may be both good and pleasant. This is, in fact, an approach to character education focused on the idea that the good can be also pleasant, and education of desire teaches "the taste" to enjoy what is good.

This is not just an education of affectivity. Such education is necessary, and there are studies of great interest and benefit; however, they are still partial studies. In these studies, the focus is affectivity, not the core of the individual. Affectivity focuses on a specific type of desires that are affective. Emotional education has mainly focused on self-control, long-term motivation, etc... In contrast, education of desire is a comprehensive action: it addresses both intellective desires and the emotional and impulsive desires.

This topic cannot be reducible to motivation either. This term has been used especially in marketing and has taken on very technical connotations, sometimes mercantilist or even mechanistic, as a modern version of the old approaches of Pavlov, Watson, Skinner... The education of the desire, as it is proposed here is, above all, a work of interiority.

Therefore, it is crucial to mould the representations. The education of desire needs to work with the representation of good. Imagination is the bridge that links outer reality with interior desire. In fact, education of desire for flourishing is a process of internalisation.

3.12 Conclusion

Since McIntyre published *After Virtue* in 1981 the interest in virtue ethics has not stopped growing and has succeeded to offer a deeper comprehension and a more fruitful application. However, emotional education as moral education is not yet well comprehended and even worse practised. Educating desire in order to achieve ethical quality does not mean to elude moral judgement as some authors have suggested (Kuangfei Xie 2015): moral perfection makes unnecessary all reasoning about one's own actions. When excellence is already achieved, it is supposed that we would be able to do everything good without thinking of it. Moral perfection would make us perfect agents who do the good spontaneously, without needing any previous reflection. But this is not the purpose.

Educating desire, on the one hand, does need the activity of the reason and its judgements. On the other hand, this moral education is not based on emotivism, when it is considered that judgements "are nothing but expressions of preference, expressions of attitude or feelings" (McIntyre 1981). Instead of this, education of desire for achieving flourishing means to teach desire in accordance with moral judgement.

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Chapter 4
The Joy of Doing Good and Character Education

Aurora Bernal

Abstract Interest in emotional education has been expanding in the last three decades. Character education (CE) includes emotional education and is related to moral education, social education, positive psychology and education in values. Aristotelian thought explains the integration of desires, passions and valuable actions. His works inspire CE. The authors agree that emotions motivate intrinsically to perform positive actions: healthy behaviours, good actions, prosocial behaviours, efficient work, that is, the actions that contribute to the good life. One of the objectives of CE is that people want to do good and enjoy it. In these pages, we study the joy, a positive emotion related to want to do good. We directly examine some of Aristotle's works and complete the study with current research on Aristotelian theses and CE. We try answering these questions: Is joy an important passion for good action? Is joy one of the important elements of good character? Are people able to behave good and enjoy at the same time? Is the education of desire and joy present in the current EC programmes?

Keywords Education of desire · Joy · Character education · Emotional education · Positive education

4.1 A Wish: To Be Happy

Both acting well and being happy are of social interest today, and, therefore, many professionals work to achieve happiness for people and to prevent them from failing in what they choose to do and what they actually do. Among these professionals, educators and psychologists stand out. Well-educated people, people with good character, are in better conditions to avoid behaviours that cause unhappiness, such as social maladjustment, physical and mental illness, antisocial behaviours

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and addictions. Good character helps people to live happier lives, upon which depends their own happiness. This is why character education (CE) programmes are booming and spreading throughout the world, for example, programmes for moral education, virtues education, social emotional learning, positive youth development and those directly called CE (Nucci et al. 2014; Naval et al. 2015; Eaude 2016; Durlak et al. 2017).

In this chapter, I argue, from a philosophical perspective, that doing good produces joy and that CE should take this "result" into account. The basic proposition consists of two ideas:

(a) Acting well (thinking, making and producing) is accompanied with joy.
(b) CE is an educational approach aimed at promoting people's abilities to act well.

The hypothesis is that, if joy is a sign of doing good, it should be more present in education, in the educator and in a person who is educated. Moreover, we should highlight joy as an important feature of CE. The focus to explaining (b) is placed in two CE approaches: character education, so directly called (focused on virtue ethics and with a neo-Aristotelian approach), and positive youth development (focused on positive psychology). In addition, to consider idea (a), I focus on Aristotle's contributions collected in his *Nicomachean Ethics* (*NE*), for his arguments serve as inspiration to the promoters of the CE and of civic education since the 1990s (Bernal 1998; Balot 2017).

The following questions emerge from the central issues of this chapter:

(a) Is joy an important passion for good action?
(b) Is joy one of the important elements of good character?
(c) Are people able to behave good and enjoy at the same time?
(d) Is the education of desire and joy present in the current CE programmes?

The answers to these questions are elaborated throughout this chapter, which is divided into five sections. The first and second sections are about the ability to be passionate and happy. The third section is about character—issues (a) and (b). The fourth section offers an argument to answer question (c). Finally, in fifth section I argue how the two selected CE approaches work on emotions in general—in particular, joy—and what value they give to it as an element of character. Thus, I try to answer question (d). The main conclusion is descriptive: to check whether current CE projects take joy into account.

As a starting point I select a passage of Aristotle's *Ethics* in which joy is defined as *thing* that is found in the soul (Aristotle 2009, *NE* 1105b).[1] This text helps to see

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[1]The reference to *Nicomachean Ethics* is abbreviated as *NE*. The space of this chapter does not allow to explain Aristotelian psychology in depth. I present the clarifications strictly necessary to understand the argument in the notes. In this case, *thing* is something that is the soul is one of the co-principles of the living being, the immaterial principle, the principle of all operations that manifest self-movement, in and from the body, the material principle. The operations show the different dimensions of the human being, physical, sensitive and rational, interdependent with each other (Aristotle 2016b, *De Anima* 414a).

what Aristotle understands about joy and its relationship with character. There are three kinds of things that *happen* in the soul: passions, faculties and habits.[2] Joy is a passion that Aristotle mentions among others. He probably enumerates those he thinks are easier to recognize: "I understand as passions: appetite, anger, fear, daring, envy, joy, love, hatred, desire, jealousy, compassion, and in general the affections that are accompanied by pleasure and pain" (*NE* 1105b). The text continues with an explanation about the *thing* faculty or ability of acting, in this case, the ability to suffer, to be passionate and to have passions. Finally, the *thing* habit is that what makes people behave well or badly with respect to passions.

According to Aristotle, the character is closely related to these three *things*, in particular to the habits. Before delving into what Aristotle understands character to be, however, we shall look into what the *thing-passion* called joy is, and to which *thing-faculty* it is related. To understand what joy is we need first to study what a passion is, and, thus, to answer two questions: (1) What is the faculty of suffering? (2) What distinguishes joy from other passions?

4.2 The Desiring Part of Soul

Aristotle understands that the faculties are potencies or operational abilities by which the human being moves, changes and acts. In the case of the passions, the faculties involved are sensitive or irrational appetites.[3] We need to distinguish the appetite or desire as a faculty from the appetite as passion—the act of the faculty—(*epythymía*). Aristotle does not establish this distinction directly, but it is deduced from the description he makes of those human beings who act on their passions and desires, terms used interchangeably, such as children, youngsters, the intemperate and the licentious.[4] Neither of them has the sufficient self-control to act by rational desire (*boulesis*) choosing an action with either of the following certain reasons:

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[2]The word habit is also translated as state of character. The meaning of habit is not just custom. Faculty is also translated as capacity.

[3]The explanation of the desiderative part is set out in *De Anima*, book II, chapter 3, 414b. In short, human beings have three kinds of appetite (*órexis*): desire (*epithymía*), impulse (*thymós*) and wish (*boúlesis*). Aristotle basically distinguishes the sensitive desire from the rational one (Grönroos 2015; Irwin 2017).

[4]Aristotle uses the terms passion, desire, affection and affections interchangeably to explain how animals and human beings react by feeling attraction or repulsion to the known. This reaction consists in an alteration, in a movement, in a change, in a step of the desiderative power from potency to act. This reaction leads to an initiation, a movement to do something, to behave with respect to what has been known and estimated as pleasant or painful, or has been thought of as good or bad (only possible in the case of human beings with rational active capacity and referring to the rational desire, the will) (*De Anima*, 431a). Neither all that is pleasurable is good nor all that is painful is bad in any circumstance. Today is more frequent to speak of emotions and feelings than of passions.

- They do not have rational capacity.
- They are used to being carried away by the search of pleasure and the avoidance of pain, ignoring reason.
- They disregard reason.
- They direct reason to seek pleasure only (*NE* 1095a; 1145b; 1147b; 1150a; 1150b; 1151a).

Aristotle explains something more about the passions when he distinguishes them from the virtues and vices[5]: "in respect of the passions we are said to be moved" (*NE* 1106a) and "and every passion and every action is accompanied by pleasure and pain" (*NE* 1104b). The passions conceived as affections, felt reactions or not directly caused are passive. They are something that happen to us, and not something we do. They are actions of a faculty that changes because it is moved from the state of potency to the state of actuality by an external cause. This cause is what we know as pleasant or painful. Despite this, insofar as the passions—the acts of this faculty—move us to act seeking pleasure (or the good which is also pleasant, in this case, known by reason) and avoiding pain (or the bad that produces pain, known by reason), they are active.

How do, then, passions move? Aristotle observes: "we ourselves tend more naturally to pleasures" (*NE* 1109a), and "we must consider the things towards which we ourselves also are easily carried away; for some of us tend to one thing, some to another; and this will be recognizable from the pleasure and the pain we feel" (*NE* 1109b). Therefore, passions are closely related to the natural disposition of human beings that seek pleasure and avoid pain. They are, thus, always accompanied by pleasure or pain, which means that they are distinguished, among other things, by the pleasure and pain that follows them.

I deduce from this Aristotelian explanation of how passions move that a passion is the appetite felt as an inclination—of attraction or rejection—towards something. It is the act of the appetitive (sensitive) faculty. The passions, thus, are affections: "a quality in respect of which it is possible to be modified, as for instance the pale and the dark, and sweet and bitter, and heaviness and lightness, and all others of that kind" (Aristotle 2016a, *Metaphysis* 1022a). The previous definition of the passions indicates that they are not only momentary, variable sensations, but that they are part of the mode of human beings. They are also, then, partially stable, and they are stable enough for us to recognise types of temperament and character according to the passions dominant in each human being.

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[5]The virtues and vices are habits (they dispose to act morally right or wrong, they are chosen or at least they do not occur without choice), although for Aristotle not all habits are virtues or vices.

4.3 Joy

What kind of passion is joy? What is the difference between rejoicing (momentary affection) and being joyful (stable quality of the temperament)? What different meanings correspond to the statements: *this paper makes me happy* and *I'm glad in my life*?

Aristotle seldom mentions joy in his *Ethics* and offers no explanation centred on this passion. It is not a highlighted passion in Greek culture (Konstan 2007). Why could it explain this lack of consideration to this passion so related to happiness? No one claims that a happy person is sad. One reason may be that when the Greek philosopher dealt with passions, he does so with a practical purpose: to teach the *Art of Rhetoric* (book II) (Aristotle 2014), or to teach how to behave morally (*NE* and *Politics*). In the few instances in which Aristotle mentions joy, it appears as a simple, basic passion, but not as a passion to take into account in these teachings about practical life.

Another plausible idea to explain the scarce appearance of joy in Aristotle's arguments is that it is so basic a passion, so easy to know and to experience, so positive to live well, that it is not necessary to pay special attention to it. Today, joy is an emotion that every culture values (Tamir et al. 2017). One could make a similar argument about sadness, although Aristotle mentions it more often than joy, perhaps because the painful passions incline us to behave badly more easily than the good ones.

We experience passions in three ways, according to their causing the feeling of pleasure and pain:

(a) Passions that are accompanied by pleasure
(b) Passions that are accompanied by pain
(c) Passions that are accompanied by a mixture of pleasure and pain

Joy is a type (a) passion. That is an obvious claim based on the universal experience of human beings. It appears on its own or hidden in any affective experience that is accompanied by pleasure, and even every time human beings feel some pleasure, even if it is with pain—i.e. type (c) passions. Aristotle often refers to sadness together with joy, identifying them with expressions such as rejoice and sadden, please and sorrow, delight and grieve; i.e. joy resembles pleasure, and sadness resembles pain. If we look at these expressions of joy, it appears as a discrete, though transversal, passion in the explanations of passions, actions, virtues and happiness. I present some examples below.

(a) Happiness and other passions, such as desire, love, hope[6]: "for he does so with pleasure, since the memories of his past acts are delightful and his hopes for the

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[6]Love, as attraction and union to what is seen as pleasant and/or good, brings some joy. This joy with the presence of love entails feeling pleasure before the loved. It leads to desire, it is an impulse towards the loved one and it leads to hope, to keep the desire of the loved one obtainable in the future. Men rejoice—they are pleased—with greater or lesser intensity and duration according to

future are good, and therefore pleasant. (...) he grieves and rejoices" (*NE* 1166a). Other examples in *NE* 1108b and 1119a.

(b) Joy in actions, i.e. in activities that are carried out hardly with any effort, pleasurable—they meet needs—or noble—they are good in themselves, like doing justice or making friends: "virtuous actions are noble and done for the sake of the noble. (...) for that which is virtuous is pleasant or free from pain, least of all will it be painful" (*NE* 1120a).

(c) Joy and virtues (qualities that make it easy and right to choose and carry out a good action):

> to enjoy the things we ought and to hate the things we ought has the greatest bearing on virtue of character. For these things extend right through life, with a weight and power of their own in respect both to virtue and to the happy life (*NE* 1172a).

(d) Joy is part of happiness: "Happiness then is the best, noblest, and most pleasant thing in the world, and these attributes are not severed" (*NE* 1099b).

To arrive at a definition of joy I turn to the Aristotelian method, visible in his explanation of other passions (*Art of Rhetoric* 1378a and following). For each passion Aristotle describes the state in which a person who has it is, against what one has it or reacts this way, and why. The state is characterised by a way of feeling that responds to the actualisation of the appetite and consists in leaning towards an object, something that is known and evaluated as pleasant or painful, as good or bad. Passions are intentional, that is, they refer to objects. For example, anger: "Let us then define anger as a longing, accompanied by pain, for a real or apparent revenge for a real or apparent slight, affecting a man himself (...)" (*Art of Rhetoric*, 1378a). Therefore, joy is a pleasant appetite because of the good.[7] It is a passion accompanied by pleasure, a very basic one, present with passions, actions and virtues, as I have stated above.

Joy is the first movement of the soul before knowledge (sensitive or intellectual) of the loved (assessed as desirable or good). The opposite passion is sadness, because it makes one feel pain in the absence of the loved. Joy and sadness are very basic affections, and always produced before what is presented to the knowledge as attractive or repulsive:

> There being three objects of choice and three of avoidance, the noble, the advantageous, the pleasant, and their contraries, the base, the injurious, the painful, about all of these the good man tends to go right and the bad man to go wrong, and especially about pleasure; (...) and also it accompanies all objects of choice; for even the noble and the advantageous appear pleasant (*EN* 1140b).

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many conditions, in love, in desire and in hope. There is no love, no desire and no hope without some degree of joy.

[7] The concept of good refers to that (being or way of being) which suits another, perfects it and satisfies a need. Therefore, the pleasant, the useful, the beautiful, the perfection and excellence (in activities) are goods. Goodness admits degrees between two extremes, the worst and the best. Goodness is objective, considering the good in itself (in its being), and relative, with respect to the being for which it is good. The good, as it is sought, is an aim (*Metaphysics* 982b).

I shall call *beautiful* that which reflects the harmony of what things are and how they are: "convenient" that which is good, which perfects and completes a thing; *enjoyable* that which is pleasant.

4.4 Character

One of the main themes of the *NE* is character (Kristjánsson 2015). Aristotle does not explain directly what character is, but we can deduce its meaning from his argumentation on what people with one or other character manifest in practice (*NE* 1103a). A man's character is what enables him to act in a certain way. In general, at least this is what I find, when Aristotle refers to character without qualification he is thinking of good character. Thus, for Aristotle, character is composed of abilities to act well, that is, of well-qualified faculties. Aristotle calls this quality *ethical virtue* (Curzer 2018). The good man possesses virtues of character—*ēthikai aretai.*[8]

The ethical is about the actions, passions, knowledge and habits with which the human being directs his life to be happy. The character is acquired, that is, the human being acquires the qualities of the abilities or faculties that he possesses:

> Neither by nature, then, nor contrary to nature do the virtues arise in us; rather we are adapted by nature to receive them, and are made perfect by habit. (...) of all the things that come to us by nature we first acquire the potentiality and later exhibit the activity (. . .) but the virtues we get by first exercising them, as also happens in the case of the arts as well. (*NE*, 1103 a).

Aristotle uses the term *custom* as a synonym of habit. We acquire habits by performing actions. Habits are maintained, improved or also destroyed in operations. Habits are qualities of the faculties, stable dispositions to act in a certain way. They form a kind of second nature (*Art of Rhetoric* 1370a).[9] Habits enables us to act in the same way, with ease and pleasure. An action or reaction is good if and only if it contributes to human flourishing.

Character virtues differ from dianoetic virtues depending on whether they are qualities of the appetitive faculties—moral virtues—or of the intellectual faculty—intellectual habits. The moral virtues are not the result of a simple habituation, that is,

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[8]*ηθική* (ethics) comes from *ἦθος* (character) that seems to be a modification of *ἔθος* (custom). To refer to the character or ethical virtues we often use the notion of "moral virtues". The word "moral" comes from the Latin *mor-mores*, that is, custom. For Aristotle, the virtues that define character are acquired by habituation, by repetition of habits. The customs are also habits, hence the translation "ethics" for "moral" without differentiating *ἦθος* from *ἔθος*.

[9]Habit—*hexis*—is a certain part of the affections that manifest differences of movement and activity, according to which the things that are in motion act or receive the action of another one, well or badly (*Metaphysics* 1019a and 1020a). As an alteration of the operational power, the habit is act, quality, perfection, by which the capacity of a faculty to act in a way increases. It is also an act insofar as this faculty goes into action with this increased capacity. For this reason, it is said that people have habits or have a character. Virtues are habits that make it possible for human beings to master themselves, to own themselves, to act "using" all their faculties in order.

the consequence of repeating many times an action mechanically. Virtuous habituation occurs when the operations of the faculties of the repeated actions maintain a balance with each other. This harmony is provided by the order of reason. Virtuous actions are chosen for themselves. The reason that produces the idea of what to do, how to carry it out and how to use the faculties of the agent is described as a right reason. The character defines the person in how he is, how he is able to act, how he desires (passions) and wants (choses to act and acts), how he reasons (knows what and how it is convenient to act and why) and in how these acts, desire, judgement and choices interact in the execution of an action. This harmony entails applying and choosing a measure, a reason regarding passions and actions, a criterion that Aristotle calls the virtuous mean (*NE* 1104a–1104b).

If the habit is that by virtue of which we behave well or bad regarding the passions (*NE* 1105b), is there a habit that facilitates behaving well with respect to joy? Unfortunately, Aristotle does not describe any such habit. He neither studies joy when he considers how desires and reason are harmonized or uncoordinated in virtuous or vitiated behaviours, nor does it when he describes the virtuous mean of passion or of action. Instead, Aristotle explains this topic with examples of other passions in book II of *NE*. Likewise, neither contemporary scholars who have studied the passions in Aristotelian theory devote their reflection to joy (Konstan 2007), nor authors who develop an argument based on the Aristotelian proposal on passions, virtues and character investigate this passion (Kristjánsson 2018).

Scholars do not consider joy to be among passions that lend their names to virtues, as it is the case with compassion (emotion-virtues). Neither they assume it to be one of the fundamental passions in a virtue, as it is the case of anger for justice (passion-virtues), nor they cite it among the virtues of proper affect, such as trust. Finally, they do not present it among the virtues that assume that there is no affective response, such as humility (disenchantment virtues) (Roberts 1989). Nevertheless, I suggest thinking about the following matter: it is reasonable to think that joy is a virtue because a person with good character is always a joyful person. I find that there are enough tools to argue for this position in the Aristotelian theory.

4.5   Joy and Good Character

How does Aristotle consider the passions to be elements of the good character? Is it reasonable to think that a person with good character is joyful?

According to Aristotle, character is one of the essential resources that human beings have to be happy. Happiness is living in a summit of good. The happy life contains the following goods, listed in order of importance: contemplative activity, friends, virtues and those things necessary to live and be able to lead a contemplative life, with friends, and acting virtuously. Having character is a good in itself, a good of the soul, included in the contemplative life, in friendship and in virtuous actions.

Aristotle assesses character examining how people behave and in relation to their passions. I highlight two perspectives with two basic texts and I extend the argument to my consideration of joy. On the one hand, Aristotle explains that people with character (with good character) behave well with regard to passions (*NE* 1170b). On the other hand, a virtuous behaviour is possible because a human being is capable of being passionate in the right mean (*NE* 1103b). Both phenomena are related to each other. When human beings act well, they are passionately well.

4.5.1 Passions and Ethical Behaviour

What does it mean for people to behave well or badly in regard to the passions? (*NE* 1106a). Human beings act well when they choose the good, they get it, and in doing so they become good. For example, I choose to help someone in need, I help him and I start becoming a generous person. I find it hard to help this person (I feel pain), but at the same time I get a reward (I feel pleasure). To get the good action right, a human being has to think what is good, how to do it, what for and why, and put all his faculties in it. This activity is led by reason and the desire that follows it, i.e. the will, both faculties with which the person manages to harmonize the dynamics of desires.

The capacity to achieve this exercise is not innate. On the contrary, the innate is to seek pleasure without further consideration, and to avoid pain (*NE* 1109a). When people think that pleasure is always good, or they do not think, or ignore what their reason presents them as the good thing to do, they are dragged by the desire of pleasure or by the impulse to avoid pain:

> the good man judges each class of things rightly, and in each the truth appears to him? For each state of character has its own ideas of the noble and the pleasant, and perhaps the good man differs from others most by seeing the truth in each class of things, being as it were the norm and measure of them. (*NE* 1113a–1113b).

To act achieving the chosen good, so that the passions move in favour of what the human being wants, makes the person good. The repetition of such acts makes the person better. The habituation disposes to act more correctly, easily, and to possess a firm disposition to act well continuously. Virtue implies an order in the passions that moves one to act in the same direction as rational desire. This direction sometimes is towards the search of pleasure and avoidance of pain, and other times it is the opposite, although in the virtuous action pleasure prevails over pain. Aristotle clearly states that the good man rejoices in the virtuous action; he feels a kind of pleasure, a satisfaction and a gratification in acting virtuously (*NE* 1099a).

As Roberts (1989) states, Aristotle indicates two affective phenomena: the contentment obtained when performing an activity, and the joy, the satisfaction, for doing something well. Either way, according to Aristotle, the person that acts virtuously rejoices. Therefore, in coherence with the Aristotelian theory of passions and virtues, it seems reasonable to think that rejoicing in virtuous actions is a sign of a good person. We could also consider that joy becomes a virtuous emotion, as

interpreted by Kristjánsson (2018), or a virtue of proper affect, as defined by Roberts (1989). In other words, good character contains joy, and the good man is joyful. But still, how is joy a virtuous feeling?

4.5.2   Right Be Happy

Perhaps one of the texts inspired in Aristotle that the promoters of the different currents of EC repeat the most is the following:

> I mean moral virtue; for it is this that is concerned with passions and actions, and in these there is excess, defect, and the intermediate. For instance, both fear and confidence and appetite and anger and pity and in general pleasure and pain may be felt both too much and too little, and in both cases not well; but to feel them at the right times, with reference to the right objects, towards the right people, with the right motive, and in the right way, is what is both intermediate and best, and this is characteristic of virtue (*NE* 1106b).

In reference to the passions, the middle term is between the extremes of two relations. The extremes are defect and excess, too little and too much. The two relationships are with respect to the object of the passion, and with respect to the subject moved by the passion. Relationships intersect. Not being passionate about anything known as good or bad is a defect, a vice. Not being passionate with the right intensity to this something is a vice. Otherwise, excess is also a vice. Nonetheless, the assessment does not end at this point. The defect and excess of passion is not only in relation to how a human being should react to an object. We also establish defect and excess in relation to each individual human being (his natural aptitudes, health or illness, the situation in which he is). Thus, only taking into consideration how things are, how we are and in what concrete circumstances we are is that can we clarify when and how it is due to be passionate.

What is the virtuous mean of joy? Aristotle considers that some actions and passions do not have a mean that can indicate a virtuous disposition. He proposes envy as an example of this. Envy is bad in itself. In this sense, we can begin to establish joy as a virtue or virtuous emotional disposition since it is defined as the passion produced before good. That is how Aristotle expresses it as we have seen previously. Moreover, there is joy in the presence of the good. The virtuous person is who feels joy for what he should, that is, for what is good. We understand, thus, the Aristotelian expressions that I have explained in the previous section. Human beings are pleased or saddened, they desire, love, have hope, when they know their virtues or the virtues of others. They also enjoy or ache with well or bad actions. So, one way to recognize that a man is good, that he already has virtue, is the pleasure that accompanies the realization of a virtuous action.

Rejoicing before the right thing is a learnt reaction. People learn to feel in a certain way from the early childhood. That affection permeates life, it becomes stable and it is not easy to erase: "And we measure even our actions, some of us more and others less, by the rule of pleasure and pain. For this reason, then, our whole inquiry must be about these; for to feel delight and pain rightly or wrongly has no

small effect on our actions" (*NE* 1105a). Being rightly or wrongly pleased depends on the object, good or bad, before which the human being feels joy or sorrow. It also depends on the degree to which he feels joy or pain. I cannot examine this aspect in detail, but it is necessary to mention that joy as a virtue has the greatest goods as object, such as friendship, contemplative activity, and it also goes together with gratitude (*NE* 1155a). That is, because of the object, the *best* joy is the reaction to the greater goods. You can learn to rejoice in the good by training in knowing and estimating reality. By reason of intensity, the *best* joy is that which is a reaction proportionate to the object and the temperamental capacity of the subject. The *perfect* joy is the stable disposition or virtue by which people enjoy, are encouraged, satisfied with the knowledge of the goods they possess, in a proportionate intensity to the known good. The joy of some is good for others; joy spreads to those who are well disposed.

Regarding the degree of the feeling of joy, the defect is in the state and reaction of discouragement, passivity, insensitivity, something like being sad about what one should be happy. Extreme of joy is seen as a lot of energy, spirit, vivacity and movement. The extreme could be the one who rejoices in everything with the same intensity, or is intensely animated no matter what happens, or the one who feels that way without knowing why. It seems that at these extremes the person barely reflects on the real good. This situation is vicious if the person is responsible for that little thinking. This Aristotelian text helps us finish this section: "if life is desirable, and particularly so for good men, (...) (for they are pleased at the consciousness of the presence in them of what is in itself good" (*NE* 1170 b).

4.6   Character Education and Joy

I presented above some representative ideas of the Aristotelian practical philosophy on character, passions, virtues and happiness. We acquire character on the basis of an inherited disposition and within a social and cultural context, where we can comprehend, imitate and exercise different kinds of acts: perceptions, passions, thoughts, purposes and actions. We show and learn character with practice. My suggestion is that on the basis of this Aristotelian theory one cannot only be joyful, but also be a joyful person, and that this quality can be acquired. Joy is not only an emotional disposition that depends on one's disposition. Joy reflects, at least, that a person recognises the good he has in his life, the good he has, the good he does, the good others do. So one may ask, in the current CE approaches inspired in Aristotle, what role do passions have? Do these approaches mention joy? If they do, what for?

4.6.1   Character Education

A reference of excellence in the study and practical development of CE based on the virtue ethics, and inspired mainly by Aristotle, is the Jubilee Centre for Character &

Virtues (2017). What role do passions play? The authors and educators of this approach do not use the word *passion* but *emotion* or *feeling*, as it is the custom today. The theoretical assumptions on character, moral virtues, human flourishing, the harmonic integration of all the faculties in the virtuous action, etc., are based on a broad understanding of Aristotelian ethics and politics. The promoters of this approach to CE recognise the important role that emotions have for performing good actions and avoiding risky behaviours. Emotions are an important element of good character, and hence of moral virtues. Persons are not really motivated to feel well or to do good if they have not cultivated a good character (Sanderse 2012).

Does joy have any space in the CE programmes that the Jubilee Centre promotes? The answer is negative, or at least it is not directly present. Among the seven main moral virtues that stand out in the Jubilee Centre's approach, three are the most related to emotions: (1) compassion, as a virtuous emotion; (2) courage, as a virtue that leads to regulate fear in particular; and (3) gratitude, defined as "feeling and expressing thanks for benefits received" (Arthur et al. 2017, p. 37). In my opinion, gratitude is a kind of joy. This feeling consists in rejoicing for a type of good, the received goods. To be grateful, you have to think about the given good and that it is a gift. By exercising these thoughts, you promote the right kind of emotion that implies joy.

Indirectly, joy is considered closely following the Aristotelian inspiration, as a sign that a person reaches the fourth and last stage of moral development, that is, when the person attains virtue. In this state, the human being acts virtuously with pleasure; reasons and feelings are connected. This pleasure manifests the desire satisfied by obtaining a good, the virtue, and it is a sign of a correct reaction, of deep joy and satisfaction, connected with the reasonable choice for good, even if it is difficult to carry it out. In their CE programmes, the Jubilee Centre suggests activities of emotion recognition, what they are, how they are and how they are integrated virtuously into actions. One of the emotions mentioned is happiness, being happy, which is equated to joy.

4.6.2   Positive Youth Development

We can also consider this approach as a modality of CE, because one of the main results of a good development of the person is character, that is, the set of positive capacities of a human being (Benson and Pittman 2001; Damon 2004; Park 2004). This modality is based on the approach of positive psychology, a way of conceiving psychological intervention in order to prevent physical and mental illness, and not as a set of therapeutic procedures (Seligman 2002; Peterson 2006; Center of Positive Psychology 2019).

Positive psychology has been extended into education by introducing positive education (Seligman et al. 2009). The theory of positive psychology speaks about positive abilities as virtues and strengths of character. Aristotelian philosophy also inspires scholars within this approach, recognising him as an important

representative of the moral philosophical tradition. Academics quote him more often than other philosophers for example, for the role he gives to prudence, for his notion of habit, for his conception of happiness and as an intellectual authority that endorses some of the virtues that stand out as positive character traits in positive education programmes.

Does joy have any space in positive education? The answer is affirmative, although with a different meaning to the one argued above in which I attempted to develop an Aristotelian approach to it. Joy is mentioned (a) when describing happiness; (b) when listing the 24 character strengths (Peterson and Seligman 2004); and (c) in some of the questions of the Self-Report Questionnaires that allow each subject to recognise their qualities (Peterson and Seligman 2005).

When Seligman (2002) describes the objective of positive psychology, he presents his theory about happiness. The happy life is understood as a life full of joy, in the sense of an emotion that denotes high spirits or the energy that someone feels. This feeling is a positive emotion oriented towards the present; it is a superior pleasure, integrating the pleasant life. Eleven years later, this author explains that true happiness is well-being, recognisable by five elements (Seligman 2011). The first of them is a group of positive emotions among which we find joy (Fredrickson 2016).

We find a similar meaning of joy in the description of one of the character strengths: vitality (zest, enthusiasm, vigour, energy), a character strength that integrates the virtue of courage, helping to approach life with excitement and energy, feeling alive and activated (Peterson and Seligman 2004). We can see this same sense of joy in some tests on emotions in which the questions are about the degree to which the subject feels happy (euphoric, jubilant) (Seligman 2002). In the Signature Strengths Test, the emotions that resemble joy are the name of a character strength: zest, passion and enthusiasm, and integrate the virtue of transcendence. Those emotions similar to joy present a spiritual person.

In these CE programmes, joy is recognised as a sign of virtuous actions and a happy life. Nevertheless, they hardly propose it as a virtue, as excellence that can be shown when educating, and as a component of the character that can be acquired. It is reasonable to consider these "valuable elements" of joy "stretching" Aristotle's thought on passions and virtues.

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Chapter 5
Desire and Freedom: Are We Responsible for Our Emotions?

Martín F. Echavarría

Abstract In this chapter, we address the problem of whether we are responsible for our desires. For desire to enter the field of responsibility, it must fall into the category of a human act; that is, it must be deliberate and voluntary. Desires, insofar as they are emotions, apparently belong to the non-rational and not free sphere of the human being, and are often activated without the participation of reason, will and consciousness. In our chapter, however, we demonstrate how the emotional life and, therefore, the desire can enter the moral sphere itself. We do so by resorting to the Thomistic conception of the relations between reason, will and emotions. For this purpose, we distinguish, in the first place, two different genres of desire, those of the rational appetite (as the acts of intention and choice) and those of the sensitive appetite. Second, we appeal to the scholastic distinction between antecedent emotions and consequent emotions, which are different in their relation to morality and are an important point to approach the education of desire from the point of view of the virtue ethics.

Keywords Desire · Free will · Philosophy of Emotion · Psychology of Emotion · Emotional Responsibility

5.1 Emotions: Between Health and Moral Sciences

To talk about desire is to talk about the realm of feelings and emotions. In the vernacular of today, this seems to be a field of study mainly of psychology and neurosciences and, therefore, apparently of natural determinism. This would give the impression that we cannot choose what we desire but, at best, we can only give free channel to desire or curb it by the action of the will. It would be, therefore, a field

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outside of morals or that, at most, concerns it in terms of the execution of acts that lead to satisfying desire, but not in terms of the inner movement of desire.

Despite the apparent evidence of these claims, we believe that they depend on a significant misunderstanding that has its roots in Cartesian voluntarism and Kantian formalist ethics. For a non-dualistic anthropological concept and for the Aristotelian ethical tradition, the substantial and operational unity between the spiritual and the bodily, and between will and desire, gives rise to a much more subtle and nuanced discourse on the morality of passions. Nevertheless, in our time, we have reached a situation of maximization of the bio-sanitary perspective, which tends to absorb all human affairs into its perspective. An example of this is seen in the World Health Organization's (WHO) constitutional definition of health: "Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity." This definition has been much praised for its holistic character. However, one suspects that it is so holistic that it goes beyond the field of health sciences. In fact, in essence it matches Boethius' definition of happiness (*De consolatione philosophiae*, III, 2): "the perfect state in which all goods are possessed." For classical philosophy, there are three kinds of goods: exterior, of the body and of the soul (*Summa Theologiae*, II-II, q. 85, a. 3, ad 2[1]). These three goods correspond to the physical, mental and social well-being as defined by the WHO. This shows us clearly how easy it is to slip from the field of health sciences to ethics. At this point, the issue of emotions is especially delicate.

In the last century, Yves Simon lucidly stated that the field of emotions is intertwined with that of freedom; therefore, a merely empirical and aseptic psychological approach is not enough, but that ethical valuation is required. These are his words:

> At the same time, however, we must not let pass unchallenged the persistent attempts to extend the scope of psychology to problems that are really problems of ethics and can only be understood in the light of moral principles. In fact, such efforts to subject all affective life to empirical speculative procedures of modern psychology go back at least three-quarters of a century. For instance, writing in the 1860s, a well-known author [Ribot] insisted that for psychology there are not good or bad passions any more than there are useful and harmful plants for the botanist. Such distinctions, he said, are what moralists and gardeners are interested in. That is a seductive but sophistic parallel. To a plant it matters not whether it causes joy or its opposite in the lover of gardens; but a passion, considered in its concrete exercise, directly affects the moral destiny of the free agent. And that is why, when it studies human passions, psychology becomes less of a natural science than when it studies, for example, memory. It may not be easy to draw a straight line between a psychological and an ethical problem, but it is safe to say that the moment the possibility of free choice enters the picture, psychology, if it eschews all value judgements, cannot provide a full explanation of the case.

> Leaving choice out of consideration cannot but distort our understanding of human experience, including emotional responses. We found in such attempts the last word of scientism.

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[1] Aquinas' *Summa Theologiae* will be quoted in the classical way (part, volume, question, article), and the pages and edition will be used just in the case of text quotations. The translation of the text of the *Commentary on the Sentences* is ours.

> After its arrogant pretention to subject metaphysical problems to the judgements of positive science, scientism is now working on the *physication of moral things*, so to speak (Simon 2002).

It is evident that emotions are ordinarily impregnated with morality. Envy, for example, which has always been regarded as morally bad, is a form of sadness aimed at the good of another, likewise shame and cowardice are forms of fear, and so forth. In the following pages, we therefore address the issue of freedom of emotions from a psychological and ethical perspective based on the Aristotelian ethical tradition and, within it, on the contributions of Thomas Aquinas.

5.2 Desire, Appetite and Emotions

Before proceeding to the core issue, it is necessary to clarify the meaning of words. When we talk about responsibility, firstly, we are referring to the ability to give a "response" to the reasons for our actions. This ability to respond depends on our being a perfect cause of them; that is, that these acts are free. That they are free means that the judgement that specifies them is free and that the act of following that judgement is free. The notion of freedom implies, on the one hand, full causality: "*liber est causa sui*" (*Summa Theologiae,* I, q. 96, a. 4, co.). This causality is that of an appetite specified by a previous judgement, coming from a deliberation. On the other hand, it means an absence of coercion. More specifically, this means that in order to cause the act, judgement that specifies and is the formal cause of the free act depends on the indeterminacy of the will.

Let's turn to the word "desire." According to the *Oxford Dictionary of English* (2006), the word "desire" means "a strong feeling of wanting to have something or wishing something to happen". Read philosophically, this definition can correspond to two distinct concepts, one broader and one narrower. In its broad sense it may correspond to the Greek "*orexis*" and the Latin "*appetitus*". In this first sense, when we ask ourselves whether desire is responsible, we ask ourselves if one can be responsible for one's orectic movements, whether these be love, hate, envy, sadness, anger, hope, joy, etc. Since the Greeks, philosophy has distinguished between the sensitive appetite, which in turn is divided into concupiscible and irascible, and the rational appetite. Taken in this first meaning, the question of the responsibility of desire could therefore refer to (a) the responsibility of any affective tendency of any kind, (b) the responsibility of the tendencies of the sensitive appetite (emotions) or (c) the responsibility of the rational appetite. The second, narrower meaning of desire is that according to which the word designates a particular type of act of the appetite, which is one that consists of craving something that is not possessed. This corresponds to the Greek "*epithymía*" and Latin terms "*concupiscentia*" and "*desiderium*". Since, however, all these questions are theoretically connected to each other, we will try to answer all of them, starting with the most general and finishing with the most particular.

Let's start, then, by framing the notion and types of appetite. Appetite in general is defined as an inclination or tendency towards the good. Thomistic philosophy distinguishes three types of appetite: natural, sensitive and intellectual or rational (*Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 80). Because of its substantial form, the natural appetite is the inclination, proportion or reference of any entity to its own perfect act (Prevosti 2016). This is not the type of appetite that interests us here. The other two forms of appetite are what are known as an elicited appetite. The elicited appetite results from the intentional existence of the entities in the mind through their forms, that is, through knowledge (Echavarría 2017). As there are two levels of knowledge—the sensitive and the intellectual—there are also two kinds of appetite: the one that follows sensory knowledge, and the one that follows rational knowledge. Of these two types of appetite we will consider the problem of their freedom and responsibility, including in both cases the freedom of desire understood as "*concupiscentia.*"

The movements of the sensitive appetite have been referred to by classical philosophy as "passions", a word that, after Descartes, ends up being replaced by the word "emotions" (Echavarría 2019). While it is true that "emotions" is a polysemic word that cannot be fully identified with the classic "passions" (Lombardo 2011); nevertheless both words ordinarily tend to coincide in their meaning. In this regard we will use the word "emotion".

There are very differing classifications of emotions in contemporary psychology (Cornelius 1996). The most widespread is that of Paul Ekman's basic emotions (Ekman 1972), which is neither the only one nor the most accurate. We will follow the classical classification of Thomas Aquinas, which has been updated and validated by the experimental psychologist Magda B. Arnold (1960a, b), to whom we shall return shortly. This is a classification based on differences in the object of the acts of the appetite, which is what specifies them. The emotions of the concupiscible appetite are aimed at the pleasurable good for the sense, or the evil that opposes it, resulting thereby in six emotions:

1. Love, which is the first reaction of the appetite to the presence of a good
2. Hate, which is the first reaction of the appetite to the presence of what opposes the beloved one, such as an evil that threatens or has apprehended the beloved one
3. Desire, which is the tendency to search for an absent good
4. Aversion, which is the tendency to flee from an approaching evil
5. Joy, which is the reaction of the appetite to the present good
6. Sadness, which is the reaction of the appetite to the presence of evil (*Summa Theologiae*, I-II, q. 25, a. 2)

The emotions of the irascible appetite are more complex because its object is the difficult good. The difficult good is something that is appreciated as a good by a faculty superior to the senses, and that, for these, is rough and, therefore, is a good with a mixture of bad. What is good attracts, and what is bad repels. The result of the irascible appetite is five passions, which include:

1. Hope, which is the movement of appetite towards the search for an arduous good that is considered achievable

2. Despair, which is the opposite movement, of escape from an arduous good that is considered impossible to achieve
3. Daring, which is the movement of the appetite to combat a future evil that is seen as possible to overcome
4. Fear, which is the movement in the form of escape before a future evil that is considered impossible to overcome
5. Anger, which is movement in the form of resistance and combat against the evil that is present (*Summa Theologiae*, I-II, q. 25, a. 3)

If we take "desire" in its most general sense, all these movements could be called desire. If we take it in its strictest sense, "desire" means only one kind of movement of the sensitive appetite, namely that in which we tend to find something apprehended as an absent good (*Summa Theologiae*, I-II, q. 30, a. 1 and 2). You desire what you want but do not have. As such, desire has not been apprehended—at least not yet—as an arduous good. Desires can be natural, such as sexual desire, the desire to eat or drink, the desire to sleep and so forth, or they can be cognitively and socially acquired desires, such as the desire to have wealth, or to have certain clothing brands, or to become a film star (*Summa Theologiae*, I-II, q. 30, a. 3). Are desires—that is, these types of movements of the concupiscible appetite—be considered responsible? To be responsible, they should be authentic human acts, that is, acts that come from deliberation and are free. This seems to be something difficult to affirm, since emotions, including desires, are activated by non-rational and even unconscious processes.

5.3   The Psychology of the Activation of Emotions

That emotions are activated by non-intellectual processes is a very well-established thesis today. Cognitive psychology usually recognizes two levels of cognitive functioning (dual process theory). One level is singular, automatic, which produces contingent associations and is shared by people and animals (System 1 or Type 1). The second level is an abstract, reflexive, rational type that is specific to the human being (System 2 or Type 2) (Evans 2017; Kahneman 2003; Sloman 1996). The second activates the actions we call voluntary. The first, which is relatively independent of the second, activates emotions. These theses of cognitive psychology are recent derivations of the theory of the activation of emotions as proposed by the Czech-American psychologist Magda B. Arnold. Arnold formulated the first cognitive theory of emotions, known as the "appraisal theory", in the late 1950s and early 1960s. (Arnold 1960a, b). From this theory the work of Richard Lazarus was founded (1966) and, from him, all the subsequent developments of cognitive psychology of emotions (Echavarría 2019). This theory was intended to overcome the problems of previous theories, which were inserted in the discussion initiated by the James-Lange theory (James 1884). In the latter, which was heir to the Cartesian approach to emotions (Echavarría 2019), emotion was reduced to the sensation of

the organic modifications produced by a previous perception. Arnold sees two problems in this concept: (a) emotions would be activated by mere perceptions, and (b) emotion is reduced to a sensation, thereby losing its orectic character. In general terms, Arnold's thesis, widely confirmed by subsequent research, is that emotions are psychosomatic tendency movements that have their origin in an appraisal. This appraisal is a cognitive act that is not reduced to a perception or an idea. This appraisal must include a type of judgement of value or evaluation that presents, to the animal or individual, what it had previously known perceptually as something that has some kind of vital relationship with the subject that it values. The appraisal is knowledge of the vital value to the animal or individual of the perceived or imagined object. This judgement is not intellectual or reflexive. Arnold calls it "sensory judgement". This sensory judgement is not abstract, but concrete; it is not reflexive, but unthinking and automatic; and it is not necessarily aware. Arnold argued, however, that while emotions motivate us, they do not ordinarily force us to act. An intellectual, reflexive assessment can prevent us from acting according to an emotion and that we can choose to act in a way opposite to the inclination of the emotion.

This way of understanding emotion is, at least in general, not completely new. It is an updated version of a theory that has its roots in Aristotle (Pearson 2012). Avicenna explicitly developed this theory, with the introduction between the inner senses of an estimative power (Wolfson 1935), an idea that scholastics, particularly to include Thomas Aquinas, adopted (Allers 1941; Klubertanz 1952; Fabro 1961; Muszalski 2014). In its Thomistic version, the general idea is as follows. The external senses are those that capture the formal information of the bodies (proper senses and common senses) through peripheral nerve terminals (the distinct senses). In addition to the external senses are the inner senses. The inner senses are central faculties located in the brain that elaborate the sensory information at a higher level. These are (in its Thomistic version): common sense; imagination; the estimative power (or "cogitative power" in man, following Averroes); and sensory memory (*Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 78, a. 4).

Common sense and imagination are "formal" senses. In other words, common sense and imagination elaborate at a more complex level of integration the same data received by the senses without yet apprehending meanings. Common sense integrates data from the distinct senses, connects and compares it. The imagination retains what is received from the external senses and the common sense and reproduces it in an image when the object is absent from the senses. In contrast, the estimative power and memory are "intentional" senses, that is, senses that add to the mere formal elaboration the apprehension of meanings (*intentiones*). The meanings can be of two types: universal, which are apprehended by the intellect, and particular, which are those that are apprehended by the estimative power. The "*vis aestimativa*" is so called because its function in the animal psyche is to apprehend vital meanings in the configurations apprehended by the external senses and the formal internal senses (Allers 1941). These meanings are particular, vital and pragmatic (Echavarría 2018). They are particular because it is not a universal concept, but of the individual ("my mother", for example, not "mother"). They are

vital because they affect the life of the subject (such as its food, its home, its friend). They are pragmatic because they move to action (for the animal mother, to apprehend something as her offspring is, at the same time, to prepare to act on her offspring with some action of maternal care), but they do it by activating first the passions or emotions in such a way that the estimative power would be, in this theory, the one that evaluates the vital value that a thing has, and this evaluation would activate the emotion. As it is a non-intellectual evaluation that depends on many factors (instinctive or learned), it can be unconscious and precede an assessment made from intellectual principles.

It is important to note that the coincidence between these theories of classical philosophical psychology and those of cognitive psychology is not accidental. Arnold, who was an experimental psychologist, received an explicit and documented influence of the Thomistic concept of the inner senses and passions, an influence she herself recognized (Arnold 1963). The way in which she conceived the evaluation that precedes the emotions, her concept of emotion and even her classification of emotions are based very deeply on Thomistic psychology (Cornelius 2006; Echavarría 2019). From this cognitive and Thomistic conception, it follows that emotion depends on cognition, but not immediately on intellectual cognition. Instead, emotions depend on that specific cognition which relates to that sensory evaluation. Consequently, the possibility of being responsible for our emotions will depend on the ability to govern that type of cognition.

5.4   Antecedent Emotions and Consequent Emotions

What has been said so far allows us to understand that, on the one hand, emotions are immediately activated by a faculty other than reason, and that on the other hand, in the human being the mere activation of emotions is not ordinarily sufficient to move to action. Instead, action is waiting for the consent of the will, when this is possible. We must now take another step to understand that emotions are not just another motivational factor of moral action but an element that can be intrinsically moral. For this it is necessary to explain two things: (a) the articulation between intellectual evaluation and internal sensory evaluation and (b) the articulation between will and emotion. The most complete explanation of this dual articulation is the Thomistic doctrine of antecedent passions and consequent passions.

According to Aquinas, the sensitive appetite can be considered in two ways: either in itself, or in its functional relationship with reason and will. Considered in itself, the sensitive appetite, which is also found in animals, is foreign to the will and, therefore, to responsibility. It is activated by the estimative faculty. From this point of view, the sensitive appetite can be the source of involuntary acts (or at least, mitigate the voluntary nature of the acts), but it is not free and responsible. Considered in its relation to reason and will, the sensitive appetite enters the field of morality (*Summa Theologiae*, I-II, q. 24, a.1). This is because there are two types of emotions: (a) those that are activated before the judgement of reason and (b) those

that are activated as a result of the activity of reason and will. The first are called antecedent emotions or passions, or the "first movements of sensuality" (Echavarría 2013), and the second, consequent passions. The former are not activated by acts of deliberation and choice, and, therefore, do not fully comply with the concept of the human act. The latter, although movements of the sensitive appetite, are fully voluntary and, therefore, responsible, deliberately and freely participating in the acts of reason and will. This is how Aquinas explains the process by which both types of emotion occur (*Summa Theologiae*, I-II, q. 24, a. 3, ad. 2):

> The passions of the soul may stand in a twofold relation to the judgement of reason. First, antecedently: and thus, since they obscure the judgement of reason, on which the goodness of the moral act depends, they diminish the goodness of the act; for it is more praiseworthy to do a work of charity from the judgement of reason than from the mere passion of pity. In the second place, consequently: and this in two ways. First, by way of redundance: because, to wit, when the higher part of the soul is intensely moved to anything, the lower part also follows that movement: and thus the passion that results in consequence, in the sensitive appetite, is a sign of the intensity of the will, and so indicates greater moral goodness. Secondly, by way of choice; when, to wit, a man, by the judgement of his reason, chooses to be affected by a passion in order to work more promptly with the co-operation of the sensitive appetite. And thus a passion of the soul increases the goodness of an action (Aquinas 1914).

We have, first of all, the preceding passions. These are activated in the way explained by the psychological theories mentioned above. This is to say that antecedent passions are activated regardless of the action of reason. Preceding passions will instead be activated first, by the preceding evaluation of the estimative faculty based on instinctive inclinations and previous experience. Secondly, we have the consequent passions. Aquinas proposes two ways in which these consequent passions or emotions would be activated. We will begin by explaining the second mode, and then we will move on to the issue of redundancy. Aquinas refers here to the possibility of choosing to be affected by certain emotions. How is it possible for one to choose which emotions affect one, if they are activated by a sensitive faculty, the estimative faculty? The key to the solution is in the cogitative power or *vis cogitativa* (De Haan 2014). Cognitive theories, particularly the recent dual processing theory, give the impression that the human being is radically divided into two minds: the intuitive and the rational. This point of view is useful for explaining cognitive biases and other unconscious cognitive processes. But this point of view can lose sight of the operational unit of the human being, which is so important for understanding the moral dimension of emotions. The cognitive power is a key point in this integration.

According to the Thomistic perspective, the cogitative power is the same power as the estimative power. The latter is called "estimative" when it proceeds to evaluate according to innate dispositions not dependent on reasoning, as occurs in animals. Although animals are able to associate and learn, animal learning consists of redirecting new forms presented by their sensitive experience to instinctive evaluation schemes. In humans, this level of functioning of the estimative power is present, as is evident in childhood, but also in adults. However, in addition to this instinctive functioning of the ability to apprehend particular meanings, in humans this faculty is

elevated by its ontological and operational insertion into the higher powers of human beings. In addition to functioning in this natural estimative way, in humans this faculty receives the name of "cogitative power" or "particular reason", which differs from universal reason. The reason for this denomination is primarily because humans can enrich their experience of instinctive particular valuation schemes through a kind of reasoning about particulars.

By comparing particular meanings humans can grasp new meanings. These are contingent connections between particular meanings, which are inferences based on experience and which can be expressed in a propositional structure, such as "Peter is my enemy; John is Peter's son; therefore, John is my enemy". These kinds of inferences are not acts of intelligence or universal reason but of the particular reason, which deals with the singular. In addition, the cogitative power, through its radical insertion into the mind, is able to apprehend the individual under the universal concept. Terms such as "this man" or "this orchid" are not only important in terms of vital and pragmatic meanings. Such terms also have an epistemological importance for the development of the speculative capacity of man, which is a discussion that goes beyond the purview of this chapter (Echavarría 2018).

Finally, the cogitative power is called *particular reason* because it is subordinated in its operation to universal reason, that is, to intelligence in the strict sense. Because the action is always about singular judgements, this subordination allows movement from universal moral judgements to particular judgements that can move to action. Thus, starting from a universal premise such as "I must not hate my father," man through his cogitative power introduces a second singular premise. This second premise serves as a middle term, a premise that corresponds to the cogitative faculty, such as "this man is my father". This mediation will allow a conclusive judgement to be reached that may specify the act of choice by the will ("I must not hate this man"). Because the cogitative power is the same faculty as the estimative power—that is, the particular faculty that moves emotions—the emotions are also moved, because the cogitative power is the same faculty as the estimative power. Saint Thomas explains this procedure of rational and free activation of emotions in the following paragraph (*Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 81, a. 3, co.):

> In two ways the irascible and concupiscible powers obey the higher part, in which are the intellect or reason, and the will; first, as to reason, secondly as to the will. They obey the reason in their own acts, because in other animals the sensitive appetite is naturally moved by the estimative power; for instance, a sheep, esteeming the wolf as an enemy, is afraid. In man the estimative power, as we have said above, is replaced by the cogitative power, which is called by some 'the particular reason,' because it compares individual intentions. Wherefore in man the sensitive appetite is naturally moved by this particular reason. But this same particular reason is naturally guided and moved according to the universal reason: wherefore in syllogistic matters particular conclusions are drawn from universal propositions. Therefore it is clear that the universal reason directs the sensitive appetite, which is divided into concupiscible and irascible; and this appetite obeys it. But because to draw particular conclusions from universal principles is not the work of the intellect, as such, but of the reason: hence it is that the irascible and concupiscible are said to obey the reason rather than to obey the intellect. Anyone can experience this in himself: for by applying certain universal considerations, anger or fear or the like may be modified or excited (Aquinas 1922).

We all have experiences where emotions have been modified through the influence of thought. This possibility that thoughts affect emotions is given by the synergy of universal reason and particular reason. Reason governs the sensitive appetite with politic and not despotic governance (*Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 83, a. 3, ad 2). However, this influence is not infallible, and the appetite must be habituated to obey reason through the virtues. On the other hand, as the cogitative power, especially functioning under the mode of the animal estimative power, it can also be activated from below. This is to say that, by imagination under the influence of instinctive dispositions and by habits, the influence of reason on emotional activation is limited. Often an experience touches deep instinctive dispositions, or acquired dispositions closely linked to those instinctive dispositions, as sometimes happens in some mental pathologies. In such cases, reason can be impotent in imposing its rational judgement on passions or can generate an emotional conflict. This does not mean that there is no morality in emotions, but that it indicates a limit. Suffice it to say that the healthy individual, in ordinary circumstances, can influence his/her emotions enough so that they have a strictly moral value, and to form in his/her sensitive appetite the virtues or vices that will incline him/her to accept or reject the mandates of the right reason. However, the possibility of the influence of reason on emotions allows us to also glimpse the opposite situation, that is, those in which it is the moral disorder that depends on a non-right reason—that is, dependence on an unordered will and the vices of the sensitive appetite—which can end up producing a disorder in the internal senses and in the sensitive appetite, as recent psychology research shows (Heyman 2010; Dunnington 2011; Álvarez-Segura et al. 2017).

Secondly, we have the articulation between will and emotions that occurs in the phenomenon of *redundantia* (Echavarría 2016). "*Redundantia*", which could be translated into English as "overflow", is a psychological phenomenon whereby an intense tendency of the will overflows the sensitive appetite, thus permeating, so to speak, the emotions of the affect present in the will. A deep understanding of this concept entails two things: first, understanding the will as an affective faculty and not as a cold faculty without feelings (Echavarría 2016), and next, conceiving the faculties as radically linked to each other in the person in such a way that what happens in one can immediately affect the others without going through the mediation of cognition (*De veritate*, q. 26, a. 10, co). Thus, from the bottom up, strong emotions influence the inclination of the will, and vice versa, where the intense inclinations of the will also influence the emotions of the sensitive appetite. In this way the sensitive appetite participates in the voluntary nature of the act of the will. However, not by means of an indirect procedure—namely, the will influences on universal reason as this one at a time on the particular reason and finally this one on emotions—but directly, insofar as the act of will drags with its vehemence the emotions. Aquinas explains this idea it his *Commentary on the Sentences* (L. I, d. 17, q. 2, a. 1, co.):

> The fervour of charity is taken in two ways: properly and metaphorically. Metaphorically, when we say that charity is a heat, and we call the intensity of the act of charity "fervour", according to Dionysus who states that there is a fervent love in angels. Thus, fervour is consequently essential to charity [...]. Otherwise we talk about fervour as soon as it is in the

sensitive part. Well, as the lower forces follow the movement of the superior ones if it is very intense, as we see that with the apprehension of the beloved woman, the whole body becomes inflamed and moves. Likewise, when the superior affection moves towards God, a certain impression is also followed in the sensitive forces, according to which they are incited to obey divine love (Aquinas 1929).

With this we enter the field of the affective dimension of the will, which we develop below.

5.5 The Desires of the Will

Let's look now at the rational appetite, or will. However, for this we need to begin by overcoming the restrictions of the modern concept of this faculty. In modern philosophical and non-philosophical discussions, and even in popular thought, the word *will* tends to be identified with, on the one hand, the ability to choose, and on the other hand, with the ability to resist the impulse of the most fervent affective tendencies (willpower). In both senses, the will does not seem to have its own inclination, but rather to be an instance that mediates between reason and emotion. Especially in the second of the senses, rather than the freedom of desire, it would be about freeing oneself from desires by the willpower. I believe that this vision of the will is incomplete. This is why, protesting against this dualistic view of the will, Hildebrand spoke of the need to include a third faculty, together with reason and will, which is the "heart", to mean the faculty of spiritual feelings (Von Hildebrand 1965).

Since its origin, both in its roots in Greek thought (*telesis*) and later in Saint Augustine (*voluntas*), but especially in Aquinas, the will was viewed as essentially an affective faculty (Echavarría 2016). The will is the power of the mind by which it tends towards the good that the intellect presents. The first act of the will is "simple will" (*velle*). This is the first affective reception of a good apprehended by under-standing (*Summa Theologiae*, I-II, qq. 8–10). This act can be called "love" and is analogous to the corresponding first act of the sensitive appetite, which is an emotion. This first act of love of a good may be followed by the act of "intention" (*intentio*) of that good, when it is not yet possessed (*Summa Theologiae*, I-II, q. 12). The intention is the act of the will, for which that desired good not yet attained is taken as an end of the action by the one who has previously appreciated it as good. The intention is the appetite of a good as something to be obtained. This implies wanting to take the measures to achieve it. This is a form of intellectual desire, in the strictest sense of the word desire, because it is nothing other than craving what has not yet been achieved. This is similar to how the emotion of desire consists in the appetite of a good not yet possessed.

That said, there is a very important difference between the desires of the rational appetite and those of the sensitive appetite. While the desires of the sensitive appetite do not appear to be essentially free, but by participation, the desires of the rational appetite are essentially free. Proposing or not proposing something as an object of

intention is free in terms of specification, except in the case of the ultimate end or happiness, since every human being naturally aspires to happiness. One cannot not want to be happy. However, more radically, the intention is free with regard to the exercise of the act, because individuals, by their will, are free to implement or not the act of intention. In this regard, this kind of intellectual desire is free. There may be good or bad intentions, and this goodness or evilness of the intention is responsible because it is free. The emotions upon which this spiritual desire results will therefore also be free.

The other form of desire of the intellectual appetite is election, or choice. Choice is the act of will by which it is decided to put into action a practical judgement that is the result of a prior deliberation (*Summa Theologiae*, I-II, q. 13). If the intention is the appetite of a good taken as an end, for which the means must be sought, choice and practical judgement refer to the most appropriate means to achieve the intended end, that is, what is desired intellectually. This act of choice is an act of the rational appetite to the extent that it depends on prior deliberation. The act of choice is specified by the practical judgement, which is the result of the discernment process of deliberation. This act of choice is free because none of the judgements (still speculative) that deliberation presents necessarily moves (specifying) the rational appetite. This is so because any means presented is a particular good, distinct from the common good and the good of happiness that the rational appetite necessarily desires. Every particular good can be considered in two ways: as a good, or as not the entire good. And if it is considered from this second perspective, it can be rejected and not move the appetite. On the other hand, not only in terms of specification but also in terms of exercise, the act of choice is free. The will is free not only to carry out this or that act, but also to choose or not choose. The act of free choice is also an analogue form of desire in that it consists of the desire for something that is not yet possessed and is, moreover, a form of free desire and therefore morally responsible. The affective intensity of this desire will depend on the intensity of love and on the intensity of the intention.

In summary, in the order of intellectual and rational affectivity we have two analogical forms of desire: intention and choice. Both intention and choice are free. To the question of whether we are responsible for our desires with regard to the elicit desires of the will, the answer is affirmative.

5.6   Conclusion

With regard to the question of whether our desires are free, we have been able to verify that this question is more complex than seemed when formulating it. Desire is a polysemic word. The question can be answered in different ways depending on the meaning in which it is taken. Desire can mean any movement of the appetite, whether sensitive or rational. It can also mean appetite in general, or a special type of appetite. It can refer to one who seeks a good that it does not yet have, especially when referring to a kind of emotion. Simplifying the answer it must be said that,

even if emotions are immediately activated by a faculty of sensory order, the estimative power, which often limits the voluntary character of not only acts but also emotions, emotions can, nonetheless, participate in the category of a voluntary act. It is necessary to distinguish the emotions that precede the rational judgement from the consequent emotions, which are those that can be voluntary. Consequent emotions depend either on the influence of universal reason, through the mediation of the particular reason—the cogitative power—or on the overflow of the fervour of the effect of the will. The will leads us to the discovery of an affective dimension of the rational appetite, which is often unknown. Sensory affectivity and spiritual affectivity can function separately for several reasons. Both generate moral and psychological conflicts. Their normal, mature functioning implies that the metaphysical unity of the person, in which both types of affect lie, be transferred into an operational unity for which the positive character dispositions (the virtues) play an important role. Perfecting the cognitive and affective faculties guides all the forces of the person towards their fullness. Therefore, the discourse on the morality of emotions naturally leads to a discourse on the formation of character.

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Chapter 6
The Ethical Value of Motivation as an Operative Desire

Esther Jiménez-Hijes López

Abstract Ritchar Boyatzis defined competencies as a set of behaviors organized around an underlying construct called intention (Boyatzis. Vision: The Journal of Business Perspective 15(2):91–100, 2011). This intention, this desire, significantly and consistently influences behavior (Hogan and Shelton. Human Performance 11 (2):129–144, 1998).

As Gagné (High Ability Studies 21(2):81–99, 2010) points out, the goals that people set themselves indicate what they want to achieve. Most of the research in this field has followed this author along with the objectives and has focused on the motives, the intention, conscious or not, that justifies the choice of a certain goal.

Human motives are associated with interests, desires, passions, needs, values, willpower, determination, perseverance, intrinsic, extrinsic, or prosocial motivation, among many others. Juan Antonio Pérez López (Pérez López) distinguishes between motives—intention and motivation—the impulse required to achieve the motives—and the influence that each of the motives exerts in the formation of that impulse.

Faced with an isolated and static conception, Pérez López provides a dynamic explanation between the motives and the conditions necessary for their transformation into an "internal force" that leads to decision making. This chapter aims to show the interrelation and dynamism of the motives in people's behavior and the value of training in order to learn to evaluate "a priori" the consequences of the actions themselves.

Keywords Desire · Competencies · Motives · Motivation · Learning

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6.1   Introduction

Nowadays, the institution that has the greatest impact on people's lives today is the company they work for. A company is an organization in which its members work together to achieve certain results (Pérez López 1993). Over time, people acquire skills and abilities. Furthermore, they can develop a culture, social networks, and an organizational structure difficult to imitate by their competitors (Barney 1995).

As a result, some researchers assert the need to develop a decision science, which takes into account what affects people in particular, which other disciplines such as marketing or finance have already done (Boudreau and Ramstad 2005). These authors state that considering only efficiency and effectiveness, regardless of the impact of the actions, can lead to incomplete decisions. They also point out a series of values necessary for the company's long-term sustainability. These include contribution to the community, diversity, environmental protection, ethics, governance, human rights, social responsibility, and transparency, through which they integrate people into strategic decisions.

In line with this, Pérez López also posits that the aim of management function is to design strategies which produce economic, psychological, and ethical value. Thus, Pérez López helps us to understand that any business decision (obtaining resources, production, consumption, and so forth) implies an ethical aspect, since "each and every one of the acts of the individual is subject to ethical assessment as far as that affect other people and affect us ourselves" (Pérez López 1998). His interests lay in developing human thought as an instrument to solve real problems. Problems that require thinking, analyzing, and taking into account the context of the situation thus open an immense panorama of business ethics.

The study of ethics focuses on what we should do and how we should act as human beings (Ciulla 2004). Ethical behavior requires theoretical and practical training to help make the right decisions. The correct decision is one that leaves no value out of its consideration. Analytical anthropology represents the components that must necessarily occur in a free agent to explain its dynamic processes and shows the internal process by which moral virtue[1] is forged, considering the dynamism of the action.[2]

Pérez López's anthropological theory analyzes the internal consequences that actions have for the person who acts, as well as the interaction between human powers (cognitive, volitional, and affective) in the motives or desires (values, goods) that are present when taking a decision that generates a certain behavior.

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[1]Discussing ethics without mentioning moral virtues is like discussing mechanics without mentioning gravitation. A poetic discourse will be made, but nothing resembling a rigorous analysis. In the specific case of ethics, that omission is especially serious and has dire consequences. It implies a discourse—a way of reasoning—that not only ignores ethical realities, but supplants them using pseudo-ethical, pseudo-humanist categories, which are the opposite of true humanism.

[2]A more detailed development of this issue can be found at: López-Jurado, M. and K. Sowon, "Moral learning and the good life," Spanish Journal of Pedagogy, LXXI (255) (May-August 2013), pp. 327–341.

The pressures of everyday life can lead us to react rather than act. We usually spend time trying to guess the reasons why other people act, instead of stopping to think about why we do things. Understanding what moves us when making a decision is vital for our own knowledge and learning. Pérez López's anthropological model aims to guide the practical action of people in the field of work and is appropriate for the education of desire, since it starts from the consequences that our actions have for the people with whom we interact. Therefore, this chapter follows his anthropological theory of action, proposed in his first major work, *Theory of Human Action in Organizations* (1991), which his second book *Fundamentals of Business Administration* (1993) describes in practical application.

6.2 Consequences of Actions

The education and evaluation of competencies have been introduced with great weighting in training nowadays, to which different meanings have been granted. Following Boyatzis (2011), we consider competencies as a set of behaviors organized around an underlying construct called intention. This definition distinguishes both the behavior of the person acting and the desire that moves them to perform a certain action.

The term desire is used from various perspectives. In general sphere, desires are often differentiated from the intentions of action (Malle and Knobe 2001). In the academic field, Davis (1984) distinguishes between two types of desire: volitive and appetitive. According to Davis, the appetitive desire lacks a rational basis, it is practical, whereas the volitive desire implies reasons for acting that affect the intention to do so. Taking this into account, Perugini and Bagozzi (2004) define desire as a state of mind by which an agent has a personal motivation to perform an action or reach a goal. In this chapter, we will use desire in its volitional meaning, considering it as the reason behind a person's actions.

As mentioned previously in the introduction, theoretical education is not enough in order to learn ethical behavior. Reflection that analyzes the object and the consequences that our actions will have is required. To analyze forming the right intention process and of the right desire, we will start from the results that we directly seek, desire, as well as those that occur independently of that specific interest. To achieve this will use the impact that some business decisions have had on society.

During recent years, we have verified how greed to maximize profits has brought thousands of companies to bankruptcy and, with it, personal, professional, family and social ruin of hundreds of thousands of people around the world. Companies that have caused this effect evaluated their members in terms of effectiveness and only rewarded the achievement of economic objectives.

Examples of companies, such as Enron or Lehman Brothers, show how their directors managed to raise them to international acclaim and prestige, only to then sink them as a result of the distrust they generated in investors, clients, and employees when making public the methods that were used to achieve results

(Ariño 2005). This distrust occurs when, among different "scales of values," efficiency becomes the sole purpose of the company.

Members of the organization are evaluated by their effectiveness in achieving economic goals and objectives—a necessary, but insufficient, criterion for the company's long-term sustainability. Along with effectiveness, efficiency also needs to be evaluated, that being the satisfaction of individual needs and social objectives (Locke and Latham 1990). Experience has repeatedly shown us how a company limited to seeking economic benefit often does so at the expense and harm of people and society.

Regarding Enron, in August 2001 the stock price began to fall. The Vice President of Corporate Development sent a letter to the Executive President warning him of accounting irregularities that could endanger the company. With the aim of presenting a good image of the company, instead of solving the problem, the decision was made to fabricate the financial statements. From then on, the repeated irregularities committed were the result of "learning" about the activities that would be "useful to deceive" shareholders, customers, and employees.

There was a "negative learning" whereby hiding the company's real situation was creating the habit of manipulating others. If Enron executives had stopped for a moment and not thought only of their own benefit, but had assessed the impact of their action, the results would have been different. In hindsight, it is easy to identify the need for immediate intervention. However, the executive president and a team of committed managers would have had to recognize the seriousness of the situation and the people affected, and then decide to act accordingly.

Obviously, the choices made were not the only possible alternatives. What caused them to make those decisions? What reasons led Enron executives to opt for that alternative against other possible types of action? Would the managers' learning have been different if they had taken into account the people affected by their decisions?

6.3   Results of Decisions

Every action produces results according to one or more of the following three categories:

- *Extrinsic results*. These results are caused by the reaction to the environment. They depend on the response given by one or several people to a given action. Hence the name "extrinsic result," since it does not depend directly on the person acting. If we continue with the Enron example, it would be the reaction of the employees to achieve the objectives proposed by the managers in order to obtain greater recognition and a notable increase in their economic compensation.
- *Internal results.* These occur inside the person who acts, the result of the decision she or he makes. This is what the decision maker learns and will condition, in one way or another, his or her future decisions. The essential difference with respect

to the extrinsic result is that the decision maker does not depend on the response given by the person or people with whom she or he interacts. In the case of Enron, it would be the internal impact, the imprint, that the action of deceiving is left to the managers who made the decision. If they believed their actions were appropriate, if they only thought of their own benefit, if they sensed they were shirking their responsibilities by cheating customers, shareholders, and employees, etc.

- *External results*. These are the internal results for the person affected by the decision. It is the learning that the action produces in the person and the people with whom he or she interacts. It is an external result for the decision maker and different from the action taken.

Enron had an internal audit and, led by Arthur Andersen, an external audit. Enron's executives' decision affected the people in charge of the audit and produced changes in their future behavior. Whether they were satisfied or not, and whether the profits obtained were adapted to their wishes and expectations, determined their level of willingness to continue modifying the financial statements.

These three types of results occur regardless of the desire, intention, or motive of the person acting, even if she or he is not aware of it. The criteria by which we choose a certain action over another are based on:

- *Effectiveness*. The need the person wants to cover. This is evaluated through extrinsic results (the benefits obtained).
- *Efficiency*. The learning the action provides the decision maker with, in order to meet that same need in future decisions. This is evaluated through internal results.
- *Consistency.* The impact that the decision has on the people it affects, in order to facilitate future interactions. This is evaluated through external results.

When considering the learning of the right intention, of the right desire, this triple dynamic must be assessed. If only one type of result is evaluated, the decision will be wrong, because the reality will have been only partially analyzed. If a decision is made only based on obtaining extrinsic results, the efficiency and consistency of the decision will be ignored. As we have seen, any action implies a process in which three elements necessarily intervene:

- The *interaction* (action-reaction) between the person who performs an action and the one who is affected by the decision.
- The *person performing the action*. A positive or negative learning, depending on the consistency of the action, will take place.
- The *person affected by the decision* in which, as in the previous case, positive or negative learning will occur.

The dynamism of the action that entails the interrelationship of the aforementioned elements shows that the decision itself generates consequences on the person whom the action is directed at, as well as on the person who takes it. This impact on people who interact produces learning that alters the way they face their future decisions, both personally and professionally, depending on the experience they both acquire when they interact.

Through her or his performance, a person can alter his or her relationship with another or others. If, to satisfy their material needs, they steal from someone, it will worsen their ability to maintain good relationships in terms of emotional needs.

6.4   Actions and Their Desires or Motives

There are various theories about motivation which explain people's needs. Many authors have focused on the content of these needs (Maslow 1954; McGregor and Cutcher-Gershenfeld 1960; McClelland 1971; Herzberg 1966; Alderfer 1972). Academic research on motivation describes the different material and knowledge needs. We also need to add the affective ones, to the list, with a broader sense than that granted to social or esteem needs, since the latter are often linked to psychological aspects of the person. For a better understanding of the distinction we intend to make, below we synthesize three types of basic needs:

- *Material needs*. These are satisfied through the interaction between the senses and the physical world that surrounds a person. They are linked to feelings of pleasure or pain. Ultimately, they involve the possession of things, or the possibility of establishing sensitive relationships with them.
- *Knowledge needs*. These are satisfied to the extent that a person is able to control the reality around him or her. They are linked to the ability to do things in order to get what you want. The sense of power, of security, corresponds to psychological states of satisfying these needs.
- *Affective needs*. These are satisfied through the assurance that other people are also affected the same as us. They are linked to the achievement of adequate relationships with other people, with the certainty that people care and are not indifferent to us. It is also the ability to internalize what happens to other people, to love and be loved, to satisfy emotional needs.

Unlike other approaches (e.g., Maslow 1954), these three types of needs do not constitute a hierarchy, but are all present simultaneously in a person. Meeting these needs means that the person moves with his environment on three different levels: the world of sensitive realities, the world of personal realities, and his own inner world. According to Cox and Klinger (2004, p. 124), the reasons are the value assigned to what people want to achieve, what motivates them, and the energy and effort that drives them to behave in a certain way. Desire, the reason why they choose to act in a certain way to meet those needs, can be:

- *Extrinsic desire or motive.* Those that seek a benefit from the external environment. The verb for excellence is to have or achieve (incentives, retribution, awards, status, recognition, or prestige).
- *Intrinsic desire or motive*. Those who seek to learn or acquire operational knowledge (skills, knowledge, abilities, satisfaction, and so forth). The verb for excellence is to know, learn, enjoy, appreciate, or overcome a certain challenge.

- *Desire or transcendent motive*. Those who seek the use or benefit that the action will have for others. The verb for excellence is to serve, meet the real needs of people, whether material, knowledge, and their human development.

All decision theories include the first type of motives. The second one appears frequently under the name of intrinsic motivation (Ryan and Deci 2000). The third type of motives are usually referred to as prosocial motivation (Grant 2008) even though this has a different content than that which we call transcendent (Pérez López 1993).

Avolio and Locke (2002) point out the love a person has for their spouse or children propels him or her to help them (transcendent reasons); in the case of a coworker it might be the interest of finishing a project (extrinsic motives), or to a driver in distress, it could be for benevolence or goodwill (intrinsic motives). These are all factors associated with a prosocial or altruistic motivation. These examples claim a distinction between motive and motivation, since one could be talking about three types of motives under a single denomination of prosocial motivation.

Faced with an isolated and static conception, Pérez López provides a dynamic explanation between the three types of motives and the conditions necessary for their transformation into an "internal force" that leads to decision making.

6.5   Learning and Motivation

Knowing the structure of human motives is fundamental to understanding motivation (Carver and Scheier 1998; Kruglanski et al. 2002). As we have seen earlier, the three types of motives, extrinsic, intrinsic, and transcendent, can be simultaneously present in any decision. However, some may have a greater weight than others. Our motivational construct will be determined by the weight we give to each of these reasons. Our reasons for working can be extrinsic, if our desire is to earn money, obtain notable prestige, or have our value recognized by others. If we focus our work on intrinsic motives, we will be propelled by the satisfaction of learning, for enjoying what we do, or for the challenge that professional development brings us. If we move for transcendent reasons, our intention will prioritize attending to the needs of other people: feeding our families, providing good customer service and/or that our employees can develop personally and professionally.

At first glance, money may appear less valuable. Nevertheless, like power, it is an instrumental factor whose goodness or evil depends on what we want it for. If it constitutes an end in itself (wealth, show off, etc.), we would be faced with purely extrinsic motives that will never be completely satisfied. If, on the contrary, we want it to continue training and improve at work, or to be able to help our children and/or others through an NGO, it would become a means of serving other intrinsic or transcendent reasons.

We see ourselves and interpret reality based on our motive structure. If extrinsic motives have a great weight in that structure, we become a puppet of our surroundings and a sounding board of what is happening around us.

If the weight falls on the intrinsic motives, we can spend our lives studying degrees, or climbing professional ladders, with no concern other than our own learning or overcoming challenges that do not positively affect anyone other than ourselves.

The transcendent motives help the deeper development of the person, making it life's four-by-four SUV. It does not exclude our expectation for some recognition, or feeling good about ourselves. We are not pure spirits to whom only the good of the other moves us; we also need affection.

The three types of motives entail three types of gratification: external, from the people who thank us (extrinsic); from performing a certain (intrinsic) task; and those that come from our own conscience, which in the end is the one that produces a deeper (transcendent) satisfaction.

In order to advance in the education of desire it is necessary to distinguish between the motives which we have been discussing and the motivation, or the impulse, necessary to achieve those motives. Motives and motivation are interrelated, since the motives influence the learning of motivation. They act as a force of attraction, driving a person to perform a certain action in order to fulfill a desire or need. How do we generate that motivation which leads us to achieve our desires? For this we will distinguish between:

- *Spontaneous motivation*. The impulse that automatically leads us to act based on what we already know through experience.
- *Rational motivation*. This leads us to adapt spontaneous motivation to convenience—or not—of an action.

We have ample evidence of how different it is to act, or move, when we only have abstract knowledge of something (which we acquire through rationalizing) or when we have experimental knowledge (which we acquire through experience). Fazio (1995) determined attitude to spontaneous motivation and attributed it to the same learning characteristics that are unconsciously and automatically activated toward a certain type of behavior or action. Fazio (1995) also sets out the possibility of slowing that momentum by deliberating and considering the desirability of doing so. In the following section, we will present an example to demonstrate this.

Imagine a director who has never delegated. You no doubt will have read, or been told about, the many advantages of delegation: it increases efficiency, creates more time, empowers employees, encourages motivation, etc. Thinking about this abstract knowledge, about the benefits of delegating, can encourage you to do so (rational motivation), but you can also debate the force that exerts the inertia of your lack of habit (spontaneous motivation).

If you finally overcome your resistance and delegate, you will begin to have experimental knowledge about what delegation entails. If the "experiment" went well, you will be more predisposed to do so in the following dilemma, since you know the benefits that delegation produces—both theoretically and in practice. The

more you delegate now, the easier it will be to delegate in the future. A habit that will finally make spontaneous motivation converge with rational motivation: what you rationally see as good will be easier now.

Our manager can overcome his or her initial spontaneous motivation not to delegate for different reasons: because he or she will have more time to do other jobs that will bring more benefits, or take a few vacation days. Moreover, he or she will learn to delegate and overcome the challenge of developing that competence, as well as enhancing and contributing to the professional development of the collaborator. Again, you may have one or more of these reasons, with a greater or lesser weight on your decision to delegate.

How we solve the dilemma between rational motivation and spontaneous motivation reveals whether we act through reason, or if get carried away with passion and emotions. In order to be in control of ourselves, we must be able to avoid visceral reactions and think about the right decision. Delegating is not easy if you are a perfectionist, narcissist, or simply if we find it expensive to do so. Falling systematically into unsuitable habits or actions, or that are harmful to others, drags us into a vicious circle, preventing us from growing on a personal, work, family, and social level. The immediate satisfaction we feel when carried away by spontaneous motivation gives us a negative learning, through which we achieve our goal at the cost of sacrificing a greater good. Leaving that negative circle sometimes requires putting off instant gratification in order to tune in to solid values. In contrast, generating a positive circle provides us with the strength and temperament that confer the necessary moral authority to be able to lead and lead others as well.

Let's look at the circles of positive and negative learning with another example. The director of a bank branch receives the order to sell a financial product from his or her superiors. Due to its complexity, in the past it had always been offered to professional investors who could understand the risks, costs, and expected return. However, the proposed objectives imply having to sell the product to the entire client portfolio. If he or she manages to meet these objectives, you will ensure your promotion to good position in the central offices.

The entity for which he or she works is not going through its best moment, and most of its clients are pensioners and people with a low level of education. In these circumstances, the manager could get carried away by the impulse to make an easy and profitable sale, however inappropriate it may be.

Although he or she senses that the client wishes to have enough money to cover his or her old age and leave as much as possible to his or her children, the director recommends a product with no expiration date (he should sell it to recover the invested capital), without a guaranteed return and without coverage of the Deposit Guarantee Fund in case the bank fails. In this way, it would enter a circle of negative learning by obtaining a profit based on selling and not reporting on the possible risks. From there, repeated sales will create the habit of manipulating others in order to obtain his or her desires. In this way trust is destroyed, we become unable to see the needs of others, and the range of future alternatives is also reduced.

If, on the other hand, he or she decides to inform customers about the advantages and disadvantages of choosing such products, he or she will show rational

motivation, even at the risk of losing the possible promotion. The governing reason on the initial spontaneous impulse will produce a positive learning circle, which will in turn allow you to choose the right option freely in the future. This process allows us to anticipate the consequences, discern reality more clearly, and increase our capacity for service.

6.6   Evaluative Intelligence

An authentic human motivation theory cannot be limited to recognizing the three types of motives, which need to be present in human interactions. It must also explain how each of these reasons influences the impulse formation, the motivation of the decision maker. As we have seen above, motivation is the application of the generic impulse which we all have to achieve satisfaction, with the realization of a specific action which we estimate will reach the desire. We have called spontaneous motivation the impulse that a person feels to act on something that he or she knows through experience and rational motivation to the force that controls the spontaneous impulse and adapts the action to abstract knowledge. This "internal force" is generated when choosing, among different options, the most suitable option or the most attractive and desirable.

Spontaneous motivations are automatic impulses and therefore operate directly. Rational motivations, however, will have varying influence on the action taken, depending on the degree of virtuality (ability to control spontaneous motivation and implement the most suitable alternative) that the person possesses.

In the dynamism we have been discussing, having to choose an action from several that are more—or less—attractive, inter-motivational conflicts can arise. An option may appear attractive for one type of motive versus alternatives that present more interest to others: the child who hesitates between not giving his or her mother a distaste that he or she wants to study (transcendent motive) and continue playing (intrinsic motive), or an employee who doubts whether or not to close an operation that benefits him or her (extrinsic motive), knowing that doing so will be deceiving the client. If the doubt is debated between not deceiving the client—transcendent reasons—and charging more variable—extrinsic reasons—we are facing an inter-motivational conflict, as it is a matter of choosing between different types of motives. If the doubt is due to other causes, such as the fear of loss of reputation if the act were discovered—extrinsic motivation—the conflict would be intra-motivational, since it is the same type of motives—extrinsic. The motivational quality will depend on the sensitivity that the person has toward one type of motive or another. It is often said that a person is "very human" when she or he takes into account what happens to other people and is always willing to help them. This is an attitude which implies in her or his motivation: the transcendent motives weigh heavily. Conversely, we say that a person is selfish—"inhuman"—when she or he acts with the sole purpose of seeking her or his own satisfaction, without taking into account the damage or

difficulties that this could cause to others. The degree of motivational quality will change depending on how inter-motivational conflicts are resolved.

Grant (2007) calls a perceived impact on the degree of awareness that the actions themselves affect others and, therefore, the consequences that the actions themselves have on others. This impact requires evaluating different alternatives that, in addition to extrinsic results, also take into account the transcendent results that an action will have on others.

This evaluation requires a rational motivation for transcendent reasons (Pérez López 1993), which I refer to as evaluative intelligence. I define this as the ability to anticipate, evaluate, and choose the one that includes a greater transcendent result from different alternatives. In front of this evaluative intelligence, I refer to the ability to anticipate, assess, and choose the alternative that achieves a certain extrinsic result as executive intelligence.

Affective needs are met through evaluative intelligence, through which we discover and feel the affection of others. Developing this intelligence allows us to discover which plane other people move in and to design an action plan that facilitates that others also take into account the transcendent results of their decisions. Thereby, evaluative intelligence facilitates the development of moral virtues, and executive intelligence that of operational virtues. Both intelligences, evaluative and executive, are necessary. Executive intelligence facilitates the achievement of objectives, but if it is exercised regardless of how decisions affect others, it is highly unlikely that unity will be achieved.

6.7 Evaluative Intelligence Development

Those who only use executive intelligence do so for their own benefit. Therefore, the people they interact with collaborate for obligation, or the results they obtain, or because they have no other option. Conversely, involving others in the resolution of problems and their voluntary collaboration, that is, unity of purpose, will only arise if others are considered along with developing an understanding of the impact of their actions in them. The key to evaluative intelligence development is to overcome the cost of one type of behavior or another. With regard to extrinsic or intrinsic motives, the spontaneous impulse is much stronger, because they start from a previous experience which arouses spontaneous motivation.

McClelland (1985) discovered that we can predict the different types of responses related to desire based on the preference for a certain type of incentive. The spontaneous actions people take compared with actions decided on after reflexive deliberation. Having the ability to do something—power—is a required condition, but without the determination—will—and sacrifice you are unlikely to achieve a result that brings value.

Figure 6.1 reflects the potential of the combination of these three factors for the development of evaluative intelligence. If the action is based on rational motivation for transcendent reasons, the spontaneous motivation toward these types of motives
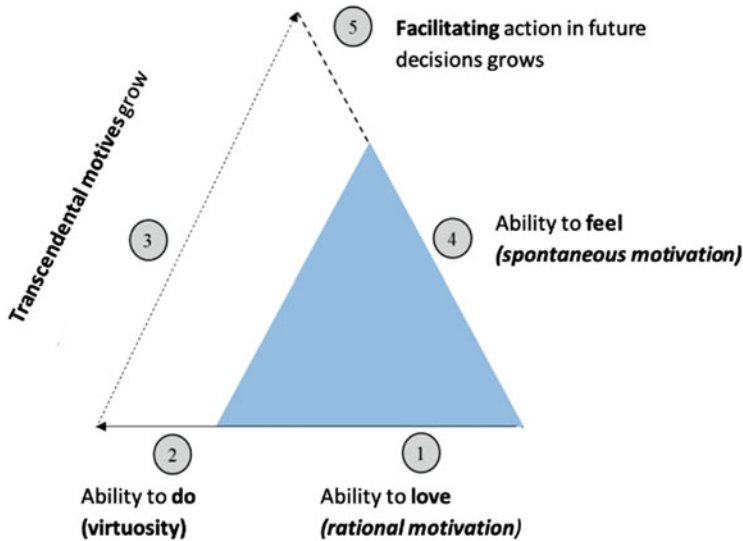
Fig. 6.1 Evaluative intelligence development

grows, as does enhanced readiness and ease toward wishing for the greater good. For this, the real need of another person must be perceived, and an action plan must be designed that includes the transcendent value of the decision (1). While other alternatives are more appealing and less expensive to do, in deciding you will use your virtuality (2) to implement the action. This will increase your ability to do things for other people (3) and will also increase spontaneous motivation for outside needs (4), facilitating action in future decisions (5):

The transcendent motives require combining reason and emotion, since the different alternatives normally involve a cost of opportunity, a sacrifice with respect to the achievement of extrinsic and intrinsic motives. This sacrifice does not mean a lose-win, using the terminology of Covey (1992), which does occur in the dynamics of extrinsic and intrinsic motives. Only through the transcendent motives is it possible for both people who interact to win, although in that interaction they must give up something. The child in the previous example, who gives up playing with the ball, gains in his ability to move for his mother's affection (transcendent motivation) and in the learning that the study will give him.

As we will see later, the extrinsic and intrinsic motives focus on the person's own interest and the result is manifested in the benefits obtained. Therefore, we usually think in terms of dichotomies: win-lose, success-failure, strong-weak. Transcendent motives are based on the paradigm that one person's gains are not achieved at the expense or exclusion of others. People with altruistic values care more about benefiting other people than those who move through selfish values (McNeely and Meglino 1994; Penner et al. 1997; Rioux and Penner 2001; Meglino and Korsgaard 2004).

The scientific debate on motivation to help others revolves around whether help is given for selfish or selfless reasons (Batson 1990; Cialdini et al. 1987; Eisenberg and Miller 1987; Haidt 2007). As Loewenstein and Small (2007) state, there are many reasons for a person to provide others with help. Pérez López distinguishes between blind altruism and selfishness, and intelligent altruism and selfishness. Extrinsic motivation corresponds to a blind selfishness, which often opposes a transcendent motivation that does not consider the real needs of people—blind altruism. Neither case values which is the most suitable action to take. Both motivations start from an instrumental intelligence based on costs and benefits. Reducing rationality to calculations leads to creating purely instrumental relationships with people and the world around us. However, evaluative intelligence would correspond to an intelligent altruism, which requires valuing the most suitable action from the point of view of the development of virtues. Grant (2007) notes that there is little research that addresses the role of the work context in the formation of prosocial motivation.

Someone who desires and acts exclusively for the money he or she will get from the sale of a product, for the challenge of closing a sale, and / or for what he or she can learn, regardless of the real needs of the client, does not move beyond his or her own interests. Whether he or she is aware of it, this way of acting will influence his or her decisions and the relationships he or she may or may not have with that client and other people in the future.

As Boyatzis (2011) highlights, behaviors are manifestations of intention, of what we want to achieve. The three-dimensional analysis that we have carried out is based on the fact that people have dynamic "structures." This being that they change their ways of operating as they learn from their experiences. It is an internal process through which moral virtue is configured. In order to achieve this, it is essential to educate desire by developing an evaluative intelligence that facilitates:

- Action based on *transcendent reasons.* That is, for the real value that people have, respecting their dignity.
- That the *motivation is rational.* That is to say, generate different alternatives that contemplate the extrinsic, intrinsic, and transcendent consequences that are expected to occur with the action, without being carried away by the one you most want.

Evaluative intelligence allows the person to get out of herself or himself and be interested in others: by asking them, by finding out their real needs, with the aim of responding appropriately to them. This will allow you to discover in each case what is most suitable action to take.

The "internal force" that generates the consequences of the decision / action in the person facilitates the correct decision making. Thus, when in the future you face a decision that is very appealing but unfair, you will be able to reject it because your rational motivation will have acquired the ease of spontaneous motivation. You will be attracted to the most suitable action to take, the good, and will have the strength to carry out that action. In this way, motivation, operational desire, will act as an ethical value in action.

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Chapter 7
Harmonising Reason and Emotions: Common Paths from Plato to Contemporary Trends in Psychology

Juan A. Mercado

Abstract Aristotle developed his proposal on the harmonisation of reason and desire in a detailed account of the essential functions of the mind, i.e. the interplay of appetites, sensitive knowledge, deliberation, and choice. Aristotle and Plato understand this harmonisation as an inner dialogue that allows humans to engage in constructive relations.

This interaction generates permanent states or habits that shape character through a permanent feedback. All this has to do with our capacity to perceive time and envision changing situations; such harmonious internal conversation requires education and assiduity to endure a great deal of effort over time.

Contemporary psychological research overlaps with relevant elements of this philosophical tradition, such as the importance of self-awareness to cope with our emotions and make them beneficial rather than destructive. This rediscovery of consciousness has significant correlates with Walter Mischel's work on self-control, the explanatory style developed by Peterson and Seligman, the mindsets proposal of Carol Dweck, and the refreshed ideas on prospection promoted by Roy Baumeister. The paper focuses on some ideas hinted at in the first chapter of the book *Personal flourishing in organizations* (Springer 2017).

Keywords Desire · Emotion · Choice · Deliberation · Reason · Will · Self-control · Virtue · Psychology

7.1 Introductory and Methodological Remarks

Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle tried to explain the intimate structure of the soul by delineating its parts and how they interact to bring about human action. They describe the physical and mental processes that allow men to engage in constructive relations and formulate that exchange in musical terms: the different parts of the

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soul—tendencies and reason—should *harmonise* so as to make possible the attainment of desired objects or situations. It is inevitable that human beings develop an internal dialogue among their inner powers in order to keep growing. This private conversation coordinates the highest demands of reason (meaningful ends) with a whole range of desires, be they vehement and ephemeral or calm and enduring.

Aristotle developed his proposal in a detailed account of the essential functions of the mind, i.e. the interplay of appetites, sensitive knowledge, deliberation, and choice. He then tried to show how those functions generate permanent states or habits (*hexeis*) and shape character in permanent evolutive feedback. All this has to do with our capacity to perceive time and foresee different situations; the harmonious internal conversation requires exertion and good upbringing (education) to endure a great deal of effort over the whole span of life. In this process, we exhibit either a vicious or a virtuous character that requires a precise way of handling different impulses, with temperance, self-control, etc.

Cross-references abound in the text, marked with "§". This will make it easier to connect the classic terms, whether among themselves or with the contemporary notions reviewed in § 7.4.

7.2 The Inescapable Heritage of Plato and Aristotle

7.2.1 Plato's Republic and the Manifesto of the Internal Human Powers

Plato's *Republic*—from now on abbreviated as *Rep.* in references—presents a very sophisticated image of the human soul. The central point of the discussions is the role of justice in society, i.e. the organisation of the city. However, in different passages, the main question turns out to be that of the honest man and the good life (cf. *Rep.* I, 329a–d and Guthrie 1975).

In the Dialogue, Glauco and Socrates agree that order is necessary to the subsistence of the *polis*, a commonwealth that should be "strong, wise, temperate and fair" (*Rep.* IV, 427e). So, the diversity of functions requires the harmonisation of its different active forces (*Rep.* IV, 427e–435b).

The ultimate version of the tripartite "division of the soul" develops in that same book, where Plato enumerates some elementary desires, their corresponding pleasures, and hints at the necessity to be virtuous to rule them (*Rep.* IV, 435c–436b) (Guthrie 1975).

The most compelling explanation of the internal dynamics of the soul appears in Book X (611a–612a) (Knuuttila 2004). There we find a symbolic image of these principles: the *rational part* is portrayed as a human being, the *concupiscible or appetitive part* (*epithumetikon*) as a many-headed beast, and the *irascible or "high-spirited" part* (*thumoeides*), represented as a lion. Plato uses the same root to refer to general desires and the concupiscible part of the soul, so his corresponding tendencies are called *epithumiai.* As for the irascible, the corresponding desire is *thumós.*

The *epithumiai* serve fundamental needs, such as hunger and thirst, and the *thumós* are the base of desires of which fulfilment requires effort (*Rep.* IV, 437d) (Knuuttila 2004). The way humans respond to these universal requirements has a wide range of nuances and degrees, and at this point, the explanation illustrates a thread of natural needs, the different responses we can manifest, and the ruling abilities that transform them into something constructive, especially temperance (*sophrosune*) and justice (*dikaiosune*) (*Rep.* IV, 439–444).

All this description requires a more sophisticated development of internal human powers, i.e. the right combination that allows us to accomplish specific tasks (*Rep.* IV, 433a): *dunameis*, "powers to do something" become *areté*, "so pitifully translated by our 'virtue'" (Guthrie 1975). Virtues are perfections or excellences of the character that allow the inner energies to be directed to specific positive functions (*Rep.* I, 353b), and justice is in the soul when each part of it is functioning as it should (*Rep.* IV, 443d–443e), or "doing its own [task]" (cf. Guthrie 1975).

The final part of this argument highlights the choral approach of Plato's explanation:

> The just man does not allow the several elements in his soul to usurp one another's functions; he is indeed one who *sets his house in order, by self-mastery* and discipline *coming a friend to himself*, and bringing into tune those three parts [*sunarmosanta*], like the terms in the proportion of a musical scale (443d). (Plato 1945, italics added)[1]

So, for Plato, the relations among the parts of the soul find their ideal in a constructive spiritual blending of the different drives and must be ensured by education (Guthrie 1975). Order, balance, and harmony acquire full meaning only in the perspective of the right love to oneself.[2] There is a close connection between the rational order and a sense of harmony in this internal dialogue. The coherent person lives supported by an *inner natural symphony* (cf. *Rep* IV, 432a).

7.2.2 Aristotle on Reconciling Reason and Feelings

Aristotle strived to find an inclusive response to the permanent tension between reason and spontaneous tendencies. He groups the different kinds of desires under the term *orexis*. He opposes an *orexis according to reason* to a merely *impulsive* one (*epithumia*), i.e. the *man* and the *lion* in the Platonic imagery. A third element emerges when the Stagirite states that a part of the irrational principle is obedient to reason "as to a father" (NE I, 1103a3).[3]

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[1]Cornford's translation is "coming to be at peace with himself". The alternative is mine. Shorey translates it as "a beautiful order". Apart from this quotation, all the other references to Plato's works are to Plato (1937).

[2]Aristotle develops this idea in his celebrated passages on friendship in *Nicomachean Ethics* IX. Henceforth I will abbreviate *Nicomachean Ethics* as NE.

[3]The text admits a reading in which the rational part, namely reason, can be distinguished by either a purely rational element or a *tendential* and moving one. See also *On the Soul* 3, 432b5–7.

So, there are three kinds of *orexis*:

- *epithumia*, merely impulsive or irrational
- *thumós*, non-rational but "docile" to reason
- *boulesis,* or rational[4]

In different texts, Aristotle reduces the opposition to that between *epithumia* and *boulesis*.[5]

The Philosopher underscores the fact that our appetitive base depends on sensitive knowledge to light up, and on reason to choose how to handle different impulses. The explanation assumes that these tendencies are *blind* and utterly dependent on cognitive resources. Reason cannot determine the movement of tendencies directly, but only by manifesting the qualities of the objects of desire and the timeliness of procuring them. Aristotle goes on by assessing that reason foresees the eventual consequences of actions in the long run and must *persuade* the rational desire (*boulesis*) so that it starts moving in a specific direction (NE I, 1102b–1103a9, III, 1119b5–18 and *Politics* I, 1254a34–b9).

Only humans as the "beings that possess a special capacity for grasping or perceiving time" (Vigo 2016) can modulate these internal drives. They possess a particular openness to temporality that enables them to detach from present stimuli and "facilitate the possibility of integrating the perspective on the medium and long term in decision-making, and of configuring their *praxis* in agreement with a total project of their life" (Vigo 2016; cf. *On the Soul* 443b7 f.).[6]

7.2.3   Virtuous Enjoyment and the Good Life

Aristotle considers that the ability to feel pleasure and evaluating its eventual fulfilment in the future while exercising demanding activities depends on the command of the basic skills of the particular discipline. That is why we can feel pleasure while playing the flute (cf. NE X, 1175b1ff.).

Pleasure seems to be part and parcel of the very same activity, but Aristotle does not understand pleasure as a *product* of the activity but as a kind of gift, an aspect of the perfection of the action "and completes the activity [...] as an end which supervenes as the bloom of youth does on those in the flower of their age" (NE IX, 1174b32–33; see Cruz 2013): it is something intimately linked to the

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[4]Cf. NE III, 1111b10 ff.; *Eudemian Ethics* 2, 1223a26 f.; *On the Soul* 4, 414b2. See also Pearson (2011) and Vigo (2016).

[5]Furthermore, Aristotle uses the same term (the noun *boulesis*) to signify both what here we understand as *rational desire* or *desire guided by reason*, and the activity of *deliberation*. On the textual and theoretical problems of the terminology, see Guthrie (1981), Reale (1988), and Natali (2007).

[6]See the last remarks of § 7.2.3 and 7.4.5. On the importance of deliberation, see § 7.2.5.

activity but at the same time irreducible to it.[7] This pleasant situation or intrinsically rewarding action is different from mere sensible pleasure (Seligman 2003).

This rewarding feeling is akin to the *autotelic experience* described by Csikszentmihalyi in his theory of *flow* (Csikszentmihalyi 2014).[8] As Ribera and Ceja point out:

> there is no need for extrinsic rewards as the most important gratification is found within the activity the individual is engaged in. It is generally upon reflection that the autotelic facet of flow is realised and provides increased motivation toward spotting new challenges and experiencing more flow. (Ribera and Ceja 2018)[9]

Aristotle formulated the notion of the *spoudaios* or upright man as a synthesis of the right way of feeling and thinking.[10] He describes the virtuous person and the close correlation between his actions and his deeply rooted way of being (*ethos*, character). One of the main factors of this relationship is the role of pleasant situations for this kind of man:

> just acts are pleasant to the lover of justice and in general excellent acts to the lover of excellence. Now *for most men, their pleasures conflict with one another because these are not by nature pleasant*; and *excellent actions are such so that these are pleasant for such men as well as in their own nature*. Their life, therefore, has no further need for pleasure as a sort of adventitious charm but has its pleasure in itself. For, besides what we have said, the man who does not rejoice in noble actions is not even good. (EN I, 1099a18–24)[11]

Vigo underscores that the cluster of faculties of the virtuous man becomes *connatural* (*symphuehai*, literally "grow together") with good and beautiful things and situations; faculties should *develop together* while exercising right actions over time (Vigo 2016). Here we find an unambiguous correspondence with the ultimate version of the upright man in *Republic*.

Aristotle continues with a quote from Plato in order to underline the significance of good upbringing:

> we ought to have been brought up in a particular way from our very youth [...] so as both *to delight in and to be pained by the things that we ought; for this is the right education.* (NE II, 1104b9–24. Cf. also II, 1103b23–25)[12]

This general remark is confirmed through a quite demanding discipline of our feelings:

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[7]NE presents two long discussions about the nature of pleasure (Books VII and X). Cruz (2013) offers a detailed explanation of the texts.

[8]See § 7.4.2.

[9]There are deeper coincidences between Csikszentmihalyi's proposal and Aristotle's metaphysical consideration of internal human activities. Cruz offers a good summary of them (Cruz 2013).

[10]Sometimes he uses the term *phronimos*, or wise. Translators use *upright, honest* or *virtuous man* or *person of value*.

[11]See also NE III, 1113a24–31, and IX, 1169a32.

[12]On the need for laws for education, see NE X, 1179b31–1180a1.

> pleasure and pain may be felt both too much and too little, and in both cases not well; but *to feel them at the right times, with reference to the right objects, towards the right people, with the right aim, and in the right way, is what is both intermediate and best, and this is characteristic of excellence*. (NE II, 1106b15–1107a1)[13]

Paul Ekman directly refers to Aristotle's text on the upright man's way of behaving and feeling. He assesses that "these are very abstract ideas, but they do explain the reasons we sometimes regret afterward how we have behaved" (Ekman 2007).

The *spoudaios* decides to act rightly no matter what the external outcome, and sometimes it is vital to act in that manner in the prospect of negative consequences, such as suffering or strenuous efforts. The righteous person is ready to take the risk of living coherently and keep growing regardless of the external outcomes.[14]

7.2.4   Awareness of Our Limited Self

The Stagirite claims that suffering could be integrated into a happy life within certain levels, but the boundaries of those levels are not clear.[15] Again, the capacity to endure pain, both physical and psychological, depends on the internal conditions of the subject.

But the passage—1095b31–35—mentions the very same challenges of some of the most thought-provoking texts of the Platonic dialogues, such as the absurdity of the sufferings of the upright person in *Gorgias* (471a–483a), the happiness of the successful selfish person (*Rep.* I, 338c–352a) and the negative role of the law, that of punishing the most gifted individuals. This is the "Nietzschean" position of the immoralists (Foot 2001), i.e. the permanent challenge to present the relationship between the good life and happiness (Mack 2003).

Aristotle's contribution strengthens the Socratic–Platonic model of the virtuous man. From this first-person perspective, humans bet on the intrinsic value of their lives, rather than on money or external goods (Abbà 1995; Annas 1993; Force 2003). Furthermore, the Stagirite claims boldly that personal identity is even more important than the uncertainty of happiness and the certainty of pain:

> For existence is good to the good man, and each man wishes himself what is good, while *no one chooses to possess the whole world if he has first to become someone else* (for that matter, even now God possesses the good). (NE IX, 1166a20–22)

Only with the advent of Neoplatonism and Christian thought does there appear a developed philosophy of human interiority. Nevertheless, the Aristotelian approach

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[13]Inciarte insists emphatically on the harmony between *right reason* and *right desire* in Aristotelian thought as a condition for the goodness of choices and actions (Inciarte 2005).

[14]See § 7.2.2 (last paragraph).

[15]Cf. NE I, 1095b31–35; I, 1098b3–99b8; 1100a8–9; 1101a7.

discloses important—and nowadays valid—paths to consider self-awareness and accountability.

7.2.5 Wilful Behaviour and the Feasibility of Desires

Books III and VI of the *Nichomachean Ethics* explain the interconnectedness of the internal powers of the soul mentioned in § 7.2.2. Choice and deliberation are at the heart of this debate.

Choice or *prohairesis* depends on our capacity to deliberate (*bouleuontai*).[16] It is a *calculation* or *ponderation* proper to rational beings (NE III, 1111b4–1113a13), i.e. beings that can project their actual actions into an uncertain future.[17] Deliberation and choice contrast with pure willing because of its more determinate nature; desire and willing are unrestrictedly open, i.e. one can desire unattainable things such as immortality or that past events had never happened (NE VI, 1139b6–10). But

> no one chooses such things, but only the things that *he thinks could be brought about by his efforts* [. . .] we *wish* to be healthy, but we *choose* the acts which will make us healthy, and we *wish* to be happy and say we do, but *we cannot well say we choose to be so; for, in general, choice seems to relate to the things that are in our own power*. (NE III, 1111b24–29)

Moreover, we do deliberate (*bouleuontai*) in weighing the external and the inner situation, i.e. the circumstances (NE III, 1112a18ff.). As with choice, Aristotle associates it with the attainability of the objects we consider:

> *We deliberate about things that are in our power and can be done*; and these are in fact what is left [. . .] Now every class of men deliberates about the things that can be done by their own efforts. (NE III, 1112a31–35)[18]

7.2.6 The Moral Dimension of Choices and Their Impact on Character

Aristotle goes on with the thesis that "it is in our power" to do or not to do specific actions to develop an argument on responsibility (NE III, 1113b10–1114a3). He uses a juridical approach to assign accountability for different deeds,

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[16]See footnote 3 above.

[17]See § 7.4.5.

[18]On the indeterminacy of wishing and the psychological differences between mere wishing and planning, as related to feasibility, see Baumeister et al. (2016) and § 7.4.5.

as when penalties are doubled in the case of drunkenness; *for the moving principle is in the man himself*, since he had the power of not getting drunk and his getting drunk was the cause of his ignorance. (NE III, 1114b33–36)[19]

Also, he moves forward to explain that we shape our interiority—the quality of our desires—while choosing. The feedback among our internal powers implies their permanent self-modelling, "for when we have *decided* as a result of deliberation, we *desire* in accordance with our deliberation" (NE III, 1113a12–13).

In Book VI, he explains the role of choice not as a mere hinge between desires and reasoning, but as a deeper interlacement of these different powers: "hence *choice is either desiderative thought or intellectual desire*, and such an origin of action is a man" (NE VI, 1139b3–5) (cf. González 2006).

Aristotle is very much aware of the two sides of the coin: while it is important to distinguish our internal capacities, it is all the more relevant to think about them in unity with the activity of the individual because we become more connatural with the things we choose to attain.

7.2.7   Temperance and the Disassociation of the Internal Powers

Aristotle explains his view on *intemperance* (*akrasía*) and *incontinence* (*akolasía*) in Books III and VII of the *Nicomachean Ethics*. Both of them—along with their virtuous counterparts, temperance, and continence—have to do with handling vehement evil desires. His remarks on violence as compulsory for acting is useful for approaching positive and superior stimuli:

those who act under compulsion and unwillingly act with pain, but those who do acts for their pleasantness and nobility do them with pleasure; it is absurd to make external circumstances responsible, and not oneself, as being easily caught by such attractions, and to make oneself responsible for noble acts but the pleasant objects responsible for base acts. (NE III, 1110b8–16)

The Stagirite moves forward with the idea of the right mean with respect to the objects of desire and considers the internal situation of the agent. Reason evaluates these elements to establish what is the *right thing for me to do here and now*.[20] For example, courage-related situations are relatively simple because there are few elements involved: the fear of the agent in a dangerous situation, and the proportionality of his flying or fighting, even if what is at stake is his own life. With these categories, we can apply the term *courageous, temerarious*, or *cowardly* to the different possible behaviours (cf. NE III, 1116a10–15).

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[19]See Guthrie (1975) on the higher severity of the Stagirite in comparison to Plato's conception of "diminished responsibility", more akin to a contemporary sensibility.

[20]See § 7.4.5 on narrative and meaningfulness.

By reasoning about concrete situations, Aristotle is moving beyond the Platonic "intellectualistic" position while still sharing some fundamental notions, e.g. temperance (*sophrosune*) as necessary to keep the presence of mind and be able to deliberate and then act in the best possible way (NE III, 1117a28–b20).

The *continent* man will have evil desires but be able to restrain them, while for the *temperate* man (*enkratés, sophron*), they are utterly irrelevant. It is implied that both will be able to reason and judge correctly in a particular situation, so they exercise self-control. The *incontinent* man (*akolastós*), in his turn, will *not* judge that he must *always* pursue pleasure—it is implied that he will be capable of giving reasons for not pursuing a particular pleasure in a particular moment—but he will go after it in any case: "knowing that what he does is bad, does it as a result of passion, while the continent man, knowing that his appetites are bad, does not follow them because of his reason" (NE VII, 1145b12–14).

The *temperate* man is in command of his sensual and irascible tendencies, acts in conformity with reason (NE II, 1104a34–b6), and does not yearn for pleasure nor for not having pursued it (NE III, 1118b28–35). The *intemperate* (*akratés*), on the other hand,

> craves for all pleasant things or those that are most pleasant, and is led by his appetite to choose these at the cost of everything else; hence he is pained both when he fails to get them and when he is craving for them (for appetite involves pain). (NE III, 1119a1–5)

The *intemperate* feels no remorse after his search for pleasure because he believes that it is right to fulfil the requirements of our spontaneous desires. Here there are more hints of "abstract thought" to complete Ekman's remarks about the role of regret quoted above (cf. NE VII, 1150a16–25; 11150b29–36).

In conclusion, the only full state of virtue is that of the *temperate*. *Continence* is similar externally to *temperance*, but with a crucial difference: a continent man's desires will be evil, or at the very least unwieldy. Therefore, Aristotle does not count *continence* as a virtue (VII, 1145b14–15 and II, 1105a17–1105b and Pakaluk 2005).

The ultimate description of the temperate man is illuminating as it offers crucial hints on the congruence of human activity. The temperate man does not enjoy the things that the self-indulgent man enjoys most,

> but the things that, being pleasant, make for health or for good condition, he will desire moderately and as he should, and also other pleasant things if they are not hindrances to these ends, or contrary to what is noble, or beyond his means. (NE VII, 1119a16–19)

So, reason must permeate the entire management of desire (Lawrence 2011), but the rational part of the incontinent person is unable to guide the appetites (NE VII, 1146b32–1147b2).

In other texts, Aristotle integrates the role of imagination into this delicate process of lining up the different faculties to generate constructive behaviour. All the powers

can either synergise or clash in this choral activity (cf. *De Motu Animalium* 701a6–b2).[21]

Alejandro Vigo explains that the incontinent is affected by a disassociation between his desires and his reason, so he "has not achieved a transformation of his ideal life in an *ethos*" or *lifestyle* (Vigo 2016).[22] He is unable to structure his life through coherent plans that require an enduring *symphonic* activity of his powers. Vigo summarises this incapacity as a "fallenness in the present", i.e. lack of energy to sustain the effort needed to deal with the foreseen situations. It makes his behaviour similar to those of animals (Vigo 2016) that cannot detach themselves from the conditioning of time (Baumeister et al. 2016).[23]

7.3   Self-Control and Constructive Desires

It is worth underlining some of the conclusions of the first works of the Positive Psychology movement regarding pleasure. I want to stress the rediscovery of essential nuances regarding pleasure and pleasant situations that are at the core of the re-evaluation of virtues and character as psychological matters (Peterson and Seligman 2004).[24]

Seligman explains that sensible pleasure and pain have a minimal scope in our emotional life. Feeling good or enjoying a situation is different from the positive feelings or emotions achieved by virtuous activities such as working in a good business, helping others, or educating our children. The most rewarding activities are those in harmony with noble purposes and imply the actualisation of virtues (Seligman 2003): authentic gratifications rely on continuous efforts (Seligman 2003). That is why in the more systematic text *Character Strengths and Virtues*, Peterson and Seligman rely more on the term *fulfilment* because, "it seems that fulfillments must reflect effort, the willful choice and pursuit over time of morally praiseworthy activities" (Peterson and Seligman 2004).[25] This includes even positive emotions, since being "alienated from the exercise of character leads to emptiness, to inauthenticity, to depression, and as we age, to the gnawing realisation that we are fidgeting until we die" (Seligman 2003).

Pleasures are just feelings, while gratifications are the product of engaging activities in which the strengths of our personality flourish. It requires thought, the ability to perceive and transmit meanings or to correct oneself (Seligman 2003).

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[21]On the relationship between senses, memory, and imagination, see Ekman (2007). More about envisioning and mental work in § 7.4.5.

[22]See § 7.2.2 (final paragraph) and § 7.4.5. Vigo (2016) explains in detail the structure of the reasoning that conclude in actual choices.

[23]See the parallels with Mischel's works in § 7.4.2.

[24]See § 7.2.3.

[25]See § 7.4.5.

Experiencing positive emotions in conjunction with right actions implies a highly developed personality for whose constitution innate provisions are not enough. Here too there is an essential coincidence with classical thought, namely, a certain kind of gratification accompanies worthwhile actions.[26]

7.4 Fostering Connaturality Between Reason and Desires

7.4.1 Paul Ekman: Awareness and Detachment from Emotions

There is a self-evident principle regarding emotions and behaviour that Ekman (Washington D.C. 1934) stresses in the first pages of *Emotions Revealed*. After acknowledging that the readiness of our emotional responses is very useful for preservation of life, he develops a whole chapter on "Behaving emotionally" (Ekman 2007). There Ekman explains what others call "appraisal awareness" or "reflective consciousness" as the need to be able to attentively cause our emotional feelings to weaken an emotional trigger that may be about to go off (Ekman 2007). Then he assesses that it is a process composed of two stages. The first one regards the awareness of what it is within ourselves that is causing us to respond emotionally in a way we later regret. The second stage is to "try to broaden our understanding of the other person" (Ekman 2007). He explains some concrete strategies to cope with different emotions in the closing part of every chapter.

7.4.2 Martin Seligman: Good Reasons and the Explanatory Style

Seligman (New York 1942) and some of his colleagues incorporated the so-called *explanatory style* in their studies about helplessness in humans. The explanatory style is a dispositional factor that influences the way we evaluate our development in complex circumstances. It shapes the way we habitually explain to ourselves why events happen. Seligman considers the explanatory style as a useful modulator of learned helplessness. An optimistic explanatory style allows for an interruption of the state of helplessness. On the other hand, a pessimistic style fosters such a state (Seligman 2006). The way we tell ourselves how things went and how we think that we can act to modify them has significant effects on one's state of mind and on the ability to overcome obstacles.[27]

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[26]Seligman refers to NE 1099a.

[27]For more details about the explanatory style, see Peterson and Seligman (2004), Peterson and Steen (2005).

So, the whole theory can be schematized as follows: if the learned helplessness comes as the renouncement reaction, then the abandonment response derives from the belief that "everything I do is in vain", "it is useless to oppose external forces", and "my natural endowments determine me".

Even if the explanatory style is only one aspect of the personality and is particularly influential in people prone to discouragement and depression, it is vital to underscore two things:

1. That the explanatory style can be shaped.
2. That it is significant not only in psychotherapy but also for people without particular problems.

It is a matter of education of the person's ability to evaluate his position in complex and often permanent situations. People can put things in a different—often corrected—perspective thanks to a certain amount of detachment. It supports a broader evaluation of the different circumstances, facilitating the work of our intelligence.

7.4.3   Carol Dweck's Mindsets: Keeping Our Prejudices in Check

Carol Dweck (New York 1946) explains the core of her work through the idea of *mindsets,* i.e. the views we adopt for ourselves. They can:

> determine whether you become the person you want to be and whether you accomplish the things you value. [...] Believing that your qualities [e.g. IQ, fearfulness] are carved in stone [...] creates an urgency to prove yourself over and over. (Dweck 2012)

She calls this *the fixed mindset* and explains its counterpart as *the growth mindset*, a mindset that is based on the belief that qualities are things we can cultivate through effort that everyone can change and grow through application and experience, "that a person's true potential is unknown (and unknowable); that it's impossible to foresee what can be accomplished with years of passion, toil, and training" (Dweck 2012).

Fixed mindsets are not proper to people who display low self-esteem. Dweck considers the tennis player John McEnroe as an outstanding exemplar of a gifted person with a fixed mindset. When he made a mistake, his irritation was directed outwards—at the line judge, the ball boy, the public—rather than inwards, towards his own learning and improvement. It seemed that he was unable to consider himself responsible and accountable for his performance. Blaming circumstances or other people interferes with the awareness of our situation and the ways we can try to improve our abilities or constructively modify our situation (Dweck 2012).

Dweck also explains the problem of the "talent mindset". She recalls the disastrous ending of Enron in 2001 and claims that American corporations espoused the worship of talent that promoted the appointment of fixed mindset, highly talented managers. A large amount of those managers were continually trying to prove they

were the best ones, often claiming credit for the contributions of other people and undermining others to feel powerful.

Dweck wisely contrasts this toxic behaviour with the description of managers like those in Collins' *Good to Great* (2001) that make firms grow steadily over the years. She claims that those managers have a growth mindset and so believe in human development. It is observable in their readiness to hear at others' opinions, their will to surround themselves with the best-qualified people they can find, their promptness in evaluating their flaws squarely and in asking openly what skills they and the firm will need in the future (Dweck 2012).

All these dispositions can be learned, but they also require the courage to modify deep-rooted inclinations—the sclerosis of the fixed mindset. Ordinary people share different elements of the two kinds of mindsets as described by Dweck. Her theory illuminates concrete elements that foster or inhibit the harmonic dialogue between the internal powers of the individual and his or her responses in different contexts.

7.4.4 Walter Mischel: Passionate Detachment from Vehement Desire

Walter Mischel (Vienna 1930–New York 2018) has been celebrated for his decades-long studies on delayed gratification, which helped clarify the importance of self-control in personal development.

Mischel asserts that the puzzle of willpower arises not only when talking about going on a diet, quitting smoking, or controlling anger, or sadness. As he points out, when we read about scandals of prominent figures, whether they be celebrities, politicians, or moral authorities, it stands to reason that if this person was competent enough to get where he is, why then did he commit such a base moral error? (Mischel 2014). We are dealing again with the paradoxes of the intemperate and the incontinent![28]

Mischel explains that the driving force behind his work was his personal belief that "the ability to delay immediate gratification for the sake of future consequences is an acquirable cognitive skill" (Mischel 2014). He clearly sets out his task:

> I discuss what "willpower" is and what it is not, the *conditions* that undo it, the *cognitive skills and motivations that enable it*, and the *consequences of having it and using it*. I examine the implications of these findings for rethinking who we are; what we can be; how our minds work; how we can—and can't—control our impulses, emotions, and dispositions; how we can change; and how we can raise and educate our children. (Mischel 2014)

Mischel and his team developed their experiments on "The preschool self-imposed delay of immediate gratification for the sake of delayed but more valued rewards paradigm". In it, children were given one candy with the promise that if they

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[28]See § 7.2.7 on the Aristotelian explanation and Vigo's remarks on the capacity of detachment from actual stimuli.

waited for the return of the teacher, they would have another one, but they could eat the first one at any time. The researchers had as their subjects some children the age of Mischel's daughters, who themselves were never part of the experiments. It is this coincidence that also led to the further development of the research on delayed gratification, that is the impact of this skill on other areas of life. First, Mischel makes it clear that he and his students designed the procedure as a tool to understand what "enabled [the kids] to delay gratification if and when they wanted to". He clarifies that the experiments were in no way meant to be predictive (Mischel 2014). However, in the years that followed, casual conversations at home with his daughters made him notice possible links between the preschoolers' results on *The Marshmallow Test* and his daughters' informal reports about the social and academic performance of their peers, namely that those who were able to delay gratification in the experiment were those who had more friends, performed better at school, and had less social and family conflicts over the years.

In both preschoolers and other groups, self-congratulation usually accompanied those who were able to delay gratification (Mischel 2014). In these instances, it is easy to identify a virtuous way of feeling while doing well for oneself, like that of the Aristotelian upright man.[29]

The impact of mastery on emotivity is more apparent in adults than in children. The very *feeling* that we can bring about something requires both awareness of our situation and of the possibility of ruling our lives instead of being acted upon. Mastery is the belief that we can be active agents in determining our behaviour, that we can change, grow, learn, and master new challenges (Mischel 2014).

7.4.5 Roy Baumeister: Meaning and the Configuration of Future

Roy F. Baumeister (Cleveland 1953) has been leading research programmes about the way we can *handle* our future. He and his colleagues have been comparing the manifestations of mental processes ranging from mere mind-wandering to concrete planning. Such a process implies the above-mentioned mental tools such as deliberation and choice in order to arrange the order of foreseen events. These exercises are particular and require effort and concentration.

Planning is mental work; it requires energy and being ready for a challenge. Arrangements do not merely happen: the individual has to be focused and working mentally at it. It is an activity that requires involvement. Planning is about what one wants and it is meaningful for many crucial reasons. It is a decisive stage of the administration of our desires. As Baumeister explains while commenting on the results of several experiments,

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[29]See § 7.2.3. On the different stages of the development of character in Aristotle, see Lawrence (2011).

> One of those [key reasons] is that it connects across time, which is inherently a meaningful connection and one that enriches the associative network of any thought or idea [. . .] [there is] a general pattern linking meaningfulness to connection across time. Thoughts that combined past, present, and future were rated as the most meaningful on average of all thoughts. (Seligman et al. 2016)

Planning entails effort and work. Exercising it colours one's mood in a more pleasant light and lowers feelings of stress, anger, and anxiety.

Baumeister and other colleagues are working on the *pragmatic prospection* theory, very much in line with the work quoted above. Apart from the coincidence about the exclusivity of humans being able to consider the future and "work" on it (Baumeister et al. 2016),[30] they explain *pragmatic prospection* as the capacity to "think about the future to guide actions to bring about *desirable* outcomes". This simple formulation overlaps with the Aristotelian principles: humans can think about their future in a way that allows them to model it.[31] It implies that we *evaluate the feasibility* of the foreseen situation and presupposes the *difference between mere desiring or wishing and choosing*,[32] between *deliberating* and *performing*, between *planning* and simply *predicting*.

They explain that general or propositional ideas become *narrative* when humans translate them into *workable plans*.[33] This narrative implies a permanent administration of emotional feedback, which means that emotions have a relevant evaluative character. However, on top of this factual evidence, the term narrative implies that moving from the present to "a desired future outcome requires a sequence of actions and events, *meaningfully and often causally related to each other*".[34] Moreover, they conclude that "plans that are in line with people's prized values are better at achieving the desired result than other plans". The authors comment that connecting the future to the present based on meaningful narratives "can improve present decision-making and long-term outcomes", as the Aristotle-inspired advocates of the *recta ratio* claim. The formulation of personal awareness or psychological conscience explained in § 7.2.5 and the reasoning that links general statements with the concrete behaviour of § 7.2.7 would profit from the experimental works quoted in this paragraph.

7.5 Conclusive Summary

Since the discourse includes many cross-references, I will only produce a list of conclusive ideas.

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[30]All the following references are to the same work.

[31]See § 7.2.2 and 7.2.7.

[32]See § 7.2.5.

[33]See § 7.2.7.

[34]See NE 1176a155 ff. in § 7.2.3.

According to Plato and Aristotle:

- We are free to choose the way we live, and to that end, we must accept that not all desires (and goals) have the same value.
- The ability to choose implies that we have a solid knowledge of ourselves and external realities.
- Human beings must develop a healthy relationship among their internal powers to master their desires in the long run. This is necessary because there is a wide range of changing desires. Some of them are vehement and transitory, while others are calm but require long-lasting efforts.
- Humans are more or less aware of the weight of desires, their relation to the foreseeable future, and the accountability of their response to them.

Among the theories and techniques that can foster this internal harmonisation, we can name:

- Ekman's ideas on mastering our emotions through a reflective consciousness, i.e. to be able to attentively consider that our feelings gradually weaken emotional triggers that may be about to go off.
- The explanatory style (Peterson, Seligman, and others), an attitude that influences the way we evaluate our development. It is how we habitually explain to ourselves why events happen.
- Carol Dweck's theses on fixed and growth mindsets. A mindset is the arrangement of ideas about our capabilities. In a fixed mindset, the prevailing thoughts are deterministic, and it does not foster the comprehension of our inner situation. The growth mindset is based on the belief that qualities are things we can cultivate through effort and that everyone can improve with enough application and experience.
- Walter Mischel's renewal of the treatment of temperance, self-control, and free will as necessary and learnable.
- The intertwined ideas in the theory of pragmatic prospection that provide a coherent picture of the relation between our perception of time (experience and farsightedness), choices, planning, and meaningful goals.

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Chapter 8
Desire and Beauty

Abel Miró i Comas

Abstract The internal development of one's own intellectual life, from Thomas Aquinas' point of view, inevitably leads to an education of desire. The element that allows us to connect intellectual contemplation, which has "truth" as its object, with moral life, which has "good" as its object, is the aesthetic experience. Every truly personal comprehension has a shining element which is irreducible to formal content: an "effulgence" of the divine Beauty; likewise, the "verb of the heart", which emanates from this contemplative actuality "like the splendor of light", expresses the understood object in its truth and beauty. Because of its beauty, the true entity becomes desired as good. The foundation and orientation of man's moral life is found in the perfection of his contemplative life, which culminates in the formation of the "verb of the heart"; thanks to the beauty of the "verbum cordis" the true entity becomes considered as good and, consequently, as something to be sought in action. One's intellectual life leads to a love for good, to the education of desire.

Keywords Desire · Thomas Aquinas · Intellectual life · Contemplation · Beauty

8.1 Intellectual Life and Moral Life

The dynamism inherent in intellectual life, when lived consistently, entails a spontaneous adherence to the moral law: an authentic man of study is an individual whose intellectual life is part of his moral life. In other words, it is someone who has decided to apply the demands of his moral conscience to their intellectual life. While moral conscience has as its object the "human good", intellectual life is oriented towards the "contemplation of the truth" (Gilson 1927).

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An authentically assumed intellectual life has profound consequences on the moral dimension of the person: the will is dragged towards the contemplated truth, by the intrinsic attractiveness of the latter; when this happens, the will desires the contemplated truth as something good, and motivates the person to seek it through practical action. Moral life and intellectual life are not two completely unconnected dimensions of the person. Their respective objects, the good for the moral life and the true for the intellectual life, are rooted in the same soil, and their roots are so intimately intertwined that they constitute a single root: "Broken from the common root and therefore less in contact with the soil, one or the other suffers; the soul grows anemic or the mind wilts. On the contrary, by feeding the mind on truth one enlightens the conscience, by fostering good one guides knowledge (Sertillanges 1960)". In this fragment, human life is treated as a unity: knowing the truth helps us to live the truth—that is, to live our personal life in accordance with the truth—and living the truth, in its turn, helps us to know it.

8.2 The Choice

The harmonious unity between the appetitive dimension and the cognitive dimension, in other words, between the moral life and the intellectual life, is especially manifested in the act of "choosing". By means of choice, the desire is inclined towards one thing or another, according to that which the intellect has determined after a deliberative process (Forment 2015b).

Choosing is especially relevant to human life, for it is the principle from which strictly human acts emanate, namely, free, personal, responsible acts. When Thomas Aquinas states that "human life consists of actions"[1] he is not referring to the "biological operations" universally shared by all individuals belonging to the human species, but to the actions that make up the "biography" of each individual man (Canals 1987). Unlike the irrational animals, the human being carries out some operations which cannot be explained only by the inclinations of his nature; by these operations each singular man, as a free agent, assumes his own existence as if he were the only one responsible for it. With these actions, that is the result of an election, the man determines its ends (Miró 2018a).[2]

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[1]"Now among the acts of man, it is proper to him to take counsel, since this denotes a research of the reason about the actions [*agenda*] he has to perform and whereof human life consists (Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, II-II, q.51, a.1, in c)".

[2]"Hence such animals as move themselves in respect to an end they themselves propose are superior to [i.e. irrational animals]. This can only be done by reason and intellect; whose province it is to know the proportion between the end and the means to that end, and duly coordinate them. Hence a more perfect degree of life [*perfectior modus vivendi*] is that of intelligible beings (Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I, q.18, a.3, in c)". However, as Aquinas himself points out, this capacity for self-determination is not unlimited: "although with respect to some things it [the rational animal] moves itself, yet with regard to other things it must be moved by another". Man,

Choosing has some part of the will and some part of the reason; however, Aristotle seems to hesitate to determine whether it is an act of the will or of the reason: "he says that choice is an act either of the intellective appetite [*appetitus intellectivi*] (that is, appetite as in subordinated to the intellect), or of the appetitive intellect [*intellectus apetitivi*] (that is, of the intellect in subordination to appetite (St. Thomas, *De Veritate*, q. 22, a. 15, in c)". Aquinas concludes that it is an act of the will,[3] but that it includes an essential reference to the cognitive faculty: "Choice is nevertheless not an act of the will taken absolutely but in its relation to reason, because there appears in choice what is proper to reason: the comparing of one with the other or the putting of one before the other. This is, of course, found in the act of the will from the influence of reason (St. Thomas, *De Veritate*, q. 22, a. 15, in c)".

The "choice" or "deliberative desire [*appetitus consiliativus*]" implies a harmonious synthesis between knowing and desiring; for the choice to be morally good, it is indispensable that the truth manifested by the intellect is loved by a "right" will, namely, by a will perfected by virtue: "Since then reason and appetitive faculty concur in choice, if choice ought to be good—this is required for the nature of a moral virtue—the reason must be true and the appetitive faculty right, so that the same thing which reason declares *says* [*dicit*] or affirms, the appetitive faculty pursues (Thomas Aquinas, *Sententia libri Ethicorum,* VI, lect. 2, n.6)".

8.3 Beauty as a "Transparency of Infinity"

But what is it that makes whatever reason *says* be desired by the will? Or, formulated with greater accuracy, how can it be explained that the "true [*verum*]" which is in the intellect becomes sought by the will as "good [*bonum*]"? According to the Catalan Thomist Francisco Canals, the element that unifies the true with the good in man, setting in motion the dynamism proper to all personal and free life, is the contemplation of beauty: "the effulgence and incandescence of the true in which the beauty of the entity consists is a constitutive condition that we come to apprehend it as good, attractive and naturally desirable (Canals 2004, p. 349)".

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for example, cannot choose "and the last end, which it cannot but will (Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I, q.18, a.3, in c)".

[3] St. Thomas offers two reasons to prove that election is directly an act of the will. The first reason is based on the object of the choice, namely, the means, the useful: "The proper object of the choice is that which is ordered to the end [*id quod est ad finem*], to whom belongs the reason of good, which is the object of the will; for the good is said of the end, which is honest or delightful, and of that which is ordered to the end, as the useful (Thomas Aquinas, *De Veritate*, q. 22, a. 15, in c)". The second reason is based on the very act of election: "Choice is the final acceptance of something to be carried out [*ad prosequendum*]". This is not the business of reason but of will; for, however much reason puts one ahead of the other, there is not yet the acceptance of one in preference to the other as something to be done [*ad operandum*] until the will inclines to the one rather than to the other. The will does not of necessity follow reason (Thomas Aquinas, *De Veritate*, q. 22, a. 15, in c).

Beauty, according to St. Thomas' commentary on *De divinis nominibus* by Dionysius Areopagita, is made up of two notes: "What is the notion of beauty [*pulchritudinis ratio*] [Dionysius] evidences this by adding that God communicates [*tradit*] beauty inasmuch as it is 'the cause of *consonantia* and *claritas* in all things. [...] For this reason, everything is said to be beautiful to the extent that it has a *claritas* corresponding to its nature, whether spiritual or corporal; and to the extent that it is constituted according to the due proportion (Thomas Aquinas, *Super De divinis nominibus*, IV, lect. 5, n. 339)".

Two principles come together in the notion of "*pulchrum*": on the one hand, harmony, proportion, the concordance of the elements, the "*consonantia*", and on the other, light, radiance, the "*claritas*". "*Consonantia*" is linked to order, but order can be understood in two senses: in the first place, "according to the order of creatures to God, and to this he refers [Dionysius] when he affirms that God is the cause of *consonantia*, inasmuch as he 'calls all things to himself [*vocans omnia ad seipsum*]', because he directs all things toward himself as toward the end [...]; for this reason, in Greek, beauty it is called κάλλος, which derives from 'calling' (Thomas Aquinas, *Super De divinis nominibus*, IV, lect. 5, n. 340)". Secondly, the "*consonantia*" is found in things "according to the ordering of the one with respect to the other". The superior things are in the inferior "according to participation [*secundum participationem*]" and the inferior things are in the superior "for excellence [*per excellentiam*]", and so, because of this universal order, "the *consonantia* congregates all things in all things (Thomas Aquinas, *Super De divinis nominibus*, IV, lect. 5, n. 340)".

The other characteristic that concurs in the notion of beauty, besides the "*consonantia*", is described with a term that belongs to the semantic field of light, that is, the "*claritas*". The word "*claritas*", as can be noticed in the text, should not be restricted to its physical, material sense; if that were the case, the perception of beauty would be reduced to the sphere of sensitivity (Miró 2018a, b).

The "*claritas*", according to Saint Thomas, has an eminently metaphysical sense: "the form, by which the thing has the *esse*, is a certain participation of the divine *claritas* (Thomas Aquinas, *Super De divinis nominibus*, IV, lect. 5, n. 349)". Form is the principle by which a thing has "*esse*"[4] in act (Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I, q.76, a.7, in c), but since divinity is a "pure act" [*actus purus*], through form the entity which has been created becomes similar to God, thus

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[4] "*Esse* is the most perfect of all things [*perfectissimum omnium*], for it is compared to all things as that by which they are made actual; for nothing has actuality except so far as it 'is [*est*]'. Hence *esse* is that which actuates all things, even their forms. Therefore it is not compared to other things as the receiver is to the received; but rather as the received to the receiver. When therefore I speak of the *esse* of man, or horse, or anything else, *esse* is considered a formal principle, and as something received; and not as that which receives *esse* (Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I, q.4, a.1, ad 3)". The "esse" is the metaphysical root of any reality, and must be interpreted, as Aquinas indicates, as an act and as a perfection.

being "divinized"[5] and participating in a certain sense of the unlimited "*esse*": "the form is a certain divine reality [*quoddam divinum*] [...], because every form is a certain participation by likeness of the divine *esse*, which is pure act; in fact, everything is in act in the same measure that it has form (Thomas Aquinas, *Commentaria in octo libros Physicorum*, I, lect. 15, n. 7)".

The parallelism between the two texts is unequivocal: "the form [...] is a certain participation of the divine *claritas*"; "all form is a certain participation by likeness of the divine *esse*". And the conclusion that we can draw from this is also the same: the Angelic identifies the "*quid divinum*" that shines through the form—the "*claritas*"—with the inner and perfect act of the entity—the "*esse*". By means of the "*claritas*", a resemblance of the divine Beauty shines forth in things, having its metaphysical foundation in that which is most intimate and profound in them, the act of "*esse*", where the Creator becomes present in the intimacy of the creature (Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I, q.8, a.1): "from divine Beauty derives the *esse* of all things (Thomas Aquinas, *Super De divinis nominibus*, IV, lect. 5, n. 349)", and thus, through such "*esse*" or "*claritas*", the divine Beauty becomes transparent.

The "*claritas*", to use an expression by Torras i Bages, consists of "a transparency of the Infinite in natural things (Torras i Bages 1936, p. 82)". Without "*claritas*" there is no beautiful object. Although the "*consonantia*" is another element that concurs in the notion of beauty,[6] that which constitutes the essence of the "*pulchrum*" is light, radiance, the "*claritas*". Saint Albert the Great, Master of Friar Thomas, expresses it clearly in his opuscule *De Pulchro et Bono*: "the splendor of the form [*splendorem formae*] substantial or actual on the parts of matter provided and finished [...] is like the specific difference that completes the reason of bello (q.1, a.2, in c)". The determining element of the "*pulchrum*", that by virtue of which beauty is beautiful, is not proportion, harmony, balance, but the "brightness of the form [*resplendentia formae*]".

The "*consonantia*", according to the profound analysis of Saint Albert, constitutes the subject, but not the essence of the beautiful thing, or, as he says, the "*ratio pulchri*".[7] We will not perceive a work of art of great regularity and harmony as beautiful unless it also possesses the radiance of life. The light or "*claritas*", considered in its metaphysical sense, that is, as "form of the Infinite (Torras i

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[5]Jaume Bofill describes the motion by which God constitutes the act of "*esse*" of the thing as "an offering of 'divinization' of the creature, which will be carried out in each case according to the 'mode' that this motion can be and is effectively assumed (Bofill 1964 p. 26)".

[6]In another passage which is fundamental to the metaphysics of the "*pulchrum*", St. Thomas enumerates three constitutive elements of beauty: "'integrity [*integritas*]' or 'perfection [*perfectio*]' since those things which are impaired [*diminuta*] are by the very fact 'ugly [*turpia*]'; due 'proportion [*debita proportio*]' or 'harmony [*consonantia*]'; and lastly, 'brightness' or 'clarity [*claritas*]', whence things are called beautiful which have a bright color. (St. Thomas, *Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 39, a.8, in c)". The notion of "*integritas*", in the commentary on *De divinis nominibus*, is already included in that of "*consonantia*"; in fact, if diminished things are ugly, it is precisely to the extent that they lack the due proportion.

[7]"Ad rationem pulchritudinis concurrit consonantia sicut subiectum, et claritas sicut essentia eius (Albert the Great, *De Pulchro et Bono*, q.4, a.1, ad 1)".

Bages 1936, p. 83)", is the "seal" that confers to a given object the character of aesthetic: the proportion or concordance behaves like the subject, but what determines the essence of the beautiful is the "form of the Infinite", which is printed on this subject.[8] Analogically speaking, we can identify "*consonantia*" with the material principle of beauty and "*claritas*" with the formal principle.

Dante Alighieri, by poetizing this doctrine, characterizes God's radiance in the creations as "light of the seal [*light of the suggel*]". And he adds that the reason why this divine light appears in a different way in different things is because of the indisposition of matter, or because of the contradiction of the second causes:

> Ciò che non more e ciò che può morire
> non è se non splendor di quella idea
> che partorisce amando il nostro Sire [...].

> Se fosse a punto la cera dedutta,
> e fosse il cielo in sua virtù suprema,
> la luce del suggel parrebbe tutta.[9]

The artist's mission is to make this divine light shine in matter. But this activity presupposes previous contemplation, for he who has not seen the "form of the Infinite" shine cannot print it upon matter, nor, therefore, make others see it. Every artist, first of all, is one who contemplates: "The artist is not only a clever man, he is a seer, a contemplator of the invisible that makes him visible to other men, by means of innate qualities of his spirit, not acquired; those innate qualities, using a theological term, can be said to be a free gift; for all of this, humanity places the great artists in such a high position and calls them divine (Torras i Bages 1936, p. 34)".

Augustine of Hippo, after confessing to the abuse of the arts, recognizes that the beauty of artistic works presupposes a contemplation—evidently proportionate to the capacity of our nature—of divine Beauty: "that beauty which, coming from the soul, has been executed by the hands of the artist, descends from that Beauty which is upon souls, and which my soul sighs after day and night (Augustine of Hippo, *Confessionum*, X, c. 34, n. 53)".

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[8]Saint Thomas himself, in some texts, explicitly recognizes that what constitutes the formal principle of the "*pulchrum*" is the "*claritas*": "Beauty has no reason of desirability if it is not in the measure that it implies the reason of good; in this way, also the true is desirable. But according to its own reason, [beauty] has *claritas* (*Super Sententiis*, I, d.31, q.2, a.1, ad 4)"; "The beauty of celestial bodies consists principally in light"; for this reason it is said in the Ecclesiasticus: "the brightness of the stars is the *species* of the sky; the Lord illuminates the world through them and communicates his light from the highest places (43, 10) (*Super Sententiis*, IV, d.48, q.2, a.3, in c)"; "And all these things, that is, the good works, the gifts of God, and the saints themselves, are the beauty [*decor*] of the House of God inasmuch as the divine grace that beautifies [*pulchrificat*] as the light *shines* in them, for, as St. Ambrose says, without light all things are ugly (*In Psalms 25*, n.5)".

[9]"What does not die and what can die are / solely the shining forth of the Idea to which our / Lord gives birth in love [...]. // If the wax were prepared fully, and if the / power of the heavens were at its height, the / light of the seal would appear entirely (Dante Alighieri, *Paradiso*, XIII, vv. 52-54, 73–75)".

8.4   Contemplation and Mystery

The intellectual is also a seer, because every truly intellectual work has its starting point in a moment of ecstasy, of wonder, of enthusiasm: "Every intellectual work begins by a moment of ecstasy; only in the second place does the talent of arrangement, the technique of transitions, connection of ideas, construction, come into play. Now, what is this ecstasy but a flight upwards, away from self, a forgetting to live our own poor life, in order that the object of our delight may live in our thought and in our heart? (Sertillanges 1960, p. ix)".

As Aristotle discovered, artistic work and intellectual work, poetry and philosophy have a common root: admiration. Sertingalles calls this experience "ecstasy" in a broad sense.[10] The sense of admiration consists in experiencing how the world is deeper, broader, richer in mystery than it appears to common, everyday reason (Pieper 2017 p. 109): "Now admiration is a kind of desire for knowledge [*desiderium quoddam sciendi*]; a desire which comes to man when he sees an effect of which the cause either is unknown to him, or surpasses his knowledge or faculty of understanding (Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologiae, I-II, q.32, a.8, in c)".

For the mystery of the human horizon to disappear it would be essential to know the universal cause of all entities, which is impossible in the present state. The divine Truth is found in the last horizon of all human admiration, regardless of how aware the person who is admiring is of this fact. We feel admiration because, ultimately, we want to get to know God. Triggered by the first admiration a process begins, the consummation of which will only take place in the "*visio beatifica*", that is to say, in the grasp of the First Cause, which makes us happy: "now the contemplation of the divine truth is competent to us imperfectly, namely 'through a glass [*per speculum*]' and 'in a dark manner [*in aenigmate*]' [I Cor 13:12]. Hence it bestows on us a certain inchoate happiness [*inchoatio beatitudinis*], which begins now and will be continued in the life to come (Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, II-II, q.180, a.4, in c)".

Human contemplation, when authentically personal, includes darkness, mystery; the greater the intellectual penetration, the greater the presence of darkness. The dynamism inherent in admiration obtains its fulfilment, its fullness, its realization, in the sense of mystery; in the present life, our intellect is ordered to rest "in the inaccessible altitude of the hidden Truth (Cajetan, *In Summa Theologiae*, I, q.22, a.4)".

It is important not to think that admiration is oriented towards a negative element, such as doubt or ignorance, but to distinguish between two types of darkness: an "inferior darkness", which comes from incoherence and absurdity, that is, from the fact of thinking in a more imperfect way than corresponds to human nature, and a

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[10]"For when we see certain obvious effects whose cause we do not know, we wonder about their cause. And since wonder was the motive which led men to philosophy, it is evident that the philosopher is, in a sense, a *philomytes*, i.e., a lover of myth, as is characteristic of the poets [...]. Now the reason why the philosopher is compared to the poet is that both are concerned with wonders (Thomas Aquinas, *Sentencia Metaphysicae*, I, lect. 3, n.4)".

"superior darkness", originated by a light that is too bright, that our weak eyes cannot bear, or, in other words, by capturing—albeit remotely—an object that transcends the objective conditions of our intellect (Garrigou-Lagrange 1945). The mystery that shines in all admiration belongs to this second type. It is incomprehensible because its light is unfathomable and inexhaustible, not because it lacks it.[11]

The mystery involved in every act of admiration, to the extent that it ultimately points to the divine light, can be identified without any problem with the "*light of the suggel*" in which the essence of beauty consists. The experience of admiration is the starting point of any authentic intellectual work, because of the "form of the Infinite" that is printed on it. Therefore, this experience not only contains an intellectual contemplation but also an aesthetic experience.

Very often, the thinker lives with his back to this dimension of his own knowledge; he considers amazement, enthusiasm, inspiration, as a merely subjective factor, alien, as such, to the objective structure of science, but in reality it is the metaphysical root of all thinking. At the origin of any structure there is "a participated likeness of the uncreated light (Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I, q.84, a.5, in c)", which at a later stage makes the constitution of the objective sphere possible (Forment 2015a, b). That which "forces" the mind to assent to a certain content is its value of truth, but that value of truth consists not in an object but in a pre-objective element, or in the words of St. Thomas, in a "light": "God's face is that for which God knows; likewise, man knows thanks to the face of God, that is, by the truth of God. By the truth of God, a likeness of His light shines in our souls. And this is like a light, and it is sealed upon us, because it is superior to us (Thomas Aquinas, *Super Psalmo 4*, n.5)".

The understanding of a structure is not, in turn, a structure, but its assimilation by the objective force of intelligence, by the "seal of divine light in us (Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I, q.84, a.5, in c)", by the inner truth of the mind: "spiritual light is truth: for just as by light something is known as it is illuminated; so it is known in so far as it is true (Thomas Aquinas, *Super Psalmo 35*, n. 5)". Every act of authentically personal knowledge implies, in addition to the objective content, a contemplation of the "divine light", without which this content could not withstand sceptical pressure.

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[11]It is important to emphasize that the affirmation of mystery does not imply any concession to irrationality: logic and mystery are not opposed ways. Unlike Francis Suarez, St. Thomas would never admit that the principle of noncontradiction cannot be applied to the mystery of the Most Holy Trinity; while the Trinity of persons in God is indemonstrable, no one can prove that this doctrine implies contradiction (Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I, q.32, a.1).

8.5   The "Verb of the Heart" and "the Silence of God"

In all understanding, there remains an "effulgence" impossible to reduce to a form, to an objective structure. Our natural reason, like angelic intelligences, is "like a divine light 'from Him who is in an inaccessible place', that is, mysterious to us (Thomas Aquinas, *Super De divinis nominibus*, IV, lect. 1, n. 288)". For this reason, the concepts that emanate from our intellect "as an act from the act, as the splendor from light (Thomas Aquinas, *Summa v. Gentiles*, IV, chap. 14, n. 3)", in addition to their formal content, they manifest a light that is none other than "the reflected gleam of divine *claritas* in the soul (Thomas Aquinas, *Super Psalm 35*, n.5)". In other words: our most eminent concepts, those which are the result of an "intelligible birth (Thomas Aquinas, *Summa v. Gentiles*, IV, chap. 11, n. 18)" and which Saint Thomas very expressively calls "verbs of the heart [*verba cordis*]", reveal the object which was understood under a mysterious light, namely, the light of divine Beauty.

The "*verbum cordis*", unlike the outer word, remains within the intellect.[12] The operation of the intellect is the "vision" of an objective content "in the divine *claritas*"; this operation, by its very nature, manifests itself in an "interior word",[13] which, as St. Augustine very precisely points out, is also a "vision": "when we call thoughts [*cogitationes*] speeches of the heart [*locutiones cordis*], it does not follow that they are not also acts of sight, arising from the sight of knowledge [*visiones exortae de notitiae visionibus*], when they are true. For when these things are done outwardly by means of the body, then speech [*locutio*] and sight [*visio*] are different things, but when we think inwardly, the two are one—just as sight and hearing are two things mutually distinct in the bodily senses, but to see and hear are the same thing (Augustine of Hippo, *De Trinitate*, XV, c.10, n.18)".

In this "inner vision", the "divine light" is a shining element which is impossible to reduce to a formal content. For this reason, St. Thomas affirms, commenting on Dionysius, that the "concept of the heart" [*conceptio cordis*] is a statement of the "silence of the heart": "The concept of the heart or of the intellect without voice [*absque voce*] remains in silence, while, through the sensitive voices, this silence of

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[12]"For whenever we understand, by the very fact of understanding there proceeds something within us, which is a conception of the object understood [*conceptio rei intellectae*] [...]. This conception is signified by the spoken word; and it is called the 'verb of the heart [*verbum cordis*]' signified by the 'verb of the voice [*verbum vocis*]'. (Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I, q.27, a.1, in c)".

[13]As the Aquinas commentator John of St. Thomas (1589–1644) very aptly observed, intellect, by its very nature, is not only cognitive, but also manifestative and locutive; human intellect does not form the mental word by its indigence in regard to the object of knowledge, that is, by the fact that it is naturally devoid of it—as if human intellect, not having an innate possession of the concept of stone, had to acquire it by forming an inner word. Rather, it would have to be said that the locutive and forming activity of the object on the part of the intellect can only occur when the intellect is understanding in act. Intellect does not form the object for understanding, but because it understands: "The fact that the intellectual nature is manifestative and expressive of the thing understood does not belong to its imperfection; it belongs to the fecundity and fullness of the intellect, and also to the breadth of the heart, the fact that [the intellectual nature] burps out a good verb, that is, perfect (John of St. Thomas, *Cursus Theologicus*, Disp. XII, a.4, n. 25)".

the heart is enunciated (Thomas Aquinas, *Super De divinis nominibus*, IV, lect. 1, n. 288)". But it is not just any silence: as the luminous element contained in the background of every "*verbum cordis*" is an effulgence of the "divine *claritas*", the silence being spoken of here is "the silence of God". When within men a "verb of the heart" is formed, they become "announcers of the divine silence [*enunciativos divini silentii*]", just like angels are (Thomas Aquinas, *Super De divinis nominibus*, IV, lect. 1, n. 288).[14]

8.6 Beauty as a Bridge Between Truth and Good

The fact that every "*verbum cordis*" includes an aesthetic experience has an inevitable consequence: desire moves towards the truth expressed by the inner word, in such a way that this word becomes, according to the expression of Saint Augustine, a "notice with love" [*notitia amata*]. The Bishop of Hippo wrote: "a word is born, when, being thought out, it pleases us [...]. Therefore love, as if it were a mean, conjoins our word and the mind from which it is conceived, and without any confusion binds itself as a third with them, in an incorporeal embrace (Augustine of Hippo, *De Trinitate*, IX, c.8, n. 13)".[15]

In the above statement, Agustine's "*nascitur autem verbum, cum excogitatum placet*" should be read together with Aquinas' psychological description of beauty: "beautiful things are those which please when seen [*pulchra enim dicuntur quae visa placent*] (Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I, q.5, a.4, ad 1)". Consequently, in the very perfection of the contemplative act of the being in its truth, from which the "*verbum cordis*" is born as an act of the act, the aesthetic experience, that is, the contemplation of the entity in its beauty, must be situated.

For the beauty of the known truth, that which the intellect *says* inwardly, is sought by desire as an end, as good. According to Albert the Great, the "*bonum*" is called

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[14]Joseph Rassam maintains, in the same manner, that in every word an essential link with silence is implied: "The word, considered less in its appearance as an event than in the [inner] act that constitutes it, presupposes a silent background on which it is formed. The word cannot be realized if it is not in intimate connection with a primordial silence (Rassam 2017, p.33)".

[15]When considering the Augustinian doctrine of the "verbum cordis" the following perplexity might easily arise: how can we say that we like what is conceived, when we think about things that displease us. How can a "notitia amata" be the concept that we have about what we hate? "When those things that we hate rightly displease us and we rightly reprove them, their reprobation is approved and pleases and is a verb. We do not dislike the knowledge of vices, but the vices themselves (Augustine of Hippo, De Trinitate, IX, 10, n.15)". The warning that the musician possesses about what he must avoid for his performance to be beautiful is something that he loves; however, the practice of these vices against art is something that he detests. To define intemperance and to pronounce its verb is something that belongs to moral science; what this discipline reproves is not knowledge but intemperance itself. In conclusion, every "word of the heart", even when it refers to a reality that we hate, because it is manifestative of the divine "*claritas*", is "a notice with love (Augustine of Hippo, De Trinitate, IX, 10, n.15)".

"*pulchrum*" because beauty causes—as its final cause—the movement of desire towards it: "The Supersubstantial Good is called Beauty to the extent that it calls [*vocans*] all things to Himself. For beauty raptures [*rapit*] in all things the desire of it (Albert the Great, *De Pulchro et Bono*, q.5, expos.)". Beauty founds the attraction of good; without it, we would never be able to apprehend any entity as good. The founding precedence of aesthetic experience with regard to the appreciation of something as a good, as a naturally desirable reality, is perfectly expressed in the following words by Saint Thomas: "*bonum laudatur ut pulchrum*", that is, "the good is praised as beauty (Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I, q.5, a.4, ad 1)".

The contemplation of beauty acts as a bridge between knowledge and desire, between intellectual life and moral life, between truth and goodness: "the first procession that takes place in the mind is according to the apprehension of the true; then, this true becomes *resplendent*, *incandescent* [*excandescit*], and becomes conceived under the reason of good; and then, desire is moved towards it (Albert the Great, *De Pulchro et Bono*, q.1, a.1, in c)". The movement that makes desire tend towards something that is proposed to it as a good presupposes a double apprehension on the part of the intellect: "one, which is in the speculative intellect, and which is the apprehension of the *verb* considered in the absolute sense; and the other, which is in the practical understanding by extension of the true to the reason of good; thus, in the former there is already an incitement of desire towards the good (Albert the Great, *De Pulchro et Bono*, q.1, a.1, in c)".

Aesthetic experience must be situated in the speculative intellect, or more specifically, in the "verb of the heart" that emanates from this intellect "as the splendour of the light [*sicut splendor ex luce*] (Thomas Aquinas, *Summa contra gentiles*, IV, chap. 14, n.). 3)"; thanks to the "incandescence" of what is true, in which beauty consists, the contemplated object crosses from theoretical intellect to practical intellect. Thereafter it moves the faculty to desire as the final cause: "the moving intellect is the reasoning intellect driven by a purpose other than mere reasoning, and this is the practical intellect, which differs from the speculative intellect according to the end. For the speculative contemplates the truth, not for anything different, but for itself; the practical, on the other hand, contemplates the truth in view of an operation [other than the mere contemplation of the truth] (Thomas Aquinas, *Sententia libri De anima*, III, lect.14, n.4)".

The aesthetic experience consists of an "incandescence" or "effulgence" of the "verb of the heart". The contemplation of the true entity in its beauty belongs to the speculative intellect. Furthermore, it enables the consideration of this same entity as good on the part of the practical intellect and, therefore, as something to be sought by action: "Just as the art of medicine does not achieve effect in operation if not helped by the virtue of nature, likewise, desire will not move if not directed by the preceding apprehension [that is, the apprehension of speculative intellect] until the next apprehension [that is, the apprehension of practical intellect] (Albert the Great, *De Pulchro et Bono*, q.1, a.1, in c)".

8.7   Conclusion

The very dynamism of intellectual life, which leads to the formation of a "verb of the heart", cannot be separated from that other dynamism by which desire is inclined towards the good. The education of desire becomes an inevitable consequence for anyone who has devoted himself honestly to intellectual life, because speculative life, thanks to the contemplation of the beauty involved in every "*conceptio cordis*", originates and directs the movement of personal life towards its ends (Canals 1976). Every word of the heart, because of the incandescent radiance of its beauty, moves our desire towards the good. The education of desire, from this perspective, should not be considered as an auxiliary discipline without any essential connection with the development of our intellectual life, but as an inevitable consequence of it, as long as it is lived with "sincerity" and "authenticity".[16]

   The dissociation between these two dimensions of the human being could only be explained by the "superficiality" of our concepts. Such superficial concepts would no longer be the result of an "intelligible birth", by which that who is intelligent manifests and declares what he understands in act. Conversely, these concepts would have conventional meanings extrinsically received through the social, economic or political environment (Canals 1987, pp. 647–9).

   Only an intellectual who is "superficial", that is, an intellectual who does not love what he *says*, is able to dissociate his personal life from his intellectual life. In this case, strictly speaking, we are no longer before an intellectual; in him there is no contemplation of a certain objective content under the light of the divine "*claritas*", nor the emanation of a "*verbum cordis*" that manifests the understood object in its truth and beauty, let alone an act of love directed towards the word interiorly conceived. Concepts from the false intellectual are not a "living word", that is, a "notice with love [*notitia cum amore*] (Thomas Aquinas, *Expositio in Symbolum Apostolorum*, a.8)", but the exact opposite, a "dead word",[17] which lacks love because of its lack of interiority, and which lacks beauty because it also lacks depth.[18]

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[16]"Would there not be something repellent in seeing a great discovery made by an unprincipled rascal? The unspoiled instinct of a simple man would be grievously hurt by it. There is something shocking in a dissociation which dislocates the harmony of the human being. One has no faith in jewel merchants who sell pearls and wear none. To be in close contact with the great spring of all things without acquiring anything of its moral nature seems a paradox. To enjoy the faculty of intelligence, and to make of it an isolated force, a 'bump', is, one suspects, a dangerous game; for every isolated force in a balanced whole becomes the victim of its surroundings (Sertillanges 1960)".

[17]"But sometimes man has a word which is dead [*verbum mortuum*]. This is when, for instance, he conceives what he ought to do, but he has not the will to do it; or when one believes but does not practise; then his faith is said to be dead, as St. James points out [2:17] (Thomas Aquinas, *Expositio in Symbolum Apostolorum*, a.8)".

[18]The distinction between a "living word" and a "dead word" is beautifully set out in the essay "Elogi de la paraula" by the Catalan poet Joan Maragall, a close friend of the Thomistic bishop Josep Torras i Bages, from whom he probably received the doctrine of the "*verbum cordis*".

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Maragall writes: "Because there is no word, no matter how tiny it may represent, that was not born in a light of inspiration, that does not reflect something of the infinite light that gave birth to the world. How can we speak coldly and with such abundance? That is why we often listen to each other with such indifference: because the habit of talking too much and hearing too much muddies the feeling of the sanctity of the word. We would have to speak much less and only by a strong desire for expression: when the spirit trembles with fullness and words sprout like flowers in spring one by one [...]. When a branch can no longer withstand the spring that it has inside, between the abundant leaves a flower sprouts as a wonderful expression. Do you not see in the fullness of the plants the admiration of having bloomed? So we do when the living word springs from our lips (Maragall 1935)".

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Chapter 9
The Education of Desire: Moderation or Reinforcement?

José Ignacio Murillo

Abstract Desire is a key feature for understanding human beings, but there are different conceptions of its nature and its role in human life. Modern thinkers tend to understand desire as a force that must be regulated, whereas classical philosophy proposes ways of integrating and harmonizing desires in the context of the whole life. Christian early thinkers argued that our desire tends toward an infinite good whose pursuit implies an always-open personal growth. From this perspective, the integration of human desires can no longer be seen as mere limitation or regulation. In this context, it is possible to understand the classical notions of habit and virtue as a kind of personal growth, which includes growth in one's capacity for desire. However, the question arises of how to reconcile this perpetual growth with the pursuit of happiness and peace.

Keywords Education of desire · Desire · Happiness · Human growth · Habit · Virtue

9.1 Introduction: The Educability of Desire

"Desire" is a key term for understanding human behavior. However, we need not wait for a clear and scientific definition of desire in order to understand what we mean by this word. We constantly speak about desires when we try to explain why we or other people act in certain ways and, despite the variety of forms that desire can take, we all seem to understand what we are talking about when we use this word. However, as is common with such broad categories, a closer inspection of the concept of desire reveals many possible misunderstandings.

Each culture has a shared conception of desire that is established by tradition and by the reflections of sages and philosophers. This cultural diversity is not incidental to our purpose of understanding desire and the possibility of its education. As with other aspects of human identity, our conception of human desire has an influence on its

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expression. What we think we are decisively influences our life and behavior. It can impose apparent limits on us that in reality do not exist, making us despair of some real possibilities, or it can make us aspire to impossible goals, putting us at risk of perpetual dissatisfaction. A distorted vision of ourselves can also make us blind to certain possibilities that are deeply rooted in our nature. Therefore, it is wise to reflect on our humanity, and, in this case, on our conception of desire. This reflection can help to clarify the notion in question and to explore the corresponding reality.

An initial question about this notion accompanies the expression "education of desire." This presupposes that desire has certain qualities that can be changed or enriched. We do not speak of educating a stone or a star (Aristotle 2012, 1103 a 18–23). If we exclude animal training, education is a possibility that we reserve for human beings. Only what is alive and endowed with cognition can be educated. But it seems that the kind of cognition that is peculiar to human beings is required for education in a strict sense.

To accept the possibility of education is to reject the idea that desire is a brute fact that can only be accepted as it is. Thus we consider desire, like other human features, to be somewhat malleable and capable of being shaped in different ways. This conviction is widespread in humanity and is one of the key factors of what we call education. And education is one of the most universal features of humanity. There is no culture without that practice, because human beings are not born complete and finished. On the contrary, they need a slow process of growth and adaptation, requiring not only the organism's interaction with the natural environment but also, and above all, its interaction with other human beings.

Unlike the case of animal training, the goal of education is not usually conceived as external to the person who is educated, but rather as something that enables the development of one's capacities. Among the features of human beings that can be educated, a very important one is desire. It seems that we also have to learn how to desire in order to achieve our goals. The possibility of educating desire and how this can be done, that is, the precise meaning of the expression "education of desire," is the main topic of these reflections.

9.2   Classical Versus Modern Conceptions of Desire

Modern thinkers have paid a lot of attention to desire, but their conception of desire and its place in human life and the natural world is different from ancient conceptions, and more limited as well. Ancient philosophy considered the intellect (*nous*) and reason (*logos*) to be the key features of a human being. This is not surprising. Ancient philosophy begins with the experience of thinking about the foundations of reality, and thus discovers the place in human life of the intellect (*nous*), understood as the capacity for distinguishing what is real from mere appearance, and also the capacity for discerning the order of reality through reason (*logos*). After investigating nature, philosophers discover, little by little, that those capacities allow us to organize our lives in order to achieve the good.

For this ancient view, desire closely depends on cognition. The supreme form of cognition consists in contemplating supreme reality, as is allowed by the intellect, and in discovering, through reason, reality's order. This kind of possession, the most excellent of all, is the goal of the highest and most intimate desire. Accordingly, it is unsurprising that ancient philosophers considered contemplation (*theoria*) to be the best way of life. But, at the same time, it is clear that a peaceful and eternal contemplation of supreme reality is not something we actually possess, but rather an object of desire. In fact, the term "philosophy" itself, understood as "love of wisdom," reveals that the contemplative life is not something that is actually achieved, but is only the object of an aspiration.

Plato is perhaps the philosopher who described most vividly and profoundly the desiderative nature of philosophy, setting in place the roots of a comprehensive theory of desire. According to the philosophical myth, philosophy has to do with *Eros*, the son of *Poros* and *Penia*, whose names, respectively, mean Abundance and Scarcity. In his *Symposium*, Plato describes *eros* as a way of ascending to the contemplation of true reality. On his view, desire appears to be something that can be educated, insofar as it can be directed progressively toward better goods, nourished on the way by beauty (Plato 1914, 203 b ss.).

Aristotle continues Plato's reflection on desire insofar as he defines human beings in terms of "desiderative intellect or ratiocinative desire (*orexis*)" (Aristotle 2012, 1139 b 4–6). Like Plato, he distinguishes two fundamental kinds of desire: the desire that derives from intellectual cognition and the desire that derives from sensitive cognition. Within this second category, both Plato and Aristotle accept a distinction that is crucial for educative purposes. On the one hand, there is mere desire (*epithymia*) and, on the other, a superior form of sensitive desire that we might call reinforced desire (*thymos*), which has to do with one's capacity for overcoming obstacles to the good, that is, with anger, courage and hope. Plato and Aristotle gave decisive importance to this last kind of desire, conceiving of it as mediating between mere desire and rational desire.

Aristotle placed desire at the heart of reality.[1] Not only rational beings, but all kinds of natural beings possess their own natural desires. He interprets natural desire as an aspiration of each being to achieve pure activity, as far as this is possible. Behind this conception is the idea of desire as a tendency to transform the desiderative agent into the desired object. In any case, for Aristotle, desire is not only a trait of humans and animals, but also a basic feature of the cosmos, and he speaks of natural inclinations as principles of movement toward the ends that are rooted in each being.

This is one of the Aristotelian theses discarded by modern philosophy; its rejection is a key postulate for Mechanics as the new way of conceiving nature. Aristotle thought that each being has a nature, and each nature possesses an inclination toward its own good. On this view, the logic of movement depends on aspiring to the perfection that each thing can attain. It is clear that desire, even natural

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[1]Speaking about the final cause, which moves other causes but does not itself move, he says that "it moves as desired (*hos eromenon*)" (Aristotle 2007, 1072 b 3).

desire, is not infallible. It can be hampered by the activity of other beings. Moreover, desire is not infinite, but is instead confined to the nature of each being, which it cannot surpass. However, desire is intelligible as a natureal cause insofar as it is directed at a goal (*telos*). This grounds the possibility of distinguishing between natural movement and accidental events. The intersection between two movements oriented toward a common goal can give rise to an unpredictable event.

In contrast, modern mechanistic thought rejects the notion of natural desire. The logic of movement no longer depends on each being's natural inclinations. Now nature is inert, and movement depends on external forces applied to bodies. So finality ceases to be the key for understanding movement, and desire is confined to the behavior of rational agents. The behavior of animals and other natural beings, including human non-rational movements, are to be understood as merely passive displacements that can only be explained by external forces operating on single bodies.

But mechanistic thought and its presuppositions also had some influence on the comprehension of human behavior. A good example of this trend is Hobbes' political philosophy. In fact, Hobbes attempted to establish a mechanistic view of human society (Cruz Prados 1986). His aim was to offer a true science that allowed us to predict, and to some extent control, the political body. To this end, Hobbes designed a political philosophy in which human beings are characterized as pre-social individuals who conflict with each other because they are moved by a particular force: unlimited desire. According to Hobbes, every human being wants everything, so everyone is an enemy of everyone else, even to the point that he or she can be killed by any of them. It is precisely this possibility that offers an opportunity and an incentive for stability and order. While driven by infinite desire, each individual also fears death, and fear is a force that can restrict desire in order to achieve security. This enables a social pact where power is consigned to one individual, and a new political reality appears: the Leviathan (Hobbes 2007).

This is not the place to discuss Hobbes' political theory. What is important for present purposes is the new understanding of desire. The term is the same. But, on closer inspection, we see important differences. In Hobbes' description, the object of desire is external to the individual. When we speak of human desire, it is directed at the possession of everything. In fact, appropriation and enjoyment seem to be the main goal that Hobbes has in mind when he talks of desiring something. But on his view, desire does not transform or internally improve its bearer. It is merely a force that leads to certain outcomes, that is, conflict, death, fear, and self-limitation. There is no perfection or peace for human beings on this view. The infinity of desire is only an expedient for explaining social interaction.

Rousseau offered a different view of desire. Like Hobbes, Rousseau hypothesized the existence of a state of nature prior to human society. But in this case, the interaction between human beings was peaceful, because their desires were limited. Humans were content with life and desired only what was needed to maintain it. Differently from the views of Plato and Aristotle, for Rosseau human beings do not naturally aspire to improve themselves. However, for Rousseau, there is also room for the infinity of desire. Society enables comparison and emulation between individuals, and thereby opens up a social world of distorted and insatiable desires (Rousseau 2002).

Rousseau explored different solutions to this irruption of conflictive desires (Múgica 1985). One of them is a kind of social organization where the individual is transformed and everyone's will accords with the general will (*volonté générale*). But on this conception, a new and perhaps better state than the natural one is not achieved by following desire, but rather is imposed as an external arrangement, that is, by some political organization that can take advantage of unchained human desire in order to achieve a general goal, and so transforms each individual into a different person with newly limited desire: a citizen.

Both Hobbes and Rousseau have a mechanical understanding of desire that is far from being an aspiration to perfection. They certainly share with the classical understanding of desire the idea that desire can be shaped to some extent, that it can be educated. But, for Hobbes, education is only a matter of achieving balance and does not transform the individual, whereas for Rousseau this transformation is the consequence of imposing a new goal on human nature, not a development of what was already present. It is true that citizenship does not abolish nature. But the condition of citizenship displays no continuity with the natural state, and seems to be a superimposed goal that uses nature much like building materials in the construction of a building, with the difference that, in this case, the arrangement of the building implies an education of desire. Indeed, in the end the citizen's happiness is the same peaceful enjoyment of life that is present in pure nature.

Along the same lines, Spinoza offered another modern conception of human desire. For Spinoza, a thing's being consists in its desire to persist and increasing its power to act,[2] and the good is defined in terms of that goal (Spinoza 2011, Etica, Part. IV, Def. 1 and Prop. 8 and Def.). Although the language here is very similar to that of the classical understanding, there is a profound change in conception. "*Conatus*" is not an aspiration to a good, because neither from a mechanical view of nature nor from the point of view of thought, understood as a logical and mathematical connection of ideas, is it necessary to accept any external end. Nature is just what necessarily happens; so good and bad, as well as achievement and frustration, become relative if not meaningless concepts: they are mere facts that can be mathematically described. Mathematical objects—numbers and objective relations—dispense with the categories of good and bad. Aristotelian thinkers tend to remember that *mathematica non sunt bona*. This is why the systematic application of mathematics and mechanics to the understanding of nature and its effects eliminates the distinction between good and bad from the realm of the real world, and transforms reality into a mere set of facts.

Freud's psychoanalysis offers yet another example of this new modern view of desire. In his interpretation of the psyche, desire is conceptualized as libido, which is the inner drive of psychic life, but is considered to be directed toward some form of

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[2]Spinoza affirms: "Conatus, quo unaquaeque res in suo esse perserverare conatur, nihil est praeter ipsius actualem essentiam" (2011, Etica, Part. III, Prop. 7).

equilibrium (Choza 1978). From this perspective, consciousness arises from the contrast with reality. Thus, it is unsurprising that Freud sets in opposition to *eros* a force directed toward pleasure, *thanatos*, which is directed toward death. Death is, in fact, the return to balance from the imbalance that life implies (Freud 2010). If we accept that desire tends toward pleasure, and we conceive pleasure only as a kind of appeasement, then it is clear that our desires are not directed toward growth and perfection, but only to the avoidance of evil and conflict (Polo 2018). This is reminiscent of Schopenhauer's conceptualization of reality as desire. If all is desire, desire remains always dissatisfied. For him, however, not even death can quench desire. We can only aspire to suppress it by accessing realms, like aesthetic experience, where desire is not present (Schopenhauer 1969).

9.3   Desire and Human Fulfilment

What seems to underlie all these conceptions of desire, which are all deprived of any idea of the good or fulfilment, is the modern idea of force. Whereas Aristotle understood movement as a consequence of desire, that is, of a teleological orientation that is intrinsic to each natural being, the mechanistic conception of the world explains movement as a result of forces that are extrinsic to the being that is moved. This is a positive achievement if we accept the conception of reality that it presupposes only as a postulate, in order to simplify phenomena and make them accessible to mathematical treatment (Murillo 1999b). But, in order to understand nature and reality as such, it is a clear misconception. And one of its outcomes is precisely the modern incapacity to understand human desire as a positive feature of human beings.

The mechanistic view of human desire has another shortcoming. As we have seen, if we understand the body as a mere mechanism composed of parts that are only externally related, desire is something alien to it. But since our experience of desire is undeniable, we are impelled to understand it as something merely internal, linked to consciousness, to an inner realm that is disconnected from the body. In this light, we can understand our modern unease with the experience of desire, and why Spinoza tries to identify the experience of desire with the mechanical dynamics of the body. We are not directed toward the good. On the contrary, we call "good" what strengthens our *conatus*. Desire is no longer conceived as an orientation toward the good, but rather as a force that is external to the body, or even something identified with *being* itself.

The separation of desire from the good, and from an inner nature that can be perfected, has influenced our view of the education of desire. From the modern perspective, to educate desire can mean shaping it in order to control it, but the possibility of some kind of growth and maturation seems to be excluded. In contrast, the classical perspective tends to stress this process of ordering and maturation of desire. However, within the classical tradition, the question arises: what is the goal of the education of desire?

If we compare the process of education and moral progress with the growth of living beings, it seems we have to accept that there is a goal to be achieved, a state of perfection of the human person where the process ends. In fact, in organic growth we can speak of the development of certain possibilities leading to the mature living body.

In addition, Greek philosophers were concerned with moderation and limitation. Aristotle says that the pursuit of wealth as a goal in itself cannot be part of the good life, precisely because it has no limit or measure. No matter how much wealth we have obtained, we can always aspire to have more, and this fact excludes the pursuit of wealth from the possibility of virtue.

For these reasons, classical moral philosophers tended to consider human perfection as a kind of harmonious equilibrium. We see a radical example of the view that it is possible to achieve perfection in the case of the primitive Stoics, who neatly divided human persons into the wise and the foolish, considering only two possibilities: perfect virtue and foolishness (Reale 1989). In this case, it is not only clear that virtue reaches a state where it cannot grow anymore, but also that growth itself seems to be excluded from moral life.

The idea that growth is intrinsic to the moral life and that, at least during mortal life, growth is always possible, is present in Christianity from the very beginning. For this perspective, the *form* of virtues, what makes them virtues and gives them unity, is charity: a kind of love of friendship and benevolence that comes from God and is primarily directed toward Him and through Him to all persons. But, as God is infinite, love can always grow. Consequently, moral growth is not seen as a limited process of development toward human maturation, but rather as growth toward closer identification with God, whose limit cannot be determined.

A good example of this new conception of human life is Saint Augustine's admonition: "If you are pleased with what you are, you have stopped already. If you say, 'It is enough,' you are lost. Keep on walking, moving forward, trying for the goal" (Sermon 169, 18). We can place a limit on corporal growth, but not on spiritual growth. This is not, for Augustine, a mere possibility, but rather a necessity of spiritual life. If virtues do not grow, they diminish.

Another, almost contemporary presentation of this idea can be found in the work of Saint Gregory of Nyssa, who established a distinction between the material and the spiritual creature, such that the latter can grow without limitation (Gregory of Nyssa 2012). This possibility grounds *epektasis*, the attitude directed toward always becoming more (Mateo-Seco 2010). After all, this attitude is just a consequence of Saint's Paul understanding of Christian life (Phil 3, 13–14). He did not think he had reached perfection so he could rest; rather he was always on the way. As the gloss quoted by Aquinas puts it: Saint Paul was not perfect, but he was a perfect runner (Aquinas 1948, S. Th. II-II, q. 24, a. 8, ad 1).

This idea of human moral life contrasts with all those views that are oriented toward mere harmony and stability, which are found not only in the Western tradition, but also in other traditions, such as for example those informed by Buddhist views of desire as the root of pain (Harvey 2013). However, it is clear that this idea of unlimited growth entails some difficulties that must be addressed.

The first difficulty concerns precisely the classical idea that limitations are necessary in order to avoid chaos. In other words, the question about growth seems to be: "How far?" In fact, the very idea of perpetual growth seems contradictory, because the condition for establishing some kind of growth as good depends on accepting a determinate and desirable goal for the process. From this perspective, growth would be mere development, a notion that suggests the idea of unfolding something that was already there. If this is true, then the idea of a life that always aspires to more appears to be a dangerous mirage that could lead to perpetual frustration.

On the other hand, the same idea of desire seems to imply pain and dissatisfaction. We aspire to something that we do not yet have. And this painful lack impels us to seek some kind of fulfillment. If so, it seems that any increase in desire leads to growing anxiety and dissatisfaction.

And finally, can this notion of growth really be applied to desire? If so, what could "growing" mean for desire? Is this possible at all? Can we specify this concept?

In order to resolve these difficulties, we have to consider the important consequences of the Christian conception of human life for our conception of human desire. In Aristotle, desire tends toward *eudaimonia*, that is, happiness conceived not as a state of satisfaction but of human fulfillment. But, as we have seen, the object of this desire does not seem to have anything to do with infinity. Now, in Christian thought, desire is to some extent directed toward an infinite good. However, it is difficult to accept a desire that is not aroused by a clear and delimited goal, a good that can be effectively achieved. At least, this seems to contrast with the classical idea that a "natural desire cannot be incapable of fulfillment" (SCG III, c. 57, n. 3).

An interesting approach to this problem can be found within Christian thought, in the work of Thomas Aquinas. He accepts the principle of perpetual growth and its implications, but clarifies that the happiness of human beings, which consists in the vision of God, is a goal that cannot be achieved only with the resources of human nature. We are, in fact, confronted with an infinite good that presupposes an activity that is somehow infinite. But Aquinas explains the dynamics of desire in a way that is reminiscent of the platonic ascension toward the One-Good (S. Th. I-II, q. 3, a. 8). The desire to know and to see intellectually progresses step by step, and only after having achieved a new step can a desire be formed toward something higher. In other words, it seems that desire is not immediately directed from the first moment toward the ultimate good, but instead has to grow and be shaped through a process in order to be able to reach the ultimate possibilities of human nature. In fact, Aquinas distinguishes between the will (*voluntas*), i.e., rational desire, and whim (*velleitas*), i.e., a desire for an object that cannot be achieved. This makes clear that to accept the infinity of desire, or a desire for something infinite, is not the same as accepting an impossible longing.

In order to formulate an adequate understanding of human desire that is compatible with this Christian view, we have to reflect on the nature of desire and its role in human life. We have to rethink the relation of desire to its object—that is, the good—, the relation between desire and human growth and ask if some kind of human fulfillment is possible under these circumstances. In the next section I will trace

out some further implications of the psychology of Aquinas, supplementing it, as necessary, with the contributions of other thinkers.

9.4   The Growth of Desire and Human Happiness

The first remark that must be made is that the relation between desire and its goal is not immediate. If we desire, this is only possible because we can enjoy or possess something, and this possession does not belong to the desiderative dimension of human beings but instead to other human dimensions. We can desire food, but when food nourishes us and is tasted, both of these activities contribute toward appeasing desire. On the other hand, desire moves us to act in a certain way, and action is not desire. So, we have to avoid any possible reification of desire that detaches it from the reality into which it is inserted. Desire is not something we are or that we have, but rather something we live in. It is a dimension of human life and its dynamics, and cannot be understood separately.

Desires are directed toward determinate goods or goals. In fact, I desire *something*. I do not deny the possibility of a longing whose goal is unclear, but this can be explained as longing for a goal that is not perfectly conscious. It is possible that the cause is, for example, an organic imbalance or the feeling of a vacuum that must be filled, but in the end it seems right to distinguish between what can be achieved (*voluntas*) and a mere whim (*velleitas*). The latter does not contribute to human fulfillment; so reason, when used correctly, dissolves it much in the manner of philosophies of the suppression of desire.

The difficulties with human desire begin with our rational capacity for understanding the notion of good. Desiring the good—as, at least, every living being does—is not the same as seeking what is good as such. Furthermore, for Aquinas, desire is rooted in love, so any distinction between kinds of desire depends on a distinction between kinds of love. For instance, Aquinas distinguishes between the love of concupiscence and the love of friendship. If "to love is to wish good to someone," then

> the movement of love has a twofold tendency: towards the good which a man wishes to someone (to himself or to another) and towards that to which he wishes some good. Accordingly, man has love of concupiscence towards the good that he wishes to another, and love of friendship towards him to whom he wishes the good. Now the members of this division are related as primary and secondary: since that which is loved with the love of friendship is loved simply and for itself; whereas that which is loved with the love of concupiscence, is loved, not simply and for itself, but for something else. (I-II, q. 26, a. 4, co)

This definition can be extended to all forms of love, even to ourselves: persons are goods that we love and affirm for their own sake, whereas we want other goods and approve of them as mere conveniences.

The term "love of concupiscence," however, can be misleading. Aquinas and tradition reserve the term "concupiscence" for the kind of desire that involves the body and is directed toward a good to the extent that it gives pleasure (*appetitus boni delectabilis*) (I-II, q. 30, a. 3, co). In the previous distinction, however,

"concupiscence" has, in my opinion, a more general meaning that includes whatever is convenient for one's ends. What is clear is that what is loved with the love of friendship is loved as an end and not as a means.

Aquinas also distinguishes between natural and nonnatural concupiscence. The former are those desires oriented toward natural goods, like food and drink. The latter are those desires that depend on apprehending something as good and convenient and, for that reason, taking pleasure in it. This kind of desire belongs to human beings "to whom it is proper to devise something as good and suitable, beyond that which nature requires" (I-II, q. 30, a. 3, co). Natural desire, so understood, is common to animals and human beings; but the second, we can say, is natural to us because we are intellectual and rational beings, and thus we are not restricted in our capacity for desiring goods.

It is under these assumptions that Aquinas poses his question about the infinity of concupiscence, stating:

> Natural concupiscence cannot be actually infinite: because it is of that which nature requires; and nature ever tends to something finite and fixed. Hence man never desires infinite meat, or infinite drink. But just as in nature there is potential successive infinity, so can this kind of concupiscence be infinite successively; so that, for instance, after getting food, a man may desire food yet again; and so of anything else that nature requires: because these bodily goods, when obtained, do not last forever, but fail. [...] But non-natural concupiscence is altogether infinite. Because, as stated above [Article 3], it follows from the reason, and it belongs to the reason to proceed to infinity. Hence he that desires riches, may desire to be rich, not up to a certain limit, but to be simply as rich as possible. (I-II, q. 30, a. 4, co)

Since this kind of infinity is—for Aquinas as it is for Aristotle—something inconvenient for human happiness, we might think, as cynical and epicurean philosophers, that nonnatural and potentially infinite desires should be avoided. However, Aquinas adds:

> Another reason may be assigned, according to the Philosopher (Polit. i, 3), why certain concupiscence is finite, and another infinite. Because concupiscence of the end is always infinite: since the end is desired for its own sake, e.g. health: and thus greater health is more desired, and so on to infinity; just as, if a white thing of itself dilates the sight, that which is more white dilates yet more. On the other hand, concupiscence of the means is not infinite, because the concupiscence of the means is in suitable proportion to the end. Consequently those who place their end in riches have an infinite concupiscence of riches; whereas those who desire riches, on account of the necessities of life, desire a finite measure of riches, sufficient for the necessities of life, as the Philosopher says (Polit. i, 3).

9.5 The Role of Virtue in Increasing Desire

"Concupiscence of the end is always infinite." Only humans can grasp the end as such, that is, the reason of good, but this reference to the good as such opens up the possibility of infinite desire. Why? Perhaps because the ultimate end of a rational being cannot be finite. At this moment, we have to remember that, for Aquinas, this is not the same as affirming what is the nature of the good. Our ideas about what is good play an important role here. Following Aristotle's explanation, Aquinas

examines and criticizes different conceptions of the human good: as wealth, as pleasure, as power, as glory, etc.

Indeed, pursuit of something wrongly identified as a good leads to difficulties and, in the final analysis, reveals itself to be impossible. Identifying wealth as the end of our life, as our good, leads to an infinite desire that can never be satisfied. But the frustration that accompanies it does not proceed from the possibility of always desiring more, but rather from the impossibility of integrating it as a real perfection of the desirer. Wealth increases my power over the external, but it does not make me grow or improve as the unique person that I am. The analysis that Aquinas offers of identifying the good with wealth, honor, pleasure, etc., exposes the mutual inconsistency of those goods. From this perspective, human life can be seen as a search for the true nature of the good that can fulfill us. Notwithstanding, as we have seen, whatever the end of a rational being is, it can always be more and, we might add, better desired. So Aquinas's thesis seems to consist in extending to desire the inseparability of permanent growth and human perfection. The perfection of a spiritual, or rational, being cannot consist in the termination of all growth and activity.

In the case of the Christian thinkers examined above, we have to reconcile the "imperative" of growth with their acceptance of the possibility of true fulfillment: access to a situation, beyond death, where desire is no longer the consequence of a lack. However, the question of whether or not there is growth and increasing desire in this situation is, for these authors, a difficult issue that we cannot address here.

Some aspects of the intrinsic growth of desire, as a feature of a good life, follow from Aquinas's response to the question of the necessity of habits for the will. The will is the desire that follows from intellectual and rational cognition. As Aristotle says, "tendency or appetite is concupiscence (*epithymia*), anger (*thymos*) and will (*boulesis*)" (1986, II, 3, 414 b 2). Anger or irascibility is by itself a kind of reinforced appetite directed toward the good, which includes a concept that Aquinas sometimes uses to refer to desire: hope. Hope is, indeed, a reinforced desire because it is a desire that does not die even in the presence of obstacles to achieving its end. For Aquinas, "the irascible or concupiscible power can be the subject of human virtue: for, in so far as it participates in the reason, it is the principle of a human act. And to these powers we must need assign virtues" (S. Th., I-II, q. 56, a. 4, co). So they are capable of some kind of growth, inasmuch as they are moved by and dependent on reason.

As for the will, Aquinas affirms:

> the object of the will is the good of reason proportionate to the will, in respect of this the will does not need a virtue perfecting it. But if man's will is confronted with a good that exceeds its capacity, whether as regards the whole human species, such as Divine good, which transcends the limits of human nature, or as regards the individual, such as the good of one's neighbor, then does the will need virtue. And therefore such virtues as those which direct man's affections to God or to his neighbor are subjected in the will, as charity, justice, and such like. (S. Th., I-II, q. 56, a. 6, co)

From this perspective, the growth of the will—that is, of rational desire—is not only a possibility, but also a necessary condition for living a complete human life. Aquinas does not consider native rational desire to be bad, but as directed primarily

toward the good of the individual. However, it is open to all goods that are opened by intellectual cognition, especially to those that appear to be goods in themselves. This is the case, of course, with other persons and God: precisely those goods that we can love with the love of friendship, as an end and not only as a means. It is not by chance that the virtues named by Aquinas are justice and charity. The first requires grasping other persons as worthy of love. We have to remember that, for Aquinas, a power or a capacity acquires a habit to the extent that it is moved by another rational potency that perfects and elevates it (S. Th., I-II, q. 51, a. 2). In the case of justice, it suffices for the intellect to grasp other persons as "another me," thus including them in one's desire of the good. In the case of charity, whose object is primarily God, and is a response to the love with which He creates us and loves us from the beginning, this virtue is not only a fruit of reason, but also depends on how God moves each human being to the most perfect good, if they let Him.

Aquinas's doctrine of the virtues represents a way of explaining the possibility of infinite growth that is inherent to the Christian view of life. This vision has had an important impact on Western culture. The idea of perpetual growth is intrinsic, for example, to our view of the progress of science, as well as of the progress of technology and civilization that science makes possible. However, it is an open question whether the modern idea of progress preserves the anthropology that makes it possible. On the contrary, the new conception of nature as a set of facts, and the separation between desire and the good, and the modern rejection of the growth of a natural being teleologically oriented toward its own good and perfection, has established another framework for understanding human desire.

In my opinion, this framework, which has prevailed during the last few centuries, is now exhausted. From a psychological point of view, it can only offer a vision of human life as oriented toward a kind of adaptation and stability that is far from the harmony that Aristotle proposed, and is more akin to the Stoic conception of passions and desires. However, our era does not share Stoicism's aspiration to virtue, understood as the capacity to obey reason, and as the only true good. This is why we are seduced by other proposals such as those inspired, for example, by Buddhism, which seem to offer some kind of technique for suppressing desire, if not totally, at least to the extent that it can no longer hurt our souls. Even without arriving at that radical solution, it is very common to equate the education of emotions and desire with some kind of regulation (Oron Semper, Murillo, and Bernacer 2016).

We might think that the Christian view is a theological one that can only be shared by those who share the Christian way of life. I think, on the contrary, that the discovery of the human person's unlimited potential for growth is a universal contribution to the comprehension of human beings (Murillo 1999a). As we have seen, this idea is present in our understanding of social progress, but we have to reintegrate it with the growth of each human person. To state a limit for the desire of the good, or to aspire only to homeostasis and adaptation, leads to the frustration of the person. Happiness should be seen, on the contrary, as an equilibrium corresponding to the correct growth of a free system. Happiness involves a kind of equilibrium or satisfaction in each stage of life, but it can only be reached in a life that does not stop with the good already obtained. Hope is the motor of human life.

But the hope of a rational being must also be understood as the personal hope of improving oneself.

If we follow Aquinas, virtuous moral habits can be seen as a kind of growth that reinforces desire. In this tradition, Leonardo Polo explains moral virtue as a means to aspire to more good and to always possess it better (Polo 2016a). This author describes virtue precisely as an intrinsic growth of one's tendencies toward the good, and affirms that a human tendency is morally good only if it does not impede one's growth toward the good (Polo 2016b). On the other hand, aspiring to the good is correlated with the improvement of the person who desires.

Returning to the primary motivation of these reflections, that is, the education of desire, this proposal offers important suggestions and corrections to other models. First, it implies that the goal of education is not only adapting the child to society, or furnishing tools to manage desires. Educators must be conscious that their task is to help the growth of a person whose *telos* cannot be imposed from the outside and yet is not previously fixed. It is not only that each person has to achieve her own goal, but also that her goal can never be definitively established, even by herself. Consequently, to educate someone is to promote their inner hopeful desire for a good that can always grow, and to instill a conviction that this can never be detached from the desire of aspiring to always be a better person.

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Chapter 10
Desire and Sensitivity

José Víctor Orón Semper

Abstract When talking about the topic of desire we have to refer to the person who desires, because truly, when we desire, we desire to be something specific, which is more evident when the object of desire is another person. At the same time the desire implies a positive assessment of the desired object, therefore education of desire relies strictly on the education of the way of looking or perception. In other words, people do not wrong-want (or wrong-desire). We always desire the good, even when we desire something considered bad, we want it, because we desire the good hidden in that something. This is a longstanding thesis supported by Socrates. What we discuss in this chapter is that the education of desire must really be education of sensitivity. This is the ability to see the other as a person, in the specific reality that they are. This is the true education of desire, the one that allows us to be happy and hurt the way it is supposed to be, as Aristotle would say. In order to do so, we will rely on the anthropology of Leonardo Polo and the revelation of the person through their face according to Levinas' proposal. The sensitive person sees other's personal reality and experiences an emotion which we call commotion; and with that comes a desire for interpersonal encounter. We will also delve into how this education of sensitivity can be developed from the person's emotional reality, considering the proposal of inter-processual self.

Keywords Education of sensitivity · Sensitivity · Desire · Interpersonal encounter

10.1 Introduction

Nowadays, there is a habit in education to measure the quality of educational intervention using satisfaction surveys. This way, education is measured via its ability to satisfy the desires of the student and therefore, it would make no sense

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to talk about education of desire, since desire is the point of reference to assess education. This position is lucidly criticized by Webster (2012) given that education breaks the satisfied desire with the novelty and confrontation that implies the educative contrast with reality.

On the other hand, when one is faced with antisocial behaviours, there is a fear to let oneself be driven by desire. In this case, education of desire would consist of getting people to desire in a determined way, but this resembles manipulation.

Focusing strictly on education of desire presents problems, since even if desire is the source for human action, it is first the effect of it. What we suggest is that desire is the effect of wanting and knowing. Wanting and knowing in a determined way lead to desiring in a specific way. Its dependence on will and knowledge makes desire have a passive component, since one does not choose their desires; at the same time, it explains the variety of desires with such a complex phenomenology. Desire is more of an indicator. When considering each desire one should ask what is really wanted and how reality is understood. However, we will see that aspects of will and knowledge are not simply operational, but personal ones. In this chapter, we will study the relationship between desiring and wanting and between desiring and knowing, in order to make them converge in the look (a voluntary and cognitive act at the same time) and finish with a proposal for the education of desire.

10.2   Desiring and Wanting

Without going into the complexity of the terminology of desire, it could basically be accepted that human desire is a kind of general intentional state of the person in some specific circumstances towards a certain object which predispose them for action and aims to get something valued as good. It could be thought that desiring and wanting are not on the same level. Wanting is generally associated with will whilst desiring is associated with an appetite.[1] This association is refuted when you ask a young person: "why do you do it?" and they give a circular answer: "I do it because I want it", "and why do you want it?", "because I like it", "and why do you like it?", "because I fancy it", "and why do you fancy it?", because I want it.

In the case of a drug addict, it is possible to differentiate between desiring something ("wanting") from wanting something with a more cognitive component (wanting) and from the pleasure derived from that something (liking). In the beginning, when drugs are used, desire and pleasure go together and then they start separating, desire increases, whilst pleasure decreases (Robinson et al. 2016; Berridge and Robinson 2016). The triple distinction: wanting, desiring, and pleasure,

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[1]Appetence would not have to be a simple impulse. Besides, desire does not have to be an impulse. Desire and impulse do not seem to be the same. Research with animals showed that castrated animals did not experience sexual drive, but they did experience desire. (Article by Beach, F. A. (1969) cited by Domínguez, 2001, p. 42).

is intriguing, since for the drug addict getting what they desire does not result in pleasure.

Beyond the terminological differentiation, one can appreciate a short of "depth" in wanting or desiring. This allows us to differentiate between the body or behavioural desire, the psychological desire, or the personal desire. If we accept that graduation, the behavioural desire refers to the appeal of a physical experience, the psychological desire refers to the appeal of a psychological activity and the personal desire refers to the appeal that a person has in their condition of "person". In other words, not because of their physical or psychological qualities, but because of who they are.

The following example is used to differentiate the desire for the qualities in a person from the desire for the person. Let us imagine watching a futuristic film in which a wife was supplanted by an impostor who had the same qualities. As long as the husband does not discover the situation, he lives as if the impostor was his real wife because all her qualities are carefully impersonated by the impostor. However, if the fraud was discovered, would he continue living with the impostor as if she were the real wife? Who did he fall in love with? Did he fall for her qualities or her persona? This love could not continue and if it did, it would be a different love (Spaemann 2000). We talk about personal desire when there is a desire is for the person himself or herself, and not for his/her qualities, behavioural or psychological.

This graduation in three different dimensions is a cognitive exercise made possible by imagination. Nevertheless, accepting that these three desires are activated independently would mean admitting that the person is made of different pieces. Can these three desires operate separately? Occasionally, one could think they do, since one believes they desire an object regardless of its psychological or personal qualities. However, throughout this chapter it will be shown that desiring is always personal. The person is always active in his/her actions and is the one who unifies the whole action (Orón Semper 2017a). First, we will see that it is better for desiring that wanting and enjoying to go together.

10.2.1 The Enjoyable-want (or Enjoyable-desire)

With everything that has been said before, it may seem that desiring and wanting are on different levels, but it turns out that the real "wanting" is an enjoyable one, which unifies wanting and desiring.

Aristotle (2014a libro VII) differentiates between vicious, incontinent, continent and virtuous. This way the continent and incontinent are similar in the sense that none of them enjoys their actions. On the other hand, the vicious and the virtuous both enjoy their actions. The virtuous do not only do good, but he also enjoys the good he or she does (Medina Delgadillo 2014). The fact that the virtuous and the vicious both find pleasure in what they do means that pleasure cannot be understood as a synonym of happiness, since happiness requires virtue. For Aristotle a happy life is more than a pleasant life (In Physic., lib. 7 l. 6 n. 4).

Saint Thomas Aquinas considered enjoyment as a sign of the perfection of an action. "Accordingly, just as it is better than a man should both will good and do it in his external act; so also does it belong to the perfection of moral good, that man should be moved unto good, not only in respect of his will, but also in respect of his sensitive appetite"; according to Ps. 83:3: "My heart and my flesh have rejoiced in the living God": where by "heart we are to understand the intellectual appetite, and by flesh the sensitive appetite." (de Aquino 1989), "the delight is the perfection of the action" (de Aquino 2010 Lib 10. Lección 6).[2]

The reason for this perfection could be understood through the difference Aristotle established between act and production. The purpose of the act lies within itself, the act directly affects the agent that supports it, which results in the possibility of talking about a moral growth; as well as an intellectual growth. On the other hand, in production, the purpose of the act lies far from it, hence it primarily affects the object that has been produced (Aristotle 2014b, book IX, 8466–467).

The personal desire looks like an act and the physical and psychological desire looks like a product. Saint Thomas Aquinas stated:

> More perfect, because the conjunction of the sensible to the sense implies movement, which is an imperfect act: wherefore sensible pleasures are not perceived all at once, but some part of them is passing away, whilst some other part is looked forward to as yet to be realized, as is manifest in pleasures of the table and in sexual pleasures: whereas intelligible things are without movement: hence pleasures of this kind are realized all at once. More firm; because the objects of bodily pleasure are corruptible, and soon pass away; whereas spiritual goods are incorruptible (de Aquino 1989).

This distinction between act and production applied to desire, alongside with the superiority of the act, could agree with what was asserted by Agustin, who said that corporal pleasure once it has been satisfied, it stops; whilst the spiritual pleasure, once it has been satisfied, it can still be satisfied some more.

Even if this distinction between act and production may be useful, it is somehow a forced one, since given the corporal reality of a human being there is no way of acting without producing. There is an intimate relationship between them where the act determines the quality of the actions because "praxis allows poiesis, but not the other way around" (Altarejos 1999). It cannot be forgotten that both "are dimensions of every human act. However, one usually predominates over the other" (Altarejos and Naval 2000).

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[2]When the philosophy of Thomas Aquinas is applied to theology, we found that the benefit of the unifying wanting and pleasure is also asserted. A Christian who lives in grace, fulfils God's will, at the same time they do what they desire since they are inhabited by grace and it is not an external matter (Gelabert Ballester 2002, pp. 98–99).

10.2.2 The Wrong-want (or Wrong-desire)

There is a way of wrong wanting and in that sense there is a wrong-want (or wrong-desire). However, there is no wrong desiring, although one can desire bad things. The desire arises, in our proposal, from a conjunction of wanting and knowing. Let us see where the wrong-want (or wrong-desire) arises from.

Erikson (1963), focused on psychosocial development of the human being, pointed out that in the first 2 years of life the child lives a series of experiences that will lead him to adopt an attitude of basic trust or basic distrust. These are two opposing basic dispositions. Trust allows the person to welcome reality, to be amazed by it and want to know it as it is. On the other hand, distrust inclines the person to fear, not wanting to discover as much as to identify traits so as to be able to control reality. The theory of bonding, social referencing, different psychoanalyst (specially Winnicott and Kohut) complete details about the double disposition in wanting (Orón Semper 2020). Two opposing dispositions would have been established: trusting and securing. The latter is not a bad thing per se, but it is bad when applied to interpersonal relationships. Using the word is an act of securing, but the interpersonal relationship relies on trust not security (Orón Semper 2018). Therefore, wanting to secure interpersonal relationships is the wrong-want (or wrong-desire).

10.3 Desiring and Knowing

It seems like desiring and knowing do not get along quite well. In fact, from an educational point of view, education of desires is usually understood as the cognitive control executed on them (Kegan 1994). This is done because beliefs change desire (Kegan 1994). This position is due to how unpopular emotions have been considered. Let us not forget that emotions have been considered within[3] the term desire. And it looks like the best thing one can do with them is control them. Descartes' desire is to control. Hence, it can be understood that he suggests "training" emotions (Descartes 2005). For Kant (1978 A 55), feelings are nothing but obstacles for reason. It seems that Plato's traditional (2009) view is being assumed and reason and emotion (as part of desire) operate independently and they need somebody to control them.

However, there would not be desire for something if that something was not known. If that is the case, desire and knowledge do not operate independently, especially because knowing something also implies how desirable something is. In other words, it would not be good to understand the relationship between desire and knowledge as a sequential one, but as a system.

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[3]Desire involves appetitive desire, emotions and the desires from a human origin (Vigo 2008).

10.3.1 The Desired Part of What Is Known

Nobody mal-desea, although we may desire something bad because in the desire there is always something valued as good so that it can be desired. In other words, nobody desires something bad on its own. Socrates uses this principle in a moment of his defence, in Apology 25d–26a, but its first mention as "nobody does evil willingly" appears for the first time in Protágoras 345d and Gorgias 509e. In República 505 d, Sócrates states the following:

> And again, is it not apparent that while in the case of the just and the honorable many would prefer the semblance without the reality in action, possession, and opinion, yet when it comes to the good nobody is content with the possession of the appearance but all men seek the reality, and the semblance satisfies nobody here? (505d).

In other words, no one desires evil on itself, and in that sense nobody wrong-wants. Even choices that cause evil are made because one expects to find good in them.[4] In that case, the problem with desiring evil will be associated more to a problem of knowledge, which does not exclude problems with will, as it has been seen in the previous chapter.

In order to deny the existence of a wrong-want (or wrong-desire), it is necessary for the human act of knowing not to be a voluntary one. Hence, the act of knowing will be as natural and spontaneous as the one of desiring.

10.3.2 Omnipresence of Knowledge

Neither knowing nor valuing are voluntary acts. We cannot see without knowing or valuing. Will may decide what and how to know and it may equally decide what and how to value, but it cannot decide not to know and not to value. A Spanish philosopher, Leonardo Polo said: "it happens that we think, not that we don't think" (Polo 1996). We live our life thinking:

> The act of knowing is not a decision [...] the person is not the constituent factor. [...] Admitting that one knows because they want to know is simply ridiculous: will has no power over this matter.[5] (Polo 1988).

The same way it is not necessary to ask a person to value what they perceive; they live valuing as their natural state (Bode et al. 2014).

That is why in order to desire we need to know and by knowing we also discover the desirable part of what is known. We can turn to Aristotle to see that there is a relationship between knowing and desiring, since there is a pleasure that belongs

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[4]A similar consideration is done in theology. When we desire, we always desire good things, even when we choose something bad, we do so by virtue of the good part we believe we find within it (Gelabert Ballester 2008, p. 39).

[5]Italics are not from the author.

only to the one who knows. "One cannot enjoy the pleasure of a fair man if they are not a fair man, neither can someone who is not a musician experience the pleasure of being one, and so on" (Aristotle 2014a, 1173b).

Certainly, there are many ways of knowing and not every kind of knowledge covers the same (Murillo 2011). When we talk about knowing we are not referring to an analytical knowledge, neither to a logical thinking speech, since performing or not performing those intellectual acts is voluntary, but the fact of seeing something and not knowing it is not voluntary. Besides, the act of knowing is not the same when we refer to a thing or people. For the knowledge of things, perception is applied, whilst for the knowledge of people another type of knowledge is applied, which is also involuntary. However, the person without a physical presence cannot be known, the person cannot be known through reason and abstraction, since everything comes from the sensitivity and the person is more than his or her sensible aspect (Sellés 2001). The person is more than his or her essence (Polo 1998).

That is why Polo would suggest a transcendental anthropology (Polo 1998) whilst Levinás would suggest the observance of the face (Levinas 2006) so that we can access the person in a direct way, in other words, in a non-voluntary way.

10.3.2.1 Origin of Wrong-want (or Wrong-desire)

It could be asked: how is it possible that if the person does not wrong-want, he or she may desire something bad.[6]

On the one hand, Socrates in The Republic (Platón 1969 435a y ss) covers this matter and he explains it as a motivational conflict between the three parts of the soul. Each of them searches for their own good, and only the rational one is capable of guiding the others towards their own good and therefore, coordinating all of them towards the harmonious good of the whole. This is the most similar to the competition of goods. However, accepting this path may be problematic because it may look like each human reality can operate separately.

Another approach would be discovering that desiring what is bad is really a problem of knowledge (de Aquino 2001, I, 65, 1, ad 3). Creatures on their own do not withdraw us from God, but lead us to Him; for "the invisible things of God are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made" (Rm. 1:20). If, then, they withdraw men from God, it is the fault of those who use them foolishly. Thus, it is said (Wis. 14:11): "Creatures are turned into a snare to the feet of the unwise." And the very fact that they can thus withdraw us from God proves that they came from Him, for they cannot lead the foolish away from God except by the allurements of some good that they have from Him.

Using the terminology of Leonardo Polo it could be thought that a desire for something bad is actually stopping knowledge. Knowledge advances, and with each

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[6]In this explanation, the topic of the corrupt people who act against nature will not be dealt with, as it is mentioned by Aristotle (2014a, 1176a 20–24).

step there is a satisfaction because we have discovered something new, but if we delight ourselves in that satisfaction, knowledge is stopped, which is, at the same time, a threat of ignorance (Polo 2006 Tomo IV/I - Introduction).

10.4   Desiring and Looking

Looking goes together with knowing and wanting, since one looks at what they want and with a specific attitude, but when one looks, one discovers. It is important to pay attention to the matter of looking since we suggest that the education of desire is the education of sensitivity and the later relies on the education of the look and specifically on the way we look other people.

10.4.1   Personal Relationship Is What Is Desired Even if People Are Unaware of it

There is no way of desiring if there is nothing being desired. One does not desire just like that, but when one says they desire something, the question to ask would be: does the desire fall on that something? Or, does the desire search beyond that something? And if so, what is it desire when we say we desire something? We suggest that desire, even if it does not seem that way, is always the desire of a person, or to be more precise, the desire of specific personal relationships.

When there is a desire, there is a desire for someone. The reason behind that statement is that the world in itself has neither meaning nor value for a person, but it borrows the meaning and value from the relevance it has for interpersonal relationships. In that case, when we desire, we always desire someone. The theories abovementioned support this approach. Erikson and his theory of attachment show how our relationships with the world are a projection of the quality of our interpersonal relationships. The theory of social referencing shows how the meaning of reality is the meaning the child borrows from their caregiver of reference. Winnicott and Kohut dig deeper into this approach and point out that ourselves is the first reality we assign a meaning to. Through what we nowadays call emotional education, not only are we assigning meaning to the world, but also, and above all, we are assigning meaning to ourselves (Winnicott 1986; Kohut 2009). Wanting something is wanting that something's meaning and that meaning is borrowed from an interpersonal relationship which is what is truly desired.

Let us see an example. It was studied whether some native English children could learn Chinese. Three groups were made. Some children were in the presence of a Chinese woman who told them a tale in Chinese, others watched the women in a recorded video and a third group would only listened to the audio of the tale. Only the ones who were with the real person learnt some Chinese (Kuhl et al. 2003). The

first group processed Chinese as a language and the others just as noise. The presence of a stimulus (audio or video) was not the relevant element, it was the presence of the person. And the value of the relationship is projected onto the stimulus. Chinese language without the Chinese person is just noise.

In other words, the desire of every object is a desire used as a means, since one desires as long as that desires is a means for the true desire, which is the personal one. Therefore, the final-desire is the person, or more precisely an interpersonal relationship. The desire used as a means is projected on objects and it has a possessive intention, but the final-desire is projected on the relationship and it has an intention of enjoyment, it is not possessive. We will have to ask ourselves: How is the person understood so that the relationship with that person can be the true object of desire?

10.4.2 Meaning of the Person and the Final-Desire for Things

It would be worth asking oneself: What does one see when they see a person? We certainly see their bodies and if we live with that person, we also perceive their qualities and their mental activity. However, is that all we see? A person is not just their body and their personality traits, but we know that the person is an intimacy-interiority.

Saint Augustine in his confessions (de Hipona 1988, III, 6, 11) discovers interiority as a place of encounter with the other, not as an isolating place, "You were inside me, more interior than the most intimate of me". It is not, thus, a mere cognitive or remote finding or meeting, but a personal loving relation. So interiority is not just a neutral introspection or "self-absorption, but openness to a relation with the origin and the truth" (Flamarique 2016).

Polo (2007) suggests that within the person and heir behaviour, there are fundamental realities ("radical" is the Spanish term used by the philosopher) and one of them is the personal one. The human being is first and foremost a person. This means that the person is an absolute novelty, because they have been created, and they have the ability to establish relationships from interiority to interiority with other people. That is why each person is unique, they are not interchangeable, they cannot be simplified because they are always *more than* any of their constituent elements. That is why the person is freedom, in other words, irreducible (Polo 1998 second part).

Spaemann (2000) in his book "people" covers in several studies how the person is always *more than* any of their characteristics and it is precisely that element of being more what explains the unique way in which a human being lives those realities.

Levinas (2006) shows how the person is not the awareness of the fracture, but the fracture of awareness that one possessed of reality. The person reflected on his or her face breaks down any attempt of giving meaning since he or she is the source of meaning.

10.4.3   The Final-Desire for Things

With everything above mentioned, it seems like it would not make any sense to talk about final-desire for things, since the very final-desire is always a desire for an interpersonal relationship. However, when the person feels they are being isolated or attacked, they go from the *trusting* state to a *survival* one. These two states could be aligned with the pairing trust–distrust from Erikson. The survival state wants to secure everything, but only things can be secured, not people. Winnicott (1986) found that the desire to control and being independent is a sign of pathology. We cannot secure a person, since given their character of always being *more than*, they would not let themselves be apprehended. The desire for things comes from the search for securing things and one can even desire objectified people. In other words, the final-desire for things or objectified people would be a result of the wrong-wanting as it was earlier mentioned.

10.5   Education of Sensitivity

On the one hand, Kegan, who assumes Kant's philosophy and develops Piaget's proposals, suggests that educating desires means learning to control them (Kegan 1994) which is done cognitively, given that beliefs change desire (Kegan 1994).

On the other hand, for others such as Ryan (Deci and Ryan 2002; Deci and Ryan 2013) the most human thing is self-determination, where will is elevated in its search for autonomy. Such is the case that, what matters is to decide (making a decision) and not what is decided. It is not essential that one decides to be independent or not, the important thing is that they decide to live autonomously dependent or autonomously independent. If it is decided, it is rightly decided (Deci and Ryan 2013). A reflection about these authors and some other contemporary ones such as Susane Cook-Greuter can be seen in (Orón Semper 2019).

A current author of reference who covers the topic of desires is Frankfurt (1971) who, like Ryan, also elevates the will in his work. Specifically, for Frankfurt, second-order desires identify human beings and differentiate them from animals. Frankfurt differentiates between first-order desires, desiring something which is shared by animals, from the second-order desires, which consist of desiring desires. These are desires that operate over the existence or not of other desires. More than these second-order desires being met, the important thing is that they are desired.

For Frankfurt as well as Ryan, if will, or desire, are the exclusive point of reference, then it is difficult to differentiate the will from the desire or craving. And if desire justifies itself, it is difficult to talk properly about the education of desires. None of these authors ignore circumstantial factors that have an influence on desires, but for them, they are no more than circumstantial conditions that have to be endured.

Kegan's proposal accepts that reason controls desires. Whilst other authors (Korsgaard 2009) also points out that desires change beliefs. Then, who controls whom? Besides, for Kegan, growth and control are very close terms, but is that so?

If we agree that emotions are part of the world of desires (Vigo 2008), it is easy to realize that the dominant proposal nowadays is that of the control or regulation of emotions (Vohs And Baumeister 2011; Gross 2014). Nonetheless, many limitations can be found in this proposal, from a neurological point of view (Pessoa 2013; Orón Semper et al. 2016), as well as from a philosophical point of view (Altarejos 2004). Moreover, new educative proposals can be found (Orón Semper 2016).

10.5.1 Precondition: Inter-Processual Self

Our proposal accepts an anthropological point of view based on Leonardo Polo, Alfred N. Whitehead, WhangYangmin, Aristotle, at a philosophical level and Viktor Frankl, Carl Rogers y Erik Erikson at psychological level, which has been named *inter-processual self* (Akrivou and Orón Semper 2016; Akrivou et al. 2018). We introduce the conceptualization of *inter-processual self* (IPS) in contrast with *autonomous self* (AS). The first thing that the IPS proposal asserts is the relationship, the existence happens relatedly and within human being the relationship from intimacy to intimacy is what prevails and constitutes the person. The more a relationship grows, the more it allows the emergence of the parts. Therefore, the more the relationship grows, the more the system grows. On the other hand, the AS proposal (based on Descartes, Kant, German idealism, Kegan, Ryan and Cook-Greuter) the first thing it asserts is the distance between myself and the not-myself. Growth happens when the self-controls everything that is not-self. As we see it, the basis of the current anthropological debate is that taking a stance in favour of one proposal or the other affects our decisions on education, emotional education, governance and business management (Akrivou et al. 2018).

This controversy between IPS and AS can be observed alongside with how current theology rejects the term substance in favour of the term person (Ratzinger 1990).

10.5.2 Trust

We are suggesting that desire emerges from the conjunction of knowing and wanting. It has been established that knowing and valuing are involuntary acts. We may know correctly, incorrectly, or partially and there may or may not be a mistake in the knowledge. Although, when one believes they know someone it is that same as denying their nature of being more and making them an object since their qualities have been reduced. That is why, it is necessary not to stop on what is

known about the person, since in that case, even if it may sound senseless, what is known would stop further knowledge.

The fact that the act of knowing and valuing is not a willful one, explains that one cannot wrongly-desire even if one can desire what is bad.

This all means that the education of desire has two main lines of action:

1. Healing the will so as to live in trust and not security between people
2. Educating the look so as to see interiority

The processes of healing are similar to those of educating although they have the added difficulty of responding to long-established habits. If we turn to Carl Rogers, a highly regarded therapist, throughout his work *On becoming a person* (Rogers 1961) mentions a series of matters which could be reformulated as experiences that are lived in the process of healing. This list is not a time sequence. When we focus on the topic of mistrust–trust, it is necessary to:

1. Acknowledge the existence of mistrust in oneself. Not deceiving oneself, for example mistaking realism with mistrust.
2. Discover how mistrust is present in the acts performed. In other words, identifying which acts are driven by mistrust.
3. Accept the reality that is being lived. Not fighting against it and accepting that it is something that is shaping the person. If it is fought against, one could not free themselves from it.
4. Know the causes behind that situation. This will evidence many aspects of one's own life and many personal relationships.
5. Heal the affected personal relationships.
6. Have new experiences of trust.

This would heal the person in his/her fundamental expression, which allows him or her to observe reality without wanting to secure it. However, they would still be missing the education of look.

10.5.3   Face

The Bible says that 1 day, "when Jesus saw the crowds, he felt sorry for them because they were harassed and dejected, like sheep without a shepherd" (Mt. 9:37). It is quite likely that the crowd was observed by many, including the people who were there. They all saw the same, but not all of them perceived the same. How does Jesus look at them? What did he see? Seeing people is not enough, neither is seeing them harassed and dejected, since everybody could see that. Jesus saw their exposed interiority. There is a way of looking which awakes certain desires. Through that look we access the other person, but the look does not explain what we see.

Levinas can help us answer these questions. In the third chapter of *Totality and Infinity* (2002), he explains how the face of the other person breaks one's comprehension. He differentiates what could be referred to as three sensitivities: the

cognitive one, the one of enjoyment and the one of the face. In the first two, the subject comes before the action and in some way it is projected on his or her look, but in the case of the face the opposite happens. The other person breaks any kind of comprehension and meaning they have of the world and of himself or herself. When the other is shown on his or her face in a helpless way, they show that their face does not hold on its own. The face offers so little that it means that the other breaks any kind of comprehension, whilst at the same time it protects them from being objectified (Levinas 2002). The face is the sign of the other, which is the meaning. However, "it is not the intervention of the sign what makes it possible to provide meaning, but the meaning provided (whose origin is the face-to-face) what makes its role of sign possible" (Levinas 2002). At the same time, the fact that the face offers so little becomes an ethical question for the one looking at it, and the not spoken question is: what are you going to do? And from there comes the responsibility which one cannot avoid. The face of the other generates an "inner commotion" (Levinas 2000).

In the terms of Lévinas, it would not be correct to say that with the look I access the other, since it is not so much a direction of the knowledge from one to another, but it is the other who breaks all kind of comprehension that could be had and it leaves us naked before the ethical question. And the ethical answer transforms us in subjectivity (Levinas 2000).

We suggest that the urgency of the face in Lévinas' terminology could be aligned with the discovery of the other person's intimacy. The other person is not an object, but intimacy. The other is someone. It is true that the other breaks the meanings I had, since they are the source of sense. It is also true that we want to know the other, the one who has appeared. According to Frankl "the deepest part of the man is neither the desire for power, nor the desire for pleasure, but the desire for meaning" (Frankl 1987). The desire to make sense of the urgency of the other, a meaning which is found by the responsibility in the face of the word which is the other person's face.

Although Lévinas underlines the other person's call through their face, it could also be understood in terms of attraction and this is closest to desire. Without questioning the radical ethical demand that Lévinas defends, we could add the desire for encounter, which appears when the other person's intimacy surfaces. The desire for one does not stop the other, since it always maintains the aspect of being more. Besides, given that we always want the best education, we want an an enjoyable-desire as it was indicated at the beginning of the chapter. This enjoyable-desire can be found when one falls in love.

> Falling in love would be the resulting feeling which is produced when self-love is reflected on the other person, who allows one to be what they are meant to be. When the person discovers the other as they are, a unique person, singular and irreplaceable, with intimacy, with their characteristic of being more, and so they realize how they can be a receptor of intimacy, that is when the act of falling in love happens at the level of the act of being a person. In that sense, when two people meet, they can't do anything other than falling in love (Orón Semper 2017b).

Consequently, the education of desire could be related to the education of the look. However, how does one educate the look to see intimacy if, as Lévinas points out the other's urgency does not come from me getting closer but from their irruption? In order to solve this, we suggest educating a non-objectifiable look, which understands that all knowledge is really stopping the knowledge and that it is not a matter of questioning what is known, but rather one's ability to know.[7] This would help not to adopt a despotic attitude, such as thinking one knows the other.

This education starts when life starts, since the child will discover they are more than a bag of desires depending on how they are treated during their first years (Kohut 2009), which means developing an emotional education that does not aim at regulating emotions, but integrating them (Orón Semper 2020). The next significant moment happens during the ages of 4 and 6 years when the person discovers they do not have to follow their desires, but they are more than their desires (Kushnir et al. 2015). The amount of experienced desires shows the complexity of human nature, not its flaws (de Aquino 2010, lib. 7, lec. 14 n. 19; Aristotle 2014a, 1154b 20–24). However, the main point is seeing the person, or even better, allowing oneself to be surprised by the other. Rogers agrees with Lévinas when he points out that the person only desires change in their life when they discover their interiority and they feel responsible for their actions before the others (Rogers 2000).

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[7]Abandonar el límite es rebasarlo (Corazón 2007). El abandono del límite es posible porque la limitación está en la operación y no en el objeto (Murillo 1998; García González 2005, 2014).

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Part II
Fundamental Authors on Education of Desire

Chapter 11
Desire and Madness: Platonic Dialogues on Education

Ciro Páez

Abstract Taking as a starting point, the declaration of Socrates in the *Gorgias* (481 c-482 a) related to the conditions under which both an effective communication and a master–disciple relationship are possible, we reflect on what would be an ideal model of education centered on the disciple's desire and natural dispositions. This model, particularly suitable for learning and philosophical teaching, will be examined from those dialogues in which Socrates acts as a friend and as a teacher. We will focus on the two *Alcibiades*, where the role of the disciple is played by an Alcibiades who is attentive and willing to listen; and on the *Symposium*, where we meet an Alcibiades already drunk with philosophy and able to give an account of what he has learned. Only as contrast will reference be made to dialogues such as the *Gorgias* and the *Meno*, in which Socrates' role is centered on refutation rather than on maieutic, and his interlocutors, although sometimes friendly, cannot or do not want to submit to the demands of philosophical research.

Keywords Desire · Sensibility · Madness · Hope · Love · Magnanimity · Virtue · Master–disciple relationship · Wisdom

> So after narrowly considering Alaeddin he said in himself, "Verily, this is the lad I need and to find whom I have left my natal land."
> *Aladdin and the magic lamp* (Anonymous 2009)

In the *Gorgias*, Callicles, faced with Socrates' approaches to justice, which literally turn everything upside down, is filled with amazement and asks the philosopher whether he is serious or joking. For if what he says were true, "the whole life of men would be turned upside down, and we would all do exactly the opposite of what we ought to do" (481 c). In his reply, Socrates tells him that in order for there to be easy and effective communication between men, a certain community of affections (*pathemata*) is necessary among those who speak. However, this does not seem

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to be the case among them, as evidenced by the very different objects of their current passions: that of Socrates, Alcibiades and philosophy; that of Gorgias, the two Demos, the people of Athens and the son of Pyrilampes (*Grg.* 481 c-d). Socrates then describes the respective effects of these relations. While Callicles acts like a weathercock, changing his mind at every instant, as they both change, the desires of the people of Athens and the whims of the young Demos, whom he is determined to please; the views of Socrates are invariable, since it does not matter that the points of view of Alcibiades change at every instant (*Alc.* 147 e-148 a), those of philosophy are always the same (*Grg.* 482 a).

In the following, we examine the two parts of this important Socrates declaration, as well as its consequences for the conception of education and the master–disciple relationship. The first part of the statement points to the conditions within which education and communication, in general, are possible; the second to the conditions of the disciple and the purposes and strategies of the master.

11.1   The Possibility of Communication

In the *Meno*, virtue is defined as "the desire of things *noble*[1] and the power of attaining them" (77 b). This superb definition is presented by Meno as his paraphrase of a sentence of a poet, whom he does not mention by name. However, the examination of this definition, undertaken by Socrates and Meno, could not be brought to a successful conclusion in this dialogue, despite the goodwill of Socrates, and perhaps the goodwill of the young man. The main difficulty has to do, in fact, with the impossibility for a master to teach something that is not already present, in some way, in the disciple. This impossibility is recognized in the dialogue in question by Meno himself on a couple of occasions. The first, when Socrates, in order to show the young man how to correctly construct a definition, gives him as an example his own definition of figure. He tells him that figure is "the only thing which always follows color" (*Meno* 75 b). The young man then objected, with some reason, that "if a person were to say that he does not know what color is, any more than what figure is, what sort of answer would you have given him?" (75 c). Socrates then has to give him a second definition, making sure that in it all the elements of the definition are known and evident to Meno. In other words, Socrates recognizes to Meno that words alone cannot teach to know anything.[2] The second occasion on which Meno acknowledges this impossibility is precisely when he finds it difficult to

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[1]Throughout this text, for the original Greek text of Plato's dialogues we use Burnet's edition (1967); for the translation of Plato's quoted passages we refer to Benjamin Jowett's translation (Plato 2015). But, when it seems necessary, as in this case, we adjust it. It seems to us that "noble" translates better than "honorable" the ethical and aesthetic meaning of the Greek term *kalós*.

[2]This position is actually that of Plato. But for the philosopher this is not a limitation concerning only writing, as Derrida (1997) considers it to be the point of view of Plato. Nor does oral language make anything known, if the thing that is spoken of is not already present in the listener.

account for the poet's definition of virtue, which he has adopted. Socrates sees this difficulty (*aporia*) as a good symptom, but Meno considers it an insurmountable obstacle. From his point of view, now that it is evident that neither Socrates nor he knows what virtue is, the inquiring about it becomes impossible:

> Meno.—And how will you enquire, Socrates, into that which you do not know? What will you put forth as the subject of enquiry? And if you find what you want, how will you ever know that this is the thing which you did not know? (*Meno* 80 d)

In spite of Socrates' goodwill, either because the difficulty is effectively insurmountable for Meno, or because the young man is capricious and authoritarian (76 b; 86 d), the fact is that from this moment the initial inquiry into the nature of virtue is abandoned. The dialogue focuses, then, on what was Meno's interest from the beginning: to find out whether virtue can be taught or it is something rather produced by some sort of divine gift. As it is well known, the conclusion of the dialogue seems to point to the latter.

The thesis that the virtue of the disciple is something that the master can teach or produce, in the way science is taught, has been questioned, apart from in the *Meno*, in the *Protagoras* (320 a-b; 361 a-c) and in the *Theaetetus* (167 a-b). If the young man did not already have in him the virtues which will be dealt with later in the course of the conversation, he could either become exasperated (*Meno* 80 a-b), or complain, as Clitophon does, that he is exhorted to virtue but not taught to know it (*Clit.* 410 b-e). How could the master teach to know with words something that the disciple has not previously had any familiarity with? The art of Socrates, like that of midwives, can only help to give birth to that which is already in gestation in the soul of the disciple (*Tht.* 151 b). If the young man is not moved by a personal search, two things can happen: either he will abandon and seek instruction elsewhere, as Clithophon does (*Clit.* 410 c), or the master will send him to a teacher able to give him instruction, as Socrates does (*Tht.* 151 b). Socrates has no other skill than that of a midwife and would have nothing to offer a young man who is not already dedicated to the search.

What Socrates could offer Meno has already been given to him by the poet—probably Pindar[3]—responsible for the definition of virtue (*Meno* 77 b). But it is evident that Meno has not benefited much from it, because he cannot give an account of its meaning, nor is he willing to examine the question by submitting himself to the demands of dialectics. It is not the first time that Plato has portrayed this situation, in which Socrates' interlocutors cite words of wisdom that have been passed on to them, but which they are unable to account for. He does so in the *Gorgias*, where Callicles cites Pindar's wise words about "the laws, queens of the city," but, curiously, he cites them in support of his outlandish theses in favor of tyrannical government. He also does so in the *Protagoras* (339 a-d) and in the *Republic* (331 c

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[3]For Seymer Thompson (1937, 100) the poet in question would have been Simonides of Ceos, who was at the court of the Aleuadae in Thessaly, Meno's homeland. However, there are better reasons to think of Pindar. The idea paraphrased by Meno is present in the first *Olympian* (v.102–15) and Pindar is mentioned by name twice in the dialogue, shortly before (76 d) and shortly after the quotation (81 b-c).

ff), where Protagoras and Polemarchus, respectively, cite the wise words of the poet Simonides of Ceos, but are unable to account for their meaning. Finally, it is consistent with what was stated in the *Phaedrus*, that the transmission of words does not teach to understand, and with what Augustine of Hippo affirms, after declaring that the end of language is not teaching:

> In the things that are contemplated with the soul, everyone who cannot contemplate them for himself hears in vain the words of the one who sees them (…). On the contrary, the one who can contemplate is a disciple of the truth in his inside, and in the outside judge of the one who speaks or rather of the locution. For he very often knows what has been said, and the same person who said it ignores it.[4] (*De Magistro* XIII, § 41, 1–8)

Unlike the knowledge of science, which is objective and therefore can be communicated, philosophy requires a previous experience which must be acquired by the disciple himself and cannot be the object of an external communication.

All this implies, then, an extreme realism in relation to the narrow limits within which the action of the master is possible.[5] A master is not the same as a teacher. A teacher can transmit the science that he possesses to his pupil, with a certain indifference to the character and dispositions of the pupil's soul, because the essence of science is its universal communicability. But the master's task is not the transmission of science, but the orientation and development of dispositions already present in the disciple. If Socrates can approach young people and guess the most intimate movements of their souls in order to guide them, it is because he recognizes in them the yearnings and motivations of his own soul. This need is expressed in the *Lysis*: the lover and the beloved must be kindred and moved by the same love.

> Then, I said, the conclusion is that what is of a congenial nature must be loved.
> It follows, he said.
> Then the lover, who is true and no counterfeit, must of necessity be loved by his love.
> Lysis and Menexenus gave a faint assent to this; and Hippothales changed into all manner of colours with delight. (221 e-222 b)

Also:

> At this he blushed; and I said to him, O Hippothales, thou son of Hieronymus! Do not say that you are, or that you are not, in love; the confession is too late; for I see that you are not only in love, but are already far gone in your love. Simple and foolish as I am, the Gods have given me the power of understanding affections of this kind. (204 b-c)

In these passages of the *Lysis*, it is clear that it is not necessary for Hippothales to express his conception of friendship. His blush speaks for him. The young man is happy because Socrates' words have interpreted his heart. But could Socrates' words put love in Hippothales' heart, or teach him to recognize (or remember) something he has not experienced for himself? Socrates can help the young man find the language to express the feeling that lies mute in his heart, and can even give him

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[4]I translated from the Spanish edition (Agustín de Hipona, 2003).

[5]This question has been beautifully addressed, in relation to Plato, by Jean-François Lyotard (Why desire? In *Why philosophize*, 2013).

advice on how to behave in love, but he cannot produce this feeling. Conversely, it is not necessary for the young man to state his sentiment in words. If it is real, it will not go unnoticed, or at least, it will not go unnoticed to Socrates, who here, as he will do at the *Symposium* (177 d), declares himself to be an expert in love.

So, if philosophy is one of the forms of amorous madness, as we are told in the *Phaedrus* (249 d), then it must be said that Lysis and his friends, unlike Meno, show that they have all the conditions for philosophy. Socrates can only start from the natural dispositions of young people. As an expert in love—and this cannot mean anything else, but that he has experienced it himself—he shows to Hippothales how to achieve the object of his longings, and to Lysis, how to become worthy of being loved. When he calls Lysis' attention to his limitations, he does not do it because he ignores the young man's noble disposition, or does not appreciate sufficiently the excellent qualities that gained him the esteem and admiration of his friends. Precisely because he recognizes them, he spends time cultivating them, leading the adolescent to see that, to the extent that he still lacks knowledge and prudence, it is very difficult for him to be a true friend or a relative of anyone (*Lys*. 210 d-e). He tells him that, without study and improvement, he will not be able to carry out any of the great projects he has in mind. Whoever aspires to think big and to undertake projects that live up to the ideal must first be able to think. High aspirations are not worth much in those who lack knowledge and wisdom.

11.2 The Ideal Master–Disciple Relationship

Among the dialogues in which the ideal conditions of communication are present, those that offer the best portrait of the master–disciple relationship are the two *Alcibiades*. In these dialogues, unlike what happens in the *Meno*, conversation flows easily, like something that happens between friends. Although there is a very important element of listening and docility in Alcibiades' attitude, it is by no means a matter of complacency and even less of lack of character on the part of the young man; what really is at stake is the affinity of Alcibiades with the issues dealt with.

11.2.1 In the Second Alcibiades

> King Zeus, grant us good whether prayed for or unsought by us; but that which we ask amiss, do thou avert. (*2Alc*. 143 a)

At the beginning of the *Second Alcibiades*, Socrates meets the young son of Clinias and asks him if he is on his way to address a petition to the God. This question, which is rather an observation, is followed by a remark about the young man's state of mind: Socrates thinks him somber and with his head down, as if he were meditating on something or worried about something (*2Alc*. 138a).

A noble boy, with his head down and his mind refocused, prepares to address a plea to the god—it is not said to which one. That is all. But in this scene, drawn with a single brushstroke, one perceives a dramatic note: Alcibiades' hesitant pace, like that of someone who goes to an unknown place or is inside a cave or in the middle of a forest. But here there is no external decoration: all the action takes place in the head of this young man with a frown. What is it about? It is about something apparently banal, if judged with frivolity: a young man turns to god to ask for the fulfillment of a wish (*pròs tòn theòn proseuxómenos*). This is typical of prayer (138b): to ask god for the fulfillment of a desire. Alcibiades is, then, in Aladdin's situation with the magic lamp, which is supposed to illuminate him, but which curiously does not seem to be there to illuminate, but to house something. What? The genius that dwells in it, and which becomes apparent only in that gesture of rubbing, of insisting with thought, on which perhaps prayer consists. In other words, it is as if the question of desire, as it is given in prayer, does not really have to do with how to obtain what is desired (a question for which Gods and the geniuses of the lamps are supposed to be), but with how to know what to want, what to ask of the gods.

Alcibiades is not sure he knows it, and Socrates approaches him to make his doubts audible. The reader does not meet here with that Socrates who becomes unpleasant by the way he harasses and exasperates his interlocutors, who respond reluctantly to him. The Socrates of this dialogue watches and waits. It is also true that his interlocutor is not impermeable or boastful like others—think of the Callicles of the *Gorgias*, or the Thrasymachus of the *Republic*. On the contrary: what makes the presence of Socrates essential here is that it has been requested in some way by Alcibiades. The young man's attitude is solicitous: in relation to the gods, to his possible teachers, to life in general. The preceding description could, therefore, be clarified, pointing out that Socrates approaches Alcibiades because he has doubts and is open to resolving them.

Socrates did not appear from nowhere, as if he were the genius of the lamp, to grant the young man a desire; he does something better for him: he illuminates his desire. He leads the young man to see that in many cases, as Heraclitus had already pointed out, it is not the best thing for men to obtain what they desire. Oedipus, for example, "prayed that his children might divide their inheritance between them by the sword: he did not, as he might have done, beg that his present evils might be averted, but called down new ones." (138 c). And although Alcibiades may think that this happened to Oedipus because he was mad, madness has very subtle forms. It is not necessary to walk the streets throwing stones at people in order to be considered a madman (139 d). Just as disease has various forms, some more serious than others, also does foolishness, the worst being what men call madness (141 c). The other forms of folly are subtler and more insidious, because of the difficulty in recognizing them (140 c-d). Sometimes reference is made to those who suffer them with more euphemistic denominations and they are called "exalted," "simpleton," "naive," "inexperienced," and "mute." All these names, except perhaps the last one, designate forms of foolishness that nest above all in generous and well-intentioned characters, which lack, however, experience, knowledge or reflection.

This seems to be the case with Alcibiades. Being endowed with a generous and idealistic character, Socrates imagines him possessed by magnanimity (150 c-d), "which is the most beautiful name for folly." Indeed, inexperienced and lacking in knowledge, but ambitious and dreamer, Socrates supposes that the young man conceives in his heart audacious and dangerous purposes. He is sure that if, at that very moment, without even giving him time to make a wish, the god appeared to him ready to grant him a tyrannical power to exercise not only in Athens, but throughout Greece and beyond (141 a-b), Alcibiades would not hesitate to accept it. However, no one should ask for the fulfillment of his desires, at the price of his life or, worse, of his soul. Many have asked for wealth, children, political power, or military command, but these things have been granted to them by the fortune for their own perdition. So, it was not a foolish poet who asked for himself and for his friends: "King Zeus, grant us good whether prayed for or unsought by us; but that which we ask amiss, do thou avert." (142 e).

Alcibiades, who has been listening attentively to Socrates, and answering his questions as honestly as possible, can hardly believe the conclusion they have reached. He feels that he has made a dramatic turn from his initial belief, shared by most men, to the present one, and he reflects amazed on its implications. How is it possible that in something as fundamental as desire the majority of men can be wrong?

> I perceive how many are the ills of which ignorance is the cause, since, as would appear, through ignorance we not only do, but what is worse, pray for the greatest evils. No man would imagine that he would do so; he would rather suppose that he was quite capable of praying for what was best: to call down evils seems more like a curse than a prayer. (143 a-b).

At this point, at which Alcibiades acknowledges the truth so often proclaimed by Socrates, that men are not mistaken because they desire evil—for to desire evil is impossible—but because they are not capable of recognizing good, Alcibiades is willing to celebrate his newly acquired certainty by affirming emphatically that ignorance is the cause of all evil. But for Socrates things are not so simple. Little by little he shows him that many have not been harmed by ignorance, but by knowledge, because knowledge of good is not the same as possession of information or mastery of techniques (143 c-144 c). If someone, lacking a clear notion of what must be said and done on each occasion, has the power that derives from the disposition of information or from the knowledge of techniques, with it he is only multiplying the means to harm himself and others (144 d).

Since the *Second Alcibiades* seems to be dedicated to the theme of prayer, it would seem natural to find in it a strong criticism of techniques. As Jean Pierre Vernant (1983: 259) suggests, the Greeks would have seen an opposition, for religious reasons, between techniques and outdoor work: "Contrary to the *téchne* of the artisans, whose power is sovereign in the narrow limits in which it is exercised, agriculture and war still have in common that in them man feels his dependence on divine forces, whose power is as absolute in the works of the field as in those of war'

(*Xen. Oec*. V, 19)."[6] Like Xenophon, they would have distinguished the closed spaces, in which the technician works, from the open spaces, in which the soldier, the sailor, the peasant carry out their own function. The merchant and the craftsman would not be given to think of their own salvation, since they are not exposed to the waves of the sea, like the sailor; they do not risk their lives in battle, like the soldier; they do not need rain or the right season, like the peasant; they do not lead the ship of the state (*Rep*. 488a–489d) through apparently dead-end situations. This position of privilege would make them ungodly and reckless. But Plato's criticism against technicians is philosophically and politically motivated, not religious. Nor is Vernant's interpretation correct when he asserts that Plato assigned to producers, artisans, and peasants the virtue of moderation (*sōphrosunē*), which is a virtue shared by the other two classes of society, and not a specific virtue, for its resistance to "granting a social virtue to those whose proper function is work" (Vernant 1983: 249). The defense of work is one of the recurrent themes in Platonic dialogues, as shown by criticism of mimicry, unconscious appropriation, and parasitism.

In the *Republic*, for instance, where he harshly criticizes parasitism, whether it refers to the body or to the soul (556 b-c), he points out that he who wants to acquire the intellectual virtues must work for them as a slave (494 d). Plato's criticism of techniques goes in another direction. Although technicians possess specialized knowledge they lack the one of good. Confident in what they know, they aspire to put their hand, with innocent and reckless determination, also in what they do not know. The technicians deal with matters that leave them some margin for objective doubt, but very little room for doubt in themselves. However, what could do technicians within the State—and here Socrates lists everyone, from archers and flutists to experts in making war—if they lack "the knowledge of the good and of the person who can tell them when it is appropriate and why to use each of this knowledge?" (*2Alc*. 145 e).

Unlike the technique, which is fast and offers infinite possibilities to gain time, what is called meditation is nothing more than an offering yourself to the waiting. In authentic prayer one does not ask the gods for a particular thing—since hope, as Heraclitus observed, if it is genuine, it hopes the unhoped-for (Freeman 1967: 26)— but for what is convenient. Also, the master–disciple relationship is ruled by waiting. In the *First Alcibiades*, Socrates lurks for the opportunity, waiting for the god to give him permission to approach the young man. Unlike the teaching of techniques, which is immediate like a commercial exchange, and which can whip, force, bend, philosophical teaching is ruled by waiting. The one who possesses virtue is attentive and courteous, he does not use violence, he does not push: he works and waits. Technicians do not need to meditate. They are too sure of their power and their knowledge.

So, the attention with which the young man, in the *Second Alcibiades*, has listened to the difficulties raised by Socrates speaks well of his nobility and his willingness to learn. But the very fact that, in relation to so many topics and in such a

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[6]I translate from the Spanish edition (Vernant 1983).

short period of time, he has let himself be carried away by Socrates from top to bottom, completely reversing his initial convictions, is a clear sign that things are not yet clear to him. Therefore, as surprising as it may seem, instead of pushing Alcibiades to address his prayer to the god, which would seem to everyone the most natural and pious thing, Socrates dissuades him and advises him to wait. To make a prayer to the god, when one still completely ignores what may be convenient, is equivalent to a blasphemous action. Earlier he told the young man that the gods prefer the prayers of the Lacedemonians over those of the Athenians (148 c-149 d) because, while the latter address the gods with generous gifts, but ask them for inconvenient things, the first ones, in a very sensible way, ask the gods to grant them that which is noble (*ta kalá*) over any other good (*epi tois agathois*).

At the end of the *Second Alcibiades*, Socrates recommends to his young friend to wait:

> You see, then, that there is a risk in your approaching the God in prayer, lest haply he should refuse your sacrifice when he hears the blasphemy which you utter, and make you partake of other evils as well. The wisest plan, therefore, seems to me that you should keep *still*[7] [*hesuchía echein*] . . . You had better wait until we find out how we should behave towards the Gods and towards men (150 c-d)

Benjamin Jowett renders *hesuchía echein* as "to keep silent," but it would be a more accurate translation: "to be still." Stillness (hesuchiótēs) is the main characteristic of *sōphrosunē*, a virtue that involves also waiting, listening, modesty and common sense. In the *Charmides* (159 b), the dialogue dedicated to this virtue, the promising teenager whom Socrates encounters, defines *sōphrosunē* as "acting in an orderly and calm manner" and, in a few words, as "absence of haste" (*hesuchiótēs*). Here, in the *Second Alcibiades*, the young man, much more impulsive than Charmides and old enough to take charge of his life, discovers that the hard thing is not getting what one wants, but knowing what one should aspire to. Figuring this out takes longer than he thought.

11.2.2   In the First Alcibiades

> For, as you hope to prove your own great value to the state, and having proved it, to attain at once to absolute power, so do I indulge a hope that I shall be the supreme power over you, if I am able to prove my own great value to you. . . (*Alc.* 105 e).

Strangely, the *First Alcibiades* does not begin with a preamble. Its beginning is a little reminiscent of Lysias' speech in the *Phaedrus*, in which a hypothetical lover (who does not love) abruptly addresses a hypothetical beloved. Here the reader is in the middle of a statement, *without preamble*, from Socrates to Alcibiades:

> Socrates. I dare say that you may be surprised to find, O son of Clinias, that I, who am your first lover, not having spoken to you for many years, when the rest of the world were

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[7]Jowett's translation says here "keep silent."

wearying you with their attentions, am the last of your lovers who still speaks to you. The cause of my silence has been that I was hindered by a power more than human, of which I will someday explain to you the nature; this impediment has now been removed; I therefore here present myself before you, and I greatly hope that no similar hindrance will again occur. (103a)

What follows no longer brings to mind the discourse of Lysias by its form, but rather by its content: it makes one think of Socrates' response to Phaedrus, when he tells him that he has heard an ingenious discourse of Lysias, in which a lover declares that favors must be granted rather to the one who does not love than to the one who does:

How generous! He should have added: and to the poor more than to the rich and to the old more than to the young, and, in short, to all that is good for me and for many of us. Because then the speeches would be, as well as amusing, beneficial for the people. (*Phdr*. 227 c-d)

It seems that Socrates was not very amused by the ingenuity of the speech, nor by the generosity, or rather, the pettiness of the lover, who not only does not love, but wants the goods of love to be democratically granted to the first appeared. Perhaps for this reason, the declaration of Socrates in the *First Alcibiades* is like an inverted and specular image of the speech of Lysias in the *Phaedrus*: it places above what was there below and below what was there above.

Regarding the lover, if there is any pettiness in him, it is of an entirely different order. It consists not in the lack of love, because Socrates has plenty of love, and he has even declared many times that the only thing he is really an expert on is love. Socrates' pettiness lies in the stinginess, in the zeal with which he retains his love. He has it for the most precious thing in the world, and he is not willing to give it to whomever. When he sees a boy worthy of his gift, he follows him, listens to him, observes him, besieges him, and does not give him the good until he is sure that he is the right one to receive it (*Alc*. 103 b 2).

Regarding the beloved, he is not poor, ugly or old, as he should be within the logic of Lysias. Alcibiades belongs to one of the most prominent families in Athens and, in terms of fortune, intelligence and physical appearance, he excels very much among young people of his age. The philosopher has observed him in the distance, and, curiously, only after he has seen him show himself proud and, so to speak, haughty and dismissive to the crowd that besieges him, does Socrates dare to approach. It has already been seen that, in the *Second Alcibiades*, the quality that best characterizes the son of Clinias is magnanimity, which Socrates presents as one of the forms of foolishness. Here also, the high aspirations of Alcibiades can easily be taken for arrogance:

Meanwhile, I have observed that your pride has been too much for the pride of your admirers; they were numerous and high-spirited [*megalophrónoi*], but they have all run away, overpowered by your superior force of character [*phrónēma*]; not one of them remains (103 b).

Plato's use of language is deliberately ambiguous. The pedagogical relationship is described as a love relationship; the retreat and flight of the crowd seem to be arrogance; magnanimity, which is one of the virtues most esteemed by the Greeks,

seems at the same time to be one of the forms of folly (*2Alc*. 140 c). Moderation (*sōphrosunē*), ordinarily associated with measurement, is the virtue defended by the lover imagined by Lysias instead of love; but Socrates, in his second discourse, denounces this *sōphrosunē* because of its pettiness (*aneleuthería*) which can only produce the ephemeral and the mortal (256 e-257 a). Nothing great can be undertaken without love.

True sensibility (*sōphrosunē*), promised in the *Phaedrus* to those who are able to contemplate beauty itself (250 a-b), is the object of reflection in the *Charmides*. In this beautiful dialogue, we see that sensibility (*sōphrosunē*) does not consist in the pettiness described by Lisias. True sensibility is recognized in absence of precipitation, modesty, care (*epimeleía*), and self-knowledge. All these qualities are also found in Alcibiades. He is attentive and willing to listen, he waits before making an imprudent decision, he recognizes his limitations when Socrates shows them to him and he is able to follow his own path. When his magnanimity leads him to want to take care of the things of the city, he does so in accordance with his own ideal of realization (Alc., 119c).

Thus, within these specular games that language produces when it speaks of virtue, simulations are produced between modesty (*sōphrosunē, aidōs*) and arrogance (*hybris*). Each of them disguises as the other, and it is not easy to say which is which. Socrates himself, when describing the proud attitude of Alcibiades, attributes it to the goods he has inherited: his birth, his family, his relationships, his physical and intellectual qualities, and even his wealth, although he recognizes that this is what the young man is least proud of. It is evident that Socrates is using words here in their ordinary sense, as if he were placed in the perspective of the friends despised by Alcibiades. However, he will, later on, interpret the words in another sense. He confesses to the young man that, if he had seen him satisfied with the goods and advantages he enumerated, he would long ago have stopped loving him (104 e). Luckily, Socrates has understood that, if a god offered Alcibiades the choice of either being content with what he has or dying, the young man would prefer to die. He knows that the young man aspires to address the assembly in Athens to prove himself worthy of the highest powers, and once obtained, he would strive to exercise them not only among the Athenians, but among all the Greeks and even among the barbarians, in Europe and beyond, filling the inhabited world with his name (104 e-105 b). Inverting, then, the ordinary valuations, one could say that the lack of measure in the desire of Alcibiades is to Socrates the only thing that can justify his hope and his pedagogical interest for him.

As if philosophy could do nothing, but in function of that excess, Socrates waits and restrains himself until he sees the young man despise those proud lovers around him. What, then, does this pride and this contempt consist of? No, evidently, that Alcibiades considers himself more than anyone else right now. Perhaps it is precisely his lovers who are trying to persuade him of such a thing. Alcibiades' contempt is directed at the immediate possibilities to which his birth and fortune are devoted. He despises them in the name of dreams and aspirations which, if declared, would make him look like a madman. If Alcibiades dreamed of entering politics in order to preserve his privileges and the position of his family, his situation would be very

similar to that of those young sophists with whom Socrates also meets, and who feel very sure of what they already have. That is why Alcibiades is at risk of, instead of listening to himself, be persuaded by the adulation of the majority. Socrates cannot take anything for granted in relation to his young friend. He stalks him, observes him, examines him, hoping to see confirmed those disproportionate purposes which others would rightly consider a sign of pride, if not madness. Socrates' hopes are parallel to Alcibiades' excessive dreams:

> . . . all these designs of yours cannot be accomplished by you without my help; so great is the power which I believe myself to have over you and your concerns; and this I conceive to be the reason why the god has hitherto forbidden me to converse with you, and I have been long expecting his permission. For, as you hope to prove your own great value to the state, and having proved it, to attain at once to absolute power, so do I indulge a hope that I shall be the supreme power over you, if I am able to prove my own great value to you (. . .) When you were young and your hopes were not yet matured, I should have wasted my time, and therefore, as I conceive, the god forbade me to converse with you; but now, having his permission, I will speak, for now you will listen to me. (*Alc.* 105 c-e)

Whatever Alcibiades carries in his soul is presented as a natural or divine gift. It is not something that Socrates can produce. That is why, at the very moment when Alcibiades conceives the purpose of addressing the city assembly to obtain from it full powers to carry out the great undertakings to which his spirit calls him, Socrates conceives the purpose of obtaining full powers to guide him and help him to accomplish his ambitious project. And what does this guide consist of? Not evidently in joining the number of flatterers, supporting what is naive and illusory in the dreams of Alcibiades; but neither in making him abdicate those dreams. The purpose of the master is to guide the disciple in the knowledge of himself and of reality, preparing him so that he can be worthy of his ambition. But the possibility of realizing the ambition must be real, otherwise it would not give rise to true hope. The desire for noble things, to be a virtue, must be accompanied by the capacity to realize them.

Socrates does not dare approach the young man without the consent of the god. And what is the sign of that consent? Precisely that which is excessive, unaccustomed in the designs of Alcibiades. The philosopher does not advise him to adapt his projects to the ordinary scale. To the amazement of Alcibiades himself, the man reputed for his wisdom remains at his side, without being scandalized by his excessive dreams. At the very moment when all the others, astonished and disappointed, turn their backs on him, Socrates considers that the divinity or the genius that previously opposed him, now gives him his authorization:

> Socrates.- I dare say that you may be surprised (*oîmaí se thaumázein*) to find, O son of Clinias, that I, who am your first lover, not having spoken to you for many years, when the rest of the world were wearing you with their attentions, am the last of your lovers who still speaks to you. (*Alc*. 103 a)

This strange, paradoxical logic is not only present in the whole dialogue but presides over it from the first line ("I think it amazes you that. . ."), putting everything upside down. At the same time, we are shown what separates admiration from amazement. Alcibiades is amazed by the fact that ordinary valuations are not found

in Socrates. The secret empathy that unites them is the fact that both remain faithful to an excessive ideal. What seduces Socrates, while alarming other lovers of Alcibiades, is its genuine magnanimity (*megalopsichia*).

Socrates looks for exceptional disciples who do not seek justice and wisdom in the words and actions of the majority, but in themselves, even against the advice of the majority. In the *First Alcibiades*, when the young man points out that Socrates' demands on political action are far above those that most politicians by profession make for themselves, Socrates replies that he would be disappointed if, instead of comparing himself to his ideal, he were to measure himself against the yardstick of what the majority thinks or does (*Alc*. 119 c). What Socrates fears most is that Alcibiades will be influenced by the people of Erechtheus who only in appearance and in Homer's saying "have a great heart" (*Alc*. 132 a). Magnanimity does not consist in imitating the aspirations of the average man. He who believes in justice and wisdom pursues them and abides by them, no matter how derisive they may be as ideals for the majority.

11.2.3   The Reciprocated Love

In the work of a master, there is an element of uncertainty that cannot be eliminated. The teaching of science and techniques can be programmed; but when it comes to true virtue, no technique can replace nature and true inspiration.

That is why Hesiod (*WD* 289–292) and Simonides of Ceos (Edmonds 1979: 320) also present us with virtue as a virgin who resides far away, on summits inaccessible to most men. Simonides even declares that he will not spend the rest of his life after a vain and unattainable hope, as it is to find a man without blemish, although he then launches the warning that if he finds that man, he will notify of it (1979: 287). Plato retains that heroic character of virtue. In the *Republic* (413e-414a) he subjects his guardians to innumerable tests and, in the *Laws* (963 a), he points out that exegetes and guardians of the State must be men who in the contest of virtue "have obtained the first places." Perhaps the only man so presented to us by Plato is Socrates himself, who in the *Apology* asks to be fed in the Prytaneum (36d), as just compensation, and in the *Second Alcibiades* is crowned as a victor by his favorite disciple—and who would be more entitled to do so?:

> Alcibiades- [. . .] and I further say that our relations are likely to be reversed. From this day forward, I must and will follow you as you have followed me; I will be the disciple, and you shall be my master.
>   Socrates: O that is rare! My love breeds another love: and so like the stork I shall be cherished by the bird whom I have hatched. (*2 Alc*. 151 a-b)

Finally, the same image is found at the *Symposium*. While it is customary for lovers, guided by their exaltation, to praise and even flatter their loved ones, who are ordinarily indifferent, here it is the beloved, an Alcibiades intoxicated with philosophy, who after crowning Socrates as victor by his discourses, undertakes his praise

(*Smp*. 213; 214 ff.). And he does so recalling, among other things, that virtue and wisdom cannot be the object of any commercial transaction. In his speech he remembers how, the day he committed himself to be the disciple of Socrates, promising to hand over his youth and resources in exchange for wisdom, the philosopher replied that the transaction was not as simple as one might think. If Socrates indeed possessed the wisdom that Alcibiades ascribed to him, he would make a bad deal by exchanging the most valuable good for the least; but it was also possible that Alcibiades would be deceived in his judgment of Socrates' wisdom, for the eyes of understanding begin to acquire acuity when those of the body begin to lose theirs. As always, he advised him to wait.

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Chapter 12
Moral Education as Education of Desire in Plato's *Symposium*

Miquel Solans

Abstract The general aim of this contribution is to explore how Plato conceives the relationship between understanding and desire in human action and to establish, on this basis, the role that he attributes to the education of desire in his account of moral education. To this end, I will focus on the *Symposium*, where Plato pays unprecedented attention to the ethical value of desire and its distinctive place within the psychology of moral virtue. I shall argue that the role of understanding in Plato's moral education is not to control or to sublimate desires, but rather to inform them. It is only by integrating desires according to the understanding of beauty that the soul or moral character of the agent becomes genuinely beautiful and thus accomplishes its intrinsic *erōs*.

Keywords Plato · Symposium · *Erōs* · Education of desire · Moral education

12.1 Introduction

It is a commonplace in Plato's dialogues, especially in those belonging to the so-called early period, that Socrates fosters moral virtue amongst his fellow citizens by engaging with them in philosophical conversations (see, for instance, *Apology* 29d–e, 30a–b, 36c–d). As is well-known, Socrates' method of moral education focuses on helping his interlocutors to realize and reject their false evaluative assumptions and to produce true accounts of virtue. Such a method relies on Socrates' profound conviction that the cultivation of one's own moral understanding can improve one's own moral condition (*Gorgias* 513c–d). On this basis, central to the Socratic pedagogy of moral virtue is the idea that reason can exert a decisive positive influence over one's own desires (cf. Brickhouse and Smith 2010, 81–88).

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The general aim of this contribution is to explore how Plato conceives the nature of such influence and to establish, within this framework, the role that Plato attributes to the education of desire in his account of moral education. To this end, I will focus on the *Symposium*, where Plato pays unprecedented attention to the ethical value of desire and its distinctive place within the psychology of moral virtue.[1] He explains that moral education consists of a personal process of ascent towards beauty that involves both understanding and desire, and that culminates in the generation of authentic virtue (*aretē*) (212a) and in a life that is worth living (*biōtos*) (211d). The relationship between understanding and desire as the two constitutive elements of the learning process is usually interpreted in intellectualistic terms. According to the most extended reading, the role of reason in Platonic moral education would be either to reduce or to sublimate the power of non-rational desires (Irwin 1977, 168–169, 234 ff.; Gill 1985, 20). On this view, the primary aim of moral education would be to either make room for or nurture the only desire that is morally valuable, namely the soul's rational desire to contemplate the ideal form of beauty (Vlastos 1973, 23 ff.; Kahn 1987, 85; Singer 1984, 67; Sheffield 2006, 97–102).

Though it is hardly deniable, as suggested in the first paragraph, that understanding plays a central role in Plato's moral psychology, I believe that modern intellectualistic interpretations overemphasize the value of intellectual contemplation in Plato's account of moral virtue in the *Symposium* and subsequently in his idea of moral education. As I shall argue next, Plato's account of the education of desire in this dialogue is consistent with the idea stated in other dialogues that moral knowledge produces justice and order in the soul (*Crito* 47a–48a, *Gorgias* 464c, *Republic* 441e) and, therefore, a truly valuable moral character. The aim of moral education, thus understood, is to integrate the agent's desires according to the proper order of the soul as it is discovered by reason. In this sense, and following some recent accounts of Plato's moral psychology (esp. Vallejo 2016; Kamtekar 2017), I shall argue that in the *Symposium erōs* neither solely nor even primarily refers to a rational desire for the good, but rather to the teleological dynamism of the soul that directs it towards becoming, by recognizing and realizing its appropriate order, a just and thus beautiful soul.[2] Contrary to intellectualistic readings, then, I maintain that the primary aim of Platonic moral education is not the improvement of the learner's intellectual capacity, but rather of the moral condition of his soul, since the most fundamental desire in human agents is not to contemplate beauty, but rather to resemble beauty as much as possible (cf. Schindler 2007, 209).

According to this interpretation of Plato's *Symposium*, then, the role of understanding in Plato's moral education is not to control or to sublimate desires, but to

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[1] In the introduction to *Plato's Symposium: The Ethics of Desire*, Sheffield argues for this approach to the dialogue with several compelling reasons (2006, 1–8).

[2] In the *Republic*, Plato writes that justice (*dikaiosunē*) is one of the most beautiful things (*to kalliston*) and that as such it must be loved (*agapēteon*) both for itself and for its results (*di' hauto kai dia ta gignomena*) (357d–358a).

inform them. It is only by integrating desires according to the understanding of beauty that the soul or moral character of the agent becomes genuinely beautiful and thus accomplishes its intrinsic *erōs*.[3] In what follows, I shall further explain and provide support for this view by offering a non-intellectualistic interpretation of Socrates' speech on the nature and education of *erōs* in Plato's *Symposium*.[4]

12.2 *Erōs* and Desire in the *Symposium*

The Platonic *Symposium* represents a Greek *symposion*, an institutionalized drinking party. As scholars have shown in recent decades, historical evidence clearly indicates that the institution of the Greek symposium had both a political and a pedagogical function. Symposia were meant to produce a positive influence on the participants' desires, making them less susceptible to *hubris* and thus more suitable for joining and sustaining the political community (cf. Calame 1999, 91–100). Such gatherings were thus ascribed a regulative function and were seen as an opportunity to both test and limit desires that, if not educated, would be deleterious for the city. In Sheffield's words, a Greek symposium was intended to be a place "where one learnt how to value and desire the right sorts of things and in the appropriate manner" and "where virtue was supposedly reinforced and passed on to the young" (2006, 5; see also Calame 1999, 93–94). On this occasion, a group of aristocrats are gathered in the house of the poet Agathon to celebrate his victory in one of the most important festivals. In order to honour their guest, each of them pronounces a speech in praise of *erōs*, a Greek term used to designate various forms of "passionate" or "intense desire", either bodily or spiritual (cf. Ludwig 2002, 8–9 and Russon 2000, 115).[5]

The unusual scenery and the topic of this dialogue stress the disruptive presence of Socrates and his views on *erōs* within the Athenian educational context as presented in this dialogue (cf. Kahn 1996, 341). Socrates' *erōs* challenges the pederastic and masculine approach to *erōs* that was prevalent in Athenian education of the time (cf. Dover 1989, 153–170): he is explicitly presented as someone who rejects sexual favours from his disciples in exchange for his moral wisdom (218e), and also as someone who has learnt about the matters of *erōs* from a woman, Diotima, a priestess from Mantinea (*Symposium* 212b).[6] However, whilst Plato's

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[3]A similar approach has been recently proposed by Destrée (2017) and Cruz Ortiz de Landázuri (2017).

[4]Plato's interest in the effect of Socratic dialogue upon its participants' *erōs* can be traced back to the *Gorgias*, a dialogue usually thought to be earlier than the *Symposium*. In the latter part of the *Gorgias*, Socrates suggests that a longer and more adequate discussion of the matters discussed would be able to redirect Callicles' *erōs* (513c–d) (cf. Irwin 1979, 233). Socrates does not specify, however, what sort of discussion and redirection he has in mind.

[5]For a detailed defence of *erōs* as not just referring to sexual desire, see Ludwig (2002, 8–9).

[6]All references to Plato's Symposium and other dialogues follow Stephanus' pagination. Subsequent references to the Symposium will indicate page number and letter only

consideration of *erōs* in this work may entail some degree of reformative intention, the primary aim of this dialogue is not to moralize the sphere of ordinary *erōs*, but rather to unfold the erotic dimension of moral education.[7] As already suggested, Plato's overall strategy is not to present moral education primarily as a process of repressing or sublimating one's own desires, but rather of developing one's own most genuine desire, namely the desire for beauty itself, which can be developed in all desiderative levels. As will be shown in the next section, such development involves and requires progress in discerning beauty as it appears to each type of desire. Before turning our attention to this process, however, we need to discuss first Plato's distinctive account of *erōs* in this dialogue.

The first part of Socrates' speech (199c–203b) is devoted to clarifying the ordinary notion of *erōs*. Recalling a conversation he had with Diotima, he explains that sexual desire represents only one of the many forms that *erōs* can take—other forms include, for instance, love for moneymaking, competition or wisdom—and he suggests, instead, a more general definition of *erōs* as a "desire for good things and for being happy" (*to...kephalaion esti pasa hē tōn agathōn epithymia kai tou eudaimonein*) (205d).[8] Relying on this account, in these passages Socrates uses interchangeably the substantives *erōs*, *epithymia* and *boulesis* (200e, 205a, 205d, 207a), as well as their corresponding verbs *eran, epithymein* and *boulesthai* (200a, 202d, 205a–b) (cf. Vallejo 2016, 409 and Kraut 2017, 248). Distinctive of Socrates-Diotima's understanding of *erōs* here is that it is not understood as a desire for this or that particular object, but rather as a fundamental impulse that directs the soul towards what it lacks, namely its good. *Erōs* refers to the volitive structure of the human soul and as such, it can take different forms and produce different classes of particular desires (cf. 205a–c and 206b) (cf. Kamtekar 2017, 201 n. 15).

On this view, what defines *erōs* as a psychic phenomenon is the structural reference to the permanent possession of the good that defines every desire (206a). In this sense, Socrates states that all human beings desire only what is good (205e–206a), since in pursuing its proper end, every desire pursues the good. *Erōs* in the *Symposium*, as Vallejo has recently pointed out, is thus to be understood as the "general form under which all the objects of the different classes of desire can be presented to the unified centre of the person" (2016, 411), that is, to the soul (ibid, 414) (see, in a similar sense, Wedgwood 2009, 317). According to this reading, *erōs* stands for the subjective side of the teleology that is constitutive and unifies the dynamism of the human soul and to which Socrates also refers in the *Republic* when he says that the good is "what every soul pursues and for the sake of which it does everything" (505e) (cf. Kamtekar 2017, 202). The good is thus not to be seen as the immediate end of each form of desire, but rather as the end that each desire accomplishes when it correctly pursues its proper particular end.

In this same vein of thought, Diotima explains that the proper function of *erōs* (its *ergon*) (206b) is to procreate in the encounter with beauty (*to kalon*) (206b). Beauty

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[7]I am very grateful to William Altman for suggesting this idea to me.

[8]For an insightful interpretation of this definition, see Kraut (2017).

thus appears as the condition under which *erōs* can pursue its proper end. From this perspective, the good pursued by every human desire when it desires its object is the accomplishment of the soul's *erōs* according to true beauty (206b–e). In this sense, it is worth noting that true beauty in the *Symposium* does not stand for the object of *erōs*, but rather for the condition under which the soul can develop and express its inner potentialities (cf. Sheffield 2006, 88–89). Indeed, Diotima explains that the human soul finds itself "pregnant" (*kuousin*) and can only "give birth" (*tekein*) when it is in contact with the type of beauty that corresponds to its type of pregnancy (209a). Therefore, *erōs* can also be described as a certain potentiality within the soul that manifests itself in different levels of desire which can be properly developed in the encounter with different classes of beauty (206d). Each class of beauty defines the conditions in which each desire can achieve its accomplishment and reach its proper end, thereby accomplishing the fundamental desire for the good of the soul.

Different ways of living, therefore, result from the different ways of trying to accomplish the soul's *erōs*. According to Diotima, human beings usually give preference to one of its manifestations over the others, and so their lives are organized according to a different type of pregnancy and procreation according to one particular type of beauty (cf. 208c–209e). There is one way of life, however, that is not restricted to any particular instance of beauty, since, unlike any other way of living, it approaches beauty itself. This form of life is the one pursued by those who have been properly educated in the matters of *erōs* as Diotima teaches them (211d and 212d), and its most distinctive feature is that, whilst other forms of life accomplish their respective *erōs* by producing immortal works (208c–e and 209d), this one accomplishes the soul's fundamental *erōs* by making the learner loved by the gods and immortal himself (212a) (cf. Sedley 2017, 97–98 and Obdrzalek 2017, 83 n. 9).[9]

12.3   Diotima's Education in the Matters of *erōs*

According to Socrates' report, Diotima begins her speech about the education in the matters of *erōs* by making it clear that it differs from traditional forms of education and from ordinary forms of erotic accomplishment, according to either the body or the soul (280c–209d, 209e–210a). Following her distinctive pedagogical program, the learner's *erōs* must be trained in different levels of beauty (bodies, souls, laws, practices, learnings) so as to become able to discern beauty in all of them (211b). Diotima explains the process by means of which the apprentice should be taught to recognize beauty as it appears in beautiful things as follows:

> A person who would set out on this path in the right way must begin in youth by directing his attention to beautiful bodies, and first of all, if his guide is leading him aright, he should fall in love (*eran*) with the body of one individual only, and there procreate beautiful discourse

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[9]The implications of this will be discussed in Sect. 12.4.

(*entautha gennan logous kalous*). Then he will realise for himself (*auton katanoēsai*) that the beauty of any one body is closely akin (*adelphon*) to that of any other body, and that if what is beautiful in form (*to ep' eidei kalon*) is to be pursued it is folly not to regard the beauty in all bodies as one and the same (*tauton hēgeisthai*). When he has understood (*ennoēsanta*) this he should slacken his intense passion for one body, despising it and considering it a small thing, and become a lover of all beautiful bodies (*pantōn tōn kalōn sōmatōn erastēn*).[10] (210a–b)

Since this passage contains the only account of the specific process involved in the educational program presented in the *Symposium*, we are led to assume that the process involved in the other levels of beauty follows the same structure as the one explained here in relation to physical beauty. According to such structure, the learning process focuses on helping the learner to discover the specific features that cause a particular object to appear as beautiful, and so to be able to identify the common property that unifies different objects that belong to the same class of beauty. The first step is to assist the learner in generating beautiful accounts (*kaloi logoi*) about the beauty to which he feels attracted (cf. Sheffield 2006, 113–114).[11] As Socrates suggested at the beginning of his speech, to produce genuinely beautiful *logoi* about something is to produce true *logoi* about it (198d and ff.). Therefore, in order to produce beautiful *logoi*, the learner must be assisted to offer a true account of the beauty that incites his desire and thus to properly understand it. In the present case, when the learner reflects on what makes him feel attracted to a particular body, he realizes that it is its visible form or figure (*eidos*) and thus he becomes able to recognize it in other bodies. As long as the learner is able to discover in other bodies the very same beauty that motivates his desire, this process necessarily leads him both to enlarge the scope of his previously particular *erōs*, becoming a lover of "all beautiful bodies", as well as to lessen the force of attraction that particular objects have over his desire.[12]

As we see, the kind of reflection upon one's *erōs* that Diotima has in mind here does not lead to its suppression, but rather to what we may well call its cultivation. In its initial, immediate, isolated and particular direction, desires cannot be fully accomplished. In order to do this, the learner must free himself from the influence of particular instances of beauty by nurturing his *erōs* with a clearer perception of its object (cf. Moravcsik 1971, 6–8). Such perception results from the reflection upon beauty that constitutes the motivating source of one's own desire. Therefore, what is crucial in this (still partial) account of moral education is that desires are not

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[10]Unless otherwise indicated, I follow Howatson's translation (2008). For the Greek text, see Burnet (1903).

[11]Something of this sort is also implied in Moravcsik (1971, 6–8).

[12]In this sense, I believe that Drees' account of the nature of moral growth in the *Phaedrus* can be applied to the *Symposium* as well: "It is in this way that an erotic experience of a beautiful person (. . .) gives rise to moral growth—a transformation of the soul and a development of character, which results from an insight into the nature of true value. This kind of moral reformation is not a species of training that teaches a person to appreciate order and harmony, and later to recognize reason. Rather, moral growth is occasioned by an experience in which cognition immediately takes the lead" (2019, 44).

conceived as irrational forces to be *controlled* by reason, but rather as potencies that, in order to reach their full accomplishment, need to be informed with insights provided by understanding. Though Plato is not explicit on this point, one possible way to understand this is that the well-trained use of understanding is able to find the right measure of each desire according to the kind of beauty that each of them pursues. This would explain why such sort of education also entails realizing the superior value of the beauty of the soul over the beauty of the body (210b). By doing this, then, the learner learns to accomplish the desire for the good by accomplishing each of his desires in the appropriate way. Therefore, by reflecting upon beauty as it appears to his ordinary experiences of desire, the learner will progressively instill a hierarchical order in his desires and thus in the way to accomplish them (see, in a similar sense, Drees 2019, 42, and also Sheffield 2006, 52).

Now, it is important to note here that this kind of training relies on the fact that the object of understanding is the learner's actual experience of beauty *as it appears to his own erōs* (cf. 210a). In other words, the kind of discernment or judgement that this process is meant to train will only be operative, and thus will only effectively lead to realize the differences between qualitative levels of beauty (210b), when applied to the learner's own desiderative experiences (cf. Russon 2000, 117–118). As already implied, thus, the pedagogical guidance that Plato presents here does not lead the learner to understand the truth of theoretical accounts of beauty, but to understand the truth of the experiences of beauty that constitute his own motivational background. It is not surprising, therefore, that throughout the educational process the learner will experience dissatisfaction with his former attachments and will change his attitude towards the particular objects of his desires (210b), since he will progressively discover their true beauty and thus he will gradually change the way in which he feels attracted to and deals with them (cf. Nussbaum 1979, 160).

Contrary to what some interpreters have argued, then, the ascent towards beauty does not necessarily entail a dismissal of the particular instances of beauty involved in the process (Vlastos 1973, 31–33; Singer 1984, 68–69 and 84–85). For, as already implied, Plato's main pedagogical concern is not how to move from one object to another, but how to move from a slavish way of desiring to a free one. The focus of the process is not on the objects of desire, but rather on the way the learner relates to them in each case. In this sense, as already said, Platonic education aims at improving the learner's capability of recognizing true beauty by reflecting on the objects of his desires (211b) and so to desire them for their true beauty. As long as the learner progresses, the way he desires and satisfies his desires progressively accomplishes his most genuine desire for good.[13]

The result of such a process thus comprises both desire and understanding. On the one hand, the properly trained learner becomes "no longer *slavishly content* (*ēdē...hōsper oiketēs*) with the beauty of any one particular thing" (210d). On the other, and since he has become able to perceive beauty in its multiple instances—he

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[13]For a more detailed critical response to Vlastos' and Singer's interpretation of Platos' *erōs* as purely intellectual and impersonal, see Schindler (2007, 216–219).

turns towards "the vast sea of the beautiful", 210d) (cf. Hunter 2004, 95)—"while contemplating (*theōrōn*) it he will give birth to many beautiful, indeed magnificent discourses and thoughts (*kalous logous kai megaloprepeis tiktē kai dianoēmata*) in a boundless love of wisdom (. . .)" (210d). At this point, the learner finds himself at the threshold of the final stage of the ascent. According to Diotima, once the learner "has been strengthened" (*rhōstheis*) and "has grown" (*auxētheis*) in the way just exposed, he then becomes able to perceive beauty in a radically new way (210d) and thus to no longer produce images of virtue, but to generate true virtue (212a).

Before turning to the culminating part of the learning process, where Diotima describes the whole new insight into the nature of beauty discovered by the well-educated learner, it might be useful to briefly comment on the role ascribed to the moral teacher or guide in the process just described. In some passages, the teacher's function is said to be to compel or oblige (*anagkazō*) the learner to ascend from one level of beauty to another (210c). However, Diotima's summary of the learning process in 211b–c clearly suggests that the learner's ascension responds to active efforts on the part of the learner too. As such, it seems that the action of the teacher and that of the learner cannot be taken as independent, but rather should be seen as two different ways of participating in the same cooperative activity, such as the one exemplified by Socratic dialogue as a method for shared inquiry (cf. Vigo 2001). In this sense, both Socrates' exchange with Agathon (199c–201c) and Diotima's starting dialogue with Socrates (210d–203b) on the true account and value of *erōs* can be seen as an example of the kind of activity that has the power to *guide* the learner towards moral virtue.

12.4   The Final Stage

At this point, Diotima asks Socrates to pay attention, for she is about to reveal the ultimate purpose of her program of education in the "matters of love" (*ta erōtika*) (210e). The learner who has been trained "in the correct way and in the right sequence" (*ephexēs te kai orthōs*) (210e)—following the process described above—to discern beauty in all its instances (211c), will now be able to know beauty as it is in itself (*gnō auto teleutōn ho esti kalon*) (211d). And whoever descries this "unique kind of knowledge" (*katidē tina epistēmēn mian toiautēn*) (210d), he "comes to see all of a sudden" (*exaiphnēs katopsetai*) a whole new vision of beauty (210e). It is under the presence of beauty brought forth by this vision that the learner can finally accomplish the ultimate aim of his *erōs* and thus to procreate true virtue (212c).

As just noted, distinctive of this vision is that it occurs "all of a sudden" (*exaiphnēs*), thus implying that it stands in a somewhat paradoxical relationship with the previous process. For whilst it requires the learner to have been trained in the right sequence, the knowledge of beauty as it is in itself nevertheless occurs suddenly (*exaiphnēs*) and, therefore, it does not result from any particular step of the previous learning process. In other words, the knowledge constitutive of virtue can

be prepared or cultivated, but it cannot be directly caused by any of the steps involved in moral education.

To clarify this, we should take into account that, as Cimakasky has recently shown, the adverb *exaiphnēs* plays a central role "in linking Plato's theory of Ideas with philosophical education" (2017, 13). Let us consider two representative examples, mentioned by Cimakasky, which help illustrate Plato's use of this word. In the *Republic*, it marks the decisive moment when the prisoner "is released and suddenly (*exaiphnēs*) compelled to stand up, to turn his neck around, to walk and look up towards the light" (515c).[14] In the *Seventh Letter*, *exaiphnēs* appears explicitly related to the learning process, when Plato explains that the kind of knowledge he attempts to teach

> does not at all admit of verbal expression like other studies, but, as a result of continued application to the subject itself and communion therewith, it is brought to birth in the soul on a sudden (*exaiphnēs*) as light that is kindled by a leaping spark, and thereafter it nourishes itself.[15] (341c).

In both cases, Plato's *exaiphnēs* refers to something akin to an "illumination experience" that is "transformative and self-sustaining" (Cimakasky 2017, 18) and that constitutes the accomplishment of knowledge or understanding.[16] In *Symposium* 210e, then, Plato uses *exaiphnēs* to refer to the accomplished experience of knowledge that takes place when the learner's mind is able to perceive beauty as it is in itself, as it becomes apparent to him after having carefully reflected on its particular instances in the correct way. The fact that such experience occurs *exaiphnēs* suggests that it is a non-processual knowledge of the sort that Plato in the *Republic* calls *noēsis*, intellection or understanding (see 511a–d, 523a–b) (cf. Kahn 1996, 352–353 and Sheffield 2006, 131).[17] In other words, *exaiphnēs* stands for the timelessly and unworldly experience of intellection that arises when the learner understands the essence of something—in this case, when he understands the essence of beauty.

One important implication of the interpretation I am presenting here is that the kind of knowledge Plato identifies with the accomplishment of the learning process cannot be described in terms of definitional knowledge. Producing definitions or accounts of beauty is one of the activities involved in the educational process in each particular class of beauty, but the knowledge of beauty itself in the final stage does not result from any attempt to define beauty nor does it result in any account of it. It occurs *exaiphnēs* when the learner has been trained in discerning beauty in his ordinary experiences of it and, thus, when he becomes able to *recognize* true beauty

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[14]Bloom's translation (1968).

[15]Bury's translation (1929).

[16]Before Cimakasky, Gordon already stressed the relevance of the *exaiphnēs* in order to understand the kind of experience Plato is presenting in the final stage of the ascent in the *Symposium*: urged by his *erōs*, the learner "communes" *exaiphnēs* with the ideal form of beauty (2010, 281).

[17]See Gerson's "Some Aspects of Nous and Noēsis in Plato" (online draft), for an insightful treatment of Plato's account of this type of knowledge in Plato's philosophy.

in all of them.[18] Beauty, as it is in itself, is what appears to the mind of the learner when it is freed from the immediate attraction of particular appearances of beauty and, therefore, what becomes visible once the learning process has strengthened and nourished his soul (cf. 210d). Diotima describes the learner's new vision of beauty as follows:

> What he sees is, in the first place, eternal; it does not come into being or perish, nor does it grow or waste away. Secondly, it is not beautiful in one respect and ugly in another, or beautiful at one time and not at another, or beautiful by one standard and ugly by another, or beautiful in one place and ugly in another because it is beautiful to some people but ugly to others. Nor, again, will the beautiful appear to him (*phantasthēsetai autō to kalon*) as a face is beautiful or hands or any other part of the body, nor like a discourse or a branch of knowledge or anything that is in some other thing, whether in a living creature or in the earth or the sky or anything else. It is on its own, one in form (*monoeidēs*) and everlasting. All other beautiful things partake of it, but in such a way that when they come into being or die the beautiful itself does not become greater or less in any respect, or undergo any change.[19] (210e–211b)

According to this passage, the understanding achieved at the end of the learning process is the knowledge of the form of beauty that transcends all its manifestations (Schindler 2007, 214). Central to this passage is the idea that grasping such transcendent, unchanging and unconditional beauty immunizes the learner, so to speak, from taking particular instances of beauty as if they were beauty itself. Thus, the accomplished understanding of beauty itself makes the learner able to discern the relative but real sense in which all beautiful things are beautiful (cf. Sier 1997, 155–158) and so to identify and desire true beauty in particular things. In this sense, the proper activity of the learner's *erōs* when he finally sees beauty itself is not to produce true accounts of it, but rather *to beget true virtue* (*tekonti…aretēn alēthē*) (212a).

The fact that the well-educated learner is said to "produce true virtue by grasping the truth" about beauty, as Sheffield puts it (2006, 116), has led some commentators to the conclusion that the full actualization of the learner's *erōs* is to be found in the contemplation of the form of beauty and thus that the true virtue produced at the final stage of the ascent is to be identified with a purely intellectual virtue (cf. Moravcsik 1971, 11; Vlastos 1973, 34; Singer 1984, 83–85; Sheffield 2006, 134–136 and 148–149). However, a close reading of Diotima's final words, where she describes the results of the vision of beauty, suggests that virtue cannot be completely identified with wisdom, though, as we are about to see, it necessarily involves it:

> Do you think, she continued, that a person who directs his gaze to that object and contemplates it with that faculty by which it has to be viewed, and stays close to it (*theōmenou kai sunontos autō*), has a poor life (*phaulon bion*)? Do you not reflect, she went on, it is there alone, when he sees the beautiful with that by which it has to be viewed, that he will give birth to true virtue? He will give birth not to mere images of virtue but to true virtue (*tiktein ouk eidōla aretēs…alla alēthē*), because it is not an image that he is grasping but the truth

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[18]For an astute account of the knowledge of the forms as a form of *recognition*, see Kim (2019, 281 and n. 70).

[19]Howatson's translation (2008) slightly modified.

(*ouk eidōlou ephaptomenō…alēthous ephaptomenō*). When he has given birth to and nurtured true virtue (*tekonti de aretēn alēthē kai threpsamenō*) it is possible for him to be loved by the gods (*theophilei*) and to become, if any human can, immortal (*athanatō*) himself. (212a)

If, as the intellectualistic reading suggests, the proper activity of *erōs* is wisdom, then we should expect Diotima to consider seeing true beauty and giving birth to true virtue as one and the same activity.[20] However, by stating that true virtue is produced *during* the contact with truth (*alēthous ephaptomenō*), in contrast with the contact with images, and thus when the learner stays close to beauty (*sunontos*), this passage seems to imply that the contact with truth that the soul attains through the understanding of the form of beauty constitutes the condition to generate virtue, and therefore it cannot be the resulting virtue itself. In this sense, as Price has recently pointed out, the notion of virtue at play here is akin to Plato's idea of "assimilation to the divine" (2017, 192), which stands for "becoming just and pious together with wisdom" (*Theatetus* 176a–b; cf. *Republic* 500d and 613a–b, mentioned in Price 2017, 192; cf. also Destrée 2017, 233–234). This would explain why, in this passage, Diotima assures that by begetting virtue the learner becomes loved by the gods and immortal himself. If this reading is correct, then, the true virtue generated and sustained by the vision of true beauty involves a positive change not just in the learner's reason, but also and more importantly in his soul.[21] *Erōs* can be thus presented by Socrates as the best "collaborator" (*sunergos*) of human nature (*anthrōpeia phusei*), since, when properly educated, it leads human nature to its fullest realization (212b).

Once he has finished his presentation of the teachings of Diotima discussed above, Socrates declares that he himself honours the matters of *erōs* and practices them (*timō ta erōtika kai diapherontōs askō*) (212b). Plato thus suggests that Socrates himself can be seen as an example of someone who has been trained in the matters of *erōs* in the appropriate way. It is no coincidence, then, that right after Socrates' speech Alcibiades—one of his most famous and polemical associates—suddenly (*exaiphnēs*) appears (212c) and, under the effects of wine, reveals to the audience that Socrates is a very special and dangerous kind of lover (*erastēs*) (cf. 222b). As we are going to see next, Socrates' particular *erōs* is deeply connected with the powerful beauty others perceive in him.

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[20]According to Sheffield, "[t]he compressed description of contemplation and virtue suggests that there are not two distinct activities that need to be accounted for at the end of the ascent: contemplating the form (noetic activity) and begetting true virtue. Contemplating the form just is to beget the virtue of *nous*" (2006, 134).

[21]A similar interpretation of this passage was suggested by Rosen (1987, xx).

12.5   Socrates' Beauty in Alcibiades' Speech

Plato's *Symposium* ends with Alcibiades' unexpected speech, in which he praises and censures Socrates at the same time. Given that it is impossible to analyze Alcibiades' discourse in detail here, I will focus on how the most significant character traits that Alcibiades attributes to Socrates will be reinterpreted by Socrates himself in terms of beauty[22] and thus on how Plato connects both Socrates-Diotima's and Alcibiades' expositions.

As he is invited to speak, Alcibiades offers a vivid description of Socrates' character. First of all, and having in mind Diotima's educational program, it is worth highlighting that Alcibiades sees Socrates as a *deceitful* lover of many young boys (216c and 222a–b). According to him, if Socrates were really in love with the young boys who he is usually with, then he would pursue the beauty of their particular bodies (219b–c) (cf. Hunter 2004, 107). Thus, the fact that, by Alcibiades' standards, Socrates is a *deceitful* lover necessarily means that Socrates' way of loving his students was not the usual one. Socrates' intention in his encounters with his students was only to engage with them in conversations, explicitly avoiding any other sort of interest (217b and 219c). What makes this unexpected or unusual in Alcibiades' eyes—and presumably to Socrates' other associates—is the fact that Socrates is always unwilling to accept sexual pleasure, money or influences in exchange for his teachings (218d), and as such is not attracted by any of these things in the way that Alcibiades would have expected (219d–e). In addition, the effects that Socrates' conversations had on Alcibiades were, according to him, radically different from those produced by other public speakers and teachers: on the one hand, by engaging in conversation with Socrates, he felt distressed, as he realized the slavish condition (*andrapodōdēs*) of his life (215e). On the other, he experienced a sort of attraction in Socrates that stimulated him to become morally better (*kalos kagathos*) (222a). Moreover, what makes Socrates extraordinary to Alcibiades is not only his wisdom (*phronēsis*), but also his moderation or self-control (*sōphrosunē*), his valour (*andreia*) and steadfastness (*karteria*) (219d).

In this sense, Alcibiades justifies the admiration he feels for Socrates with a series of anecdotes about the time they spent together at the siege of Potidea. We know from these stories that Socrates neither pursues nor rejects bodily pleasures, as he is the best in both enduring scarcity and enjoying abundance (220a). Socrates also stands out amongst his fellow citizens due to his courage in the battlefield (220d–221b), as well as his extraordinary capacity of concentration and meditation (220c–d). Though Alcibiades clearly exaggerates Socrates' virtues in his speech (cf. Hunter 2004, 108 ff.), such exaggeration nevertheless reveals the underlying assumption that Socrates' attractiveness is not just the result of his wisdom, but is also and chiefly brought about by the whole range of traits that define his character as they are expressed in different patterns of behaviour regarding different types of desires. Thus, what makes Socrates extraordinary and incomparable with any other man is

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[22]For a detailed account, see Nussbaum (1979), Boeri (2016) and Destrée (2017).

both the way he speaks and the way he himself is (221d). According to Alcibiades, this also relates to the fact that, after spending some time in Socrates' company (*sunousia*), his "beloveds" realize that they are more attracted to him than he is to them (222b).

As Boeri points out, Alcibiades sees Socrates' beauty, but he cannot understand what it is, since he is unable to inform his actions with it (2016, 363). It seems natural, then, that it is in Socrates' own words, as recalled by Alcibiades, where we find an explanation for Socrates' unusual attractiveness in terms of beauty:

> My dear Alcibiades, you really must be no ordinary man if what you say about me is actually true and there is in me a certain power (*en emoi dunamis*) through which you might become a better person (*di' hēs an su genoio ameinōn*). You must see in me an irresistible beauty (*kallos horōēs an en emoi*) vastly superior to the physical attractions you possess. But if on this basis you are trying to strike a bargain with me and trade your beauty for mine, then your intention is to win a considerable advantage over me. What you are trying to acquire is true beauty in return for apparent beauty (*anti doxēs alētheian kalōn*), in fact you intend to get 'gold in exchange for bronze'. But look more carefully, dear boy, in case I am actually worthless and you have not noticed. I tell you, mental perception becomes keener when the eyesight starts to fail, and you are still a long way from that. (218d–219a)

What makes Socrates unusually attractive is the unusual beauty embodied in his soul and the unusual power that such beauty entails. If this is true, then we find here the same idea expressed in the *Republic*, namely that the well-educated moral agent is the one who possesses the ideal paradigm in his soul (*enarges en tē psukhē ekhontes paradeigma*) and acts out of it (484c) (Lear 1992, 192). This would explain not only why Socrates acts and lives the way he does, but also why both by talking to him and being with him others feel motivated to improve their moral condition.

Therefore, by testifying that Socrates' words, deeds and character are extraordinary and divine in the way that he does (221d and 222a), Alcibiades' speech reveals that Socrates' soul resembles beauty and describes the pedagogical effects that such resemblance has upon his associates. However, despite the fact that Socrates' is *true* beauty, at the end of the passage quoted above Socrates suggests that he is *worthless*, exhorting Alcibiades to use his understanding so as to avoid mistaking his (Socrates') beauty for beauty itself (cf. Irwin 1995, 268). This suggests that Socrates' true beauty is an image or resemblance of the form of beauty and that it will only be educative as long as it is not mistaken for beauty itself. Socrates' soul embodies virtue, it is beautiful, and as long as it is truly so, it truly resembles the form of beauty.

12.6 Conclusions

As we have seen, Socrates' way of resembling beauty itself involves both the development of virtues of character and thought and has the power to make others experience their own *erōs* towards beauty itself, that is, towards developing the same virtues in their souls. According to the interpretation presented here, such

development requires training in moral understanding, that Plato presents as the practice of reflection upon the objects of one's own desires. Such reflection enables the agent to discover true beauty in the objects of his desires, thus finding the appropriate way to satisfy them. Only when the learner's soul has been nourished and strengthened by such reflection, that is, only when the accomplishment of his desires has been persistently submitted to the guidance of understanding, will he be able to understand beauty itself and finally produce true virtue. True virtue, as Socrates embodies it, appears thus as the harmonious integration of all kinds of desires that resembles beauty itself and is the proper end of the soul's *erōs*.

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Chapter 13
Educating Desire in Aristotle

Giles Pearson

Abstract In this chapter, I employ Aristotle to investigate the various ways in which a person's desires may be educated over time. I do so by considering how people may gradually shift from being vicious to virtuous. In particular, I sketch the shifts from (1) a contented vicious agent to (2) a discontented vicious agent to (3) an akratic or weak-willed agent to (4) an enkratic or strong-willed agent, and finally to (5) a fully virtuous agent. To make the transitions clear and the discussion accessible, I shall use some running examples, especially a smoker who eventually gives up. We shall see that crucial to charting the developmental processes are the agent's reason-based evaluations and desires, on the one hand, and her perception-based responses and desires, on the other.

Keywords Aristotle · Desire · Education · Reason · Perception · Virtue · Vice · *akrasia* · *enkrateia*

13.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I employ Aristotle to investigate the various ways in which a person's desires may be educated over time. I do so by considering how people may gradually shift from being vicious to virtuous. To make the transitions clear and the discussion accessible, I shall use some running examples, especially a smoker who eventually gives up. We start with a contented vicious agent, e.g. a happy smoker, and imagine her becoming a discontented vicious agent, someone who regrets smoking. We then envisage the unhappy smoker shifting into an akratic smoker, that is, someone who actively forms the choice to give up smoking but fails to do so. We next imagine the akratic agent becoming enkratic, that is, while still possessing desires to smoke,

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nonetheless successfully resisting them. Finally, we see the enkratic agent become virtuous and lose any (significant) desire to smoke.

In sketching these transitions, I follow Aristotle in investigating how the agent's reason-based desires and evaluations interact with her perception-based desires and evaluations. As we shall see, changing one's judgements and belief-based desires is only half the battle—one must also learn to see the world differently and have different perception-based desires.

13.2   Different Kinds of Cognitions and Desires

Before charting the transition from vice to virtue, it will be helpful to introduce the psychological states and capacities we will employ in our explanations.

Aristotle distinguishes between what he calls *kritika*, that is, discriminatory or cognitive capacities, on the one hand, and *orexeis*, desiderative or conative capacities, on the other (*De motu animalium* 6, cf. also the opening lines of *De anima* [henceforth *De an.*] III.3 and III.9). He recognises several different cognitive capacities, but I shall operate with a distinction between thought (*dianoia*)/reason (*logos*)/belief (*doxa*)-based responses, on the one hand, and perception-based responses, on the other. By the latter, I mean to pick out not merely perception proper (*aisthésis*), but also the capacity Aristotle calls *phantasia* (perceptual imagination or construal). In *De anima* he explicitly distinguishes *phantasia* from belief (*doxa*) and claims that the contents of *phantasia* (one's *phantasmata*) can even directly contradict one's beliefs (*De an.* III.3.428a18-b9). His famous example is of the sun appearing to be about a foot across, even though we believe it to be bigger than the known world (*De an.* III.3.428b2–4; cf. *De Insomniis* 2.460b18–22). The basic idea is that since we can experience both contents (the sun as a foot across, the sun as bigger than the known world) at the very same time, and yet at no point doubt the belief, we should deny that the content of the perceptual construal is provided by belief.[1] Instead, *phantasiai a*re 'appearances' or 'construals' deriving from perception in some way (a 'movement which comes about as a result of the activity of perception' (*De an.* III.3.428b25–26, 429a1–2), whether from immediate perceptual encounters or from previously stored perceptual content that may be modified or reinterpreted, as in dreams (see, e.g., *De Insomniis* 1.459a14–22, *De an.* III.3.429a1–2).

In this chapter, we are primarily concerned with *evaluative* cognitions, cognitions of something as valuable in some respect. And just as we can have reason (belief/

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[1]Why not two different beliefs? See Pearson 2011a: 106–107. As I noted, it is not the mere fact that the two contents contradict each other that establishes two different states (doubtless most of us have contradictory beliefs buried somewhere). Rather, it is that (1) we experience both contents about the same object at the very same time; (2) at no point do we abandon our belief or accept that circumstances have changed; and (3) at no point do we think our belief is both true and false. For (2) and (3), see *De an.* III.3.428b4–9.

thought)-based and perception-based cognitions, so too we can have reason- and perception-based *evaluative* cognitions. We can, e.g., believe it would good to give up smoking on grounds of health (a reason-based evaluative cognition) and we can have a perceptual construal of smoking as, e.g., unpleasant (a perception-based evaluative construal).[2] Furthermore, as with the *phantasia* example above, we can assume that reason- and perception-based evaluative cognitions can be independent of each other and not necessarily align.

With desires, a key distinction Aristotle draws is between rational and non-rational desires. Rational desires (*bouléseis*) are grounded is something the agent takes to be good.[3] But what is of particular interest for us here is one type of rational motivation, viz. that stemming from a preferential choice (*prohairesis*) or what I shall often call a 'resolution' (the latter is helpful in the context of considering an agent who wants to change). Preferential choices or resolutions are motivations formed in consequence of deliberation or active consideration (see, especially, *Nicomachean Ethics* [henceforth *NE*] II.2–3, *Eudemian Ethics* [henceforth *EE*] II.10).[4]

With non-rational desires, it is important to note, paradoxical as it may sound, that they can, in fact, be grounded in reason. In *NE* VII.6, for instance, Aristotle explicitly notes that perception, *phantasia* and reason can ground an *epithumia* or *thumos*, and the latter are his two non-rational desires.[5] Instead, what makes a desire non-rational, for Aristotle, is that it is grounded in a value we share with non-rational creatures, such as, but not limited to, pleasure.[6] Nonetheless, the fact that he explicitly recognises *perception-based* desires, in addition to reason-based ones, will prove significant in what follows. In *De an.* III.10, he claims that the object of desire motivates by being 'thought of or grasped through *phantasia* (*tô noêthênai ê phantasthênai*)' (*De an.* III.10.433b11–12). *Phantasia*, no less than belief/thought, can grasp objects of desire.[7] We can, then, have reason-based non-rational desires and perception-based non-rational desires. In what follows, when referring to non-rational desires, I won't always include the 'non-rational', but it should be

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[2]Evaluative perception-based cognitions may *have to* involve *phantasia*, rather than simply *aisthésis*, but this is not crucial here since my notion of 'perception-based' includes *phantasia*.

[3]For more discussion, see Pearson 2012: Chaps. 6 and 7.

[4]For the relation between *boulésis* and the desire that comes out of a *phrohairesis*, see Pearson 2012: 178–189.

[5]'For reason (*logos*) or *phantasia* informs us that we have been insulted or slighted, and *thumos*, reasoning as it were (*hôsper sullogisamenos*) that anything like this must be fought against, boils up straightway; while *epithumia*, if reason or perception merely says that an object is pleasant, springs to the enjoyment of it' (1149a32–1149b1). I discuss this text in detail in Pearson 2011b.

[6]Or so I argue in Pearson 2012, Chap. 7. Space prevents discussion of rival interpretations here. 'Not limited to pleasure' because the object of *thumos* isn't pleasure. See Pearson 2012, Chap. 4, for discussion of its object.

[7]This is important for Aristotle in *De an.* III.10 not merely to make room for our non-reason-based responses, but because he is trying to give an account of motivation that applies to all animals, not just humans, and yet, on his view, animals don't have reason-based responses (see, e.g., *NE* VII.3.1147b3–5).

clear in context when I have them in mind. I will also sometimes refer to these desires as 'pleasure-based', but it should be remembered that not all non-rational desires need be such.

In sum, then, we have reason-based and perception-based evaluative cognitions; rational motivations stemming from the agent's preferential choice or resolution; and reason- or perception-based non-rational motivations. Let's now turn to Aristotle's vicious agent.

13.3   The Contented Vicious Agent

In *NE* VII.8 Aristotle claims: 'vice is unnoticed by its possessor' (1150b36). It seems natural to read this as asserting that the vicious agent thinks she is acting well. That reading seems confirmed by *NE* III.1, where Aristotle insists that 'every wicked man (*mochthēros*) is ignorant of what he ought to do (*ha dei prattein*) and what he ought to abstain from (*hōn aphekteon*)' (1110b28–29). It also seems to fit well with his suggestion in *NE* II.8 that 'the courageous person is called rash by the coward, cowardly by the rash person' (1108b19–26). Presumably, this occurs because the courageous agent appears rash (take unnecessary risks etc.) to the coward and cowardly (unwilling to expose herself to enough risk, e.g. not willing to risk her life for a bet made when drunk) to the rash agent.

If the vicious agent thinks she is acting well, this suggests she would have reason-based evaluative cognitions that count in favour of acting the way she does. With our smoking example, she, of course, need not be completely oblivious to the generally accepted view that smoking is extremely damaging to one's health, but she will find a way to rationalise her behaviour. She might, e.g., insist that the long-term health issues don't bother her because she doesn't want to be old anyway. Or she might point to the fact that some people live a long life even though they've smoked continually, and maintain, irrationally, that she knows she will be one of the lucky ones. Or she may simply maintain that the pleasure of smoking outweighs the detriment to her health.[8] Similarly, with a drinker. Many will deny they have a drink problem even though it is clear to others they do. Indeed, in line with the point about courage above, the vicious agent may even argue vigorously and elegantly that it is the virtuous who are vicious, not her (Aristotle explicitly allows that she may possess the capacity of cleverness (*NE* VI.12.1144a23–28)). A person with an unhealthy diet may argue that those with good diets are 'health freaks'; a stingy person may try to persuade us that the generous are spendthrifts, and so on.

It also seems likely that the vicious agent's perception-based evaluative cognitions would tend to align with her reason-based ones (at least in the most important

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[8]As Aristotle notes, 'pleasure appears a good when it is not', hence we 'choose the pleasant as a good, and avoid pain as an evil' (*NE* III.4.1113a33-1113b2).

respects[9]). She will, that is, not only *believe* she is acting correctly, it will also appear that way to her perceptually. She'll experience perceptual satisfaction in smoking. And just as she will downplay or ignore any contrary reason-based evidence, such as magazine articles on the badness of smoking, she will also do so with the perceptual counterpart, e.g. a sore throat, yellow fingernails, palpitations, and so on.

With the vicious agent's *desires*, one might naturally assume that just as the vicious agent has harmonious evaluative cognitions (reason- and perception-based) of her predicament, so too she has harmonious desires/motivations. In fact, this has been disputed. Some commentators have argued that Aristotle's vicious agent is essentially conflicted.[10] I don't agree with this, but am unable to argue the point in detail here. Instead, I shall simply assume that the natural understanding of many of his comments suggests an unconflicted conception, even though in one passage he does characterise a conflicted vicious agent.[11] An unconflicted vicious agent would, after all, be a natural concomitant of the vicious agent's evaluations being harmonious. If she has conflicting desires and desires require seeing something as valuable about the act in question, then she must have conflicting evaluative construals. But the passages I've quoted seem naturally understood as ascribing to her a consistent set of cognitions about her situation. This understanding is further suggested by Aristotle's insistence that such an agent has no regrets: 'the self-indulgent man has no regrets; for he stands by his choice' (*NE* VII.8.1150b29–30); '[the self-indulgent person] is of necessity without regrets, and therefore incurable, since a man without regrets cannot be cured' (*NE* VII.7.1150a21–22). If the vicious agent (so characterised) had conflicting motivations, why wouldn't she be subject to regrets? (All this is compatible with the idea that Aristotle could *also* have a conception of a conflicted vicious agent—but see Sect. 13.5 below for how this might be understood.)

On this conception of the vicious agent—call her 'a contented vicious agent'— her motivations, no less than her evaluations, will align. She'll not only judge it would be attractive to smoke, she'll have a concomitant perceptual construal. And she'll not only find herself with rational motivations to smoke, she'll have pleasure-based desires to do so as well.

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[9]Some minor disharmony can perhaps be tolerated (see below), so long as it doesn't jar too greatly. Similarly, we'll see in Sect. 13.8 below that the virtuous agent can be slightly conflicted.

[10]Grönroos (2015a). Broadie (1991, 177n.41) notes that Aristotle never explicitly claims the vicious agent *isn't* conflicted. But the passages I've cited do suggest a conception along these lines.

[11]*NE* IX.4.1166b10–29. This passage seems inconsistent with *NE* VII insofar as that maintains that the vicious agent is not subject to regrets (see below), whereas *NE* IX.4 explicitly asserts she is (1166b24–25). See Broadie (2009: 164n.18) for an attempt to mollify this tension. (The *NE* IX conception in fact looks closer to one we find in Plato (see, e.g., *Republic* I.351b–352c).)

13.4   Becoming Discontented with Vice

Even if Aristotle's basic understanding of vice is as unconflicted, there would still be space in his account between a contented vicious agent, on the one hand, and an akratic one, who possesses full-fledged conflicting motivations, on the other. For we could have a vicious agent with some negative evaluations about her predicament, but who nonetheless doesn't yet possess conflicting desires/motivations.[12] Let us call such a person 'a discontented vicious agent'.

The first question to address is why a contented vicious agent might become discontented. Let me illustrate this by sketching two different mechanisms. There are doubtless others.

13.4.1: First, the agent might undergo some kind of conversion. The more general notion of conversion is nicely illustrated by the following example from Stephen Darwall:

> Roberta grows up comfortably in a small town. The newspapers she reads, what she sees on television, what she learns in school, and what she hears in conversation with family and friends present her with a congenial view of the world and her place in it. She is aware in a vague way that there is poverty and suffering somewhere, but sees no relation between it and her own life. On going to a university she sees a film that vividly presents the plight of textile workers in the southern United States: the high incidence of brown lung, low wages, and long history of employers undermining attempts of workers to organize a union, both violently and through other extralegal means. Roberta is shocked and dismayed by the suffering she sees. After the film there is a discussion of what the students might do to help alleviate the situation. It is suggested that they might actively work in promoting a boycott of the goods of one company that has been particularly flagrant in its illegal attempts to destroy the union. She decides to donate a few hours a week to distributing leaflets. (1983: 39–40)

There are some aspects of this example that aren't crucial for us now. First, Darwall proposes it as a case in which a person can 'be moved by awareness of some consideration, without that being explained by a prior desire' (1983: 39). It is highly questionable whether it does this, but that is not crucial for us here.[13] Our interest in the example concerns the way it illustrates how an agent's evaluations can be altered by a sudden encounter (the visual images in the film and the accompanying explanation). Second, whether or not we'd want to call Roberta's pre-conversion condition 'vice' will depend on our normative judgements about whether or not she

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[12]If Aristotle held an anti-Humean theory of motivation, he would think that certain cognitive evaluations entail desires/motivations and would account for a shift in motivation via a shift in cognition. But it wouldn't follow that every change in evaluation would necessarily bring about a change in motivation—motivation would supervene on cognitive evaluation, not vice versa. So, there might still be space for a contented vicious agent to become discontented without a corresponding change in motivation. (What would be impossible would be two agents having precisely the same view of the situation, but different motivations.) I discuss whether we should attribute a Humean or anti-Humean theory of motivation to Aristotle in Pearson forthcoming.

[13]Sinhababu (2009, 483–489; 2017: 52–55) argues that Roberta's reaction is only explicable against the background of other desires and aversions (which may not be readily accessible to the agent in her pre-conversion state).

ought to be aware of the matter in question and attempt to do something about it.[14] Finally, Roberta *does* shift from her pre-conversion condition to being motivated in a contra direction.

Nonetheless, the example neatly illustrates one kind of mechanism through which contented vicious agents may become discontented. The basic idea is that a vicious agent may encounter some novel situation that jolts her out of her contentedness. It is the psychological equivalent of being given a sudden push. With our smoking example, perhaps our agent has gradually persuaded herself that smoking isn't really harming her (even if it is harming others) and then sees a film revealing the true extent of the damage smoking does to the body. As with Roberta, her evaluations may receive a violent jolt that alters her perspective. And even if she continues to smoke, the jolt may have brought about discontent with her vicious state by altering her evaluative impressions.

13.4.2: A second mechanism for producing discontent stems from the world itself, or the agent's body, resisting (pushing back) in certain ways. Resistive feedback may prompt the agent to acknowledge her vicious state and question her evaluations.

We can get more of a take on this if we consider an idea in Peter Railton's classic paper, 'Moral Realism' (1986). Railton draws a distinction between an agent, on the one hand, and an idealised version of that agent—'the agent plus'—on the other. The latter is idealised insofar as she is hypothesised to have 'unqualified cognitive and imaginative powers, and full factual and nomological information about [her] physical and psychological constitution, capacities, circumstances, history, and so on . . . and [her] environment' (1986: 173–4). Railton then goes on to characterise what he calls the 'objectified subjective interests' of the *original* agent by reference to the desires of her idealised compatriot. To do so, he appeals to what the idealised agent would want her non-idealised version to want. If, for example, the idealised agent has full factual knowledge, she clearly wouldn't ever need a map, and so would never want a map. But if she became aware that her non-idealised version, who lacks full knowledge, had got lost, she—the idealised version—would surely want her non-idealised manifestation to want to procure a map. She might say: it is in *the best interests* of my non-idealised version to want a map, even if she doesn't possess such a desire. In this way, the requisite gap is generated between what an agent *thinks* is in her best interests and what is *actually* in her best interests. And since the latter is objective but still grounded in nothing more than the agent's desires, Railton calls it the agent's 'objectified subjective interests'.

From this beginning, Railton tried, more contentiously, to extend his account to support a realist (and consequentialist) picture of morality that takes all agents together as one group and attempts to establish what would be good for all. But without pursuing this further, we are now in a position to illustrate our second mechanism.

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[14]It's worth noting that on Aristotle's view there can be culpable forms of ignorance (see, e.g., *NE* III.5.1113b30–33, 1114b27–28).

Note that the virtue of temperance, for Aristotle, concerns tactile bodily pleasure and (in part) what is healthy for the human body.[15] With the vices corresponding to this virtue, it seems possible for aspects of the agent's situation to feedback to her over time. Here is a specific example for illustrative purposes. A friend of mine, Jones, reports what he calls 'a five/six-beer cut-off'. If he has five beers, and not a drop more, he can function perfectly well the following day, whereas if he has a sixth or even another half over the five, a hangover will reliably ensue and his work pattern the following day will be in jeopardy. Now Jones didn't always know that drinking six beers would generate a hangover. At that point, if he had something important to do the following day, he might inadvertently fail to stop at five. In such a scenario, we can say that Jones *plus* would want Jones original to want to stop at five beers. And, note, we can say this whether or not Jones original is himself aware of the five-six beer cut-off.

But suppose now that before he'd realised his physical quirk, Jones just happened to end up only having five beers one time and no more. Perhaps, by a stroke of luck, he was called away after five by some emergency. In such a scenario, a hangover *wouldn't* ensue, and Jones would find himself able to function perfectly well. We would then be able to say that Jones had acted *in accordance with* his objectified subjective interests, even though he hadn't acted *in light of* those interests. However, if this happened a few more times, Jones might begin to realise what is going on. At such a point, we might say that the facts of the matter have *fed back* to Jones and revealed to him one aspect of his objectified subjective interests.

Finally, suppose that, even given this awareness, Jones nonetheless feels no inclination to stop at five beers. His awareness of his five-six beer cut-off may still generate certain kinds of discontent. He may be unhappy at the fact that he repeatedly engages in behaviour that prevents him from functioning well.

This, then, is a second mechanism through which a contented vicious agent may become discontent: she may encounter various forms of feedback that effectively force an awareness of her vice on her.[16] A smoker may find her health deteriorating in a way that correlates with smoking; someone who drinks too much may find she sleeps much better when having a night off, and so on.[17]

It is also worth emphasising that with both the mechanisms highlighted in 13.4.1 and 13.4.2 (conversion, feedback), we see an interplay between reason- and perception-based evaluations. In the first, a novel perception-based encounter

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[15]Only 'in part' because it also concerns what is noble or fine (*kalon*) to do. I provide an overview of Aristotle's account of temperance in Pearson 2014. See also, e.g., Young (1988) and Curzer (1997).

[16]We noted in Sect. 13.3 that Aristotle refers to vice as 'unnoticed' by its possessor and 'incurable'. Such an agent—our contented vicious agent—would have to be resistant to acknowledging any feedback she receives. She would, that is, be prone to self-deception and to adopting strategies that prevent her having to recognise the truth about herself.

[17]This mechanism may also be extendable beyond vices that have a bodily basis, e.g. the vice of stinginess may feedback to one via negative reactions of others, the vice of wastefulness by one's abject poverty (see *NE* IV.1 for these vices), on so on. To say that all virtues/vices have some such basis would seem to commit us to some kind of naturalism (cf. *NE* I.7).

(seeing the suffering in the film) prompted and interplayed with certain reason-based evaluations and re-evaluations (being provided with certain plausible explanations for the suffering). In the second, perceptual feedback (repeated hangovers) prompted a shift in the reason-based evaluation ('perhaps drinking more than five beers isn't such a good thing after all').

13.5   The Prospect of Change for the Discontented Vicious Agent

Suppose our agent experiences discontent at her vice. What does this entail? On its own, very little. In Darwall's example, a shift of behaviour was already specified—Roberta decided to donate a few hours a week to distributing leaflets. But, even with that example, we can easily envisage an agent whose discontent fails to materialise into an active desire to do something, let alone choice or action. Susie may experience the same inversion of her evaluations as Roberta, but while Roberta is prompted to distribute leaflets, Susie may just sit and stew on her discontent. Similarly, a smoker may not be able to shake from her mind images of a film about the damage smoking does to the body, but nonetheless fail to be motivated to attempt to give up.

In fact, we can distinguish at least the following stages of development:

First, discontent may be only embryonic and partial and not yet have materialised into a full-blown reason-based judgement that something is wrong. For example, with Jones above, there may be some perceptual feedback and coordinate discontent on several occasions (hangovers), and these may generate a general sense of uneasiness about having more than five beers. But that may fall short of Jones forming a judgement about the exact correlation between a certain number of drinks and a hangover.

Second, even if awareness of the discontent does lead to a full-fledged judgement that something is wrong, there is no guarantee it will lead to a desire to act otherwise. Jones may become aware of the five-six beer cut-off, but simply not desire to stop drinking. This is the stage of Susie above.

Third, even if the awareness leads to a full-fledged judgement that something is wrong *and* this prompts a desire to change, there is no guarantee that that will lead to a preferential choice or resolution to change. It could just be a fleeting or idle desire.[18] Jones may become aware of the five-six beer cut off and—perhaps when suffering from a particularly bad hangover—form a desire to stop at five next time. But when that time comes around, the desire to stop at five may have

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[18]Cf. *NE* III.5.1114a13–14, Broadie (1991: 161), and Anscombe's notion of 'idle' wishes (1957: 67).

evaporated and the pull of the sixth hold sway. Similarly, many smokers find themselves desiring to give up at various points. Not all get beyond that.

Fourth, even if the awareness leads to a full-fledged judgement that something is wrong and prompts a desire to change and that desire *does* lead to a full-blown resolution to change, there is no guarantee the resolution will succeed. The agent may succumb to *akrasia* or weakness of will. Jones may be resolved to stop at five beers but, against his better judgement, succumb to a desire for the sixth. A smoker may be resolved on giving up, but nonetheless fail to do so. I shall examine this last stage in more detail in the next section.

Now, as mentioned earlier (Sect. 13.3), some commentators think that Aristotle holds that vicious agents are essentially conflicted. As I have said, I reject this, even though I can't argue the case here. What we can see from this section, though, is that even on my account Aristotle can *allow* a conflicted vicious agent who nonetheless still falls short of *akrasia*. We see this at stage three above. That agent has conflicting desires, even though she doesn't form a preferential choice to, e.g., stop smoking.[19]

Finally, it is also worth noting that there is no guarantee of *progression* through these stages. Indeed, it seems possible that an agent may *slip back* to a previous stage. Jones may lose his resolution to stop at five beers and return to wallowing in his discontent. And perhaps someone could even revert to a contented vicious state. A smoker may just try to block out all thoughts of the harm of smoking and self-deceive.

13.6   Akratic Agents

Akratics have one major success over discontented vicious agents (and, indeed, those at the third stage in Sect. 13.5): they manage to form a resolution to change. This is our smoker who is now fully committed to giving up.

How does this preferential choice or resolution materialise? Again, there won't be one single answer to this question. Here are a few possibilities (which aren't intended

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[19]Grönroos (2015a) wants something stronger: a vicious agent who acts against her preferential choice. This, however, is problematic. In order to distinguish vice from *akrasia*, Grönroos has to maintain the bad person has an erroneous conception of the good, whereas the akratic has a correct conception (161). But to generate the conflict in the vicious agent, Grönroos has to insist that even though she has this erroneous conception, she nonetheless desires to achieve the right conception. To accommodate *that*, Grönroos in turn has to insist that even the bad person has some *unarticulated* conception of the latter (162). This is controversial enough, but it also entails that to distinguish the vicious from the akratic/enkratic/virtuous, Grönroos has to furnish the latter with an *articulated* conception of their good. This is also highly controversial (see Pearson 2012: Chap. 6). Furthermore, Grönroos maintains that *bouléseis* are all for one's own overall good (see Grönroos 2015b), in spite of evidence that some of them are for lower level goods (again, see Pearson 2012: Chap. 6). (I should also note that there is an issue concerning whether all types of akratic agent Aristotle recognises act against their preferential choice, even though it seems they must; see *NE* VII.7's contrast between weak and impetuous akratics; and, e.g., Taylor (2006: 189–190).)

to be either mutually exclusive or exhaustive). Perhaps the discontent with being vicious becomes so strong that it not only leads to a desire to change but becomes something more significant? Or perhaps she finds herself having a desire to change so frequently that she feels she must try to act on it? Or perhaps she slowly begins to identify with the desire to change and starts to view it as representing who she really is? Or perhaps she finds herself wanting to *commit* to the desire to change because she finds herself beginning to like the person the change would make her?

Once the resolution to change is formed, it is nonetheless distinctive of the akratic agent that she *fails* to act on it. But why? Part of the explanation is that she also possesses a conflicting desire to act against the resolution or choice, and she succumbs to that. The akratic agent's resolution or preferential choice (*prohairesis*) manifests a reason-based motivation, whereas the non-rational desire/motivation that conflicts with it can be either reason/belief-based or perception-based (see Sect. 13.2 above). If she has resolved not to smoke on grounds of health and has a reason-based motivation (stemming from her resolution/choice) in accordance with that, she may nonetheless also possess a reason- or perception-based desire to smoke grounded in pleasure. She may still find herself *believing* that it would be *pleasurable* to smoke, or she may, for example, *see* others smoking and this trigger a perception-based desire to smoke, or have a *perceptual construal* (*phantasia*) of herself as experiencing the pleasure of smoking that forms the basis of a desire to smoke.

Why does the akratic agent act in line with her pleasure-based desire instead of her resolution/choice? How we explain this will in part hinge on what sorts of cases of *akrasia* we allow in. Commentators are divided on whether Aristotle accepts the possibility of 'hard' (also called 'clear-sighted') cases of *akrasia* or not. We can adapt Price's (2006: 235) characterisations of 'soft' and 'hard' *akrasia* as follows:

> **'Soft' *akrasia***: The agent's judgement is temporally perverted or obscured by sentiment or temptation, so that she acts in a manner of which she would normally disapprove; she shows *weakness in judgement*.
>
> **'Hard' (or 'clear-sighted') *akrasia***: The agent's judgement is neither dimmed nor distorted, and yet she shows *weakness in execution* by acting otherwise.[20]

On one view, Aristotle only allows soft cases of *akrasia*; on an alternative, he also allows hard cases. There is also obviously logical space for the view that he only allows hard cases.[21] It is also worth emphasising that even on the view which maintains he only allows soft cases of *akrasia*, it is still the case that akratic agents are aware they are akratic. It is just that they aren't aware of the akratic nature of their action *at the time of action*.

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[20]I have changed Price's characterisations to make them specify one sort of case only (Price has 'may be' instead of 'is'). This allows us to articulate the dispute in terms of whether Aristotle accepts there can be hard cases or only permits soft cases.

[21]The view that Aristotle only allows soft cases is a traditional one (dating back at least to Aquinas). See also, e.g., Bostock (2000: Chap. 6) and Price (2006). The view that he allows hard cases is maintained by, e.g., Charles (1984: Chaps. 3–4; 2009) and Broadie (1991: Chap. 5; 2002: 385–99). Charles (2009) in fact thinks Aristotle makes explicit reference to both types.

This dispute about Aristotle maps onto a parallel dispute in the contemporary literature about weakness of will. It is debated whether we should adopt an internalist account—according to which evaluative judgements are in some way essentially connected to motivation—or an externalist account—according to which the existence of such a connection is rejected. Internalists have to deny at least some cases of hard or clear-sighted weakness of will.[22] Externalists don't have this problem, but instead need to explain the privileged role we think certain kinds of evaluative judgements we make play in guiding action and ensure they don't make weakness of will lose its oddness and irrationality.[23]

Now, on the view that holds that Aristotle only allows soft cases of *akrasia*, the explanation for why the agent succumbs to a non-rational desire contrary to her resolution will be that it temporarily *block*s her access to the reason-based evaluation embodied in the resolution. In the belief-based variant of the non-rational desire, the agent's belief that, e.g., smoking will be pleasant will temporarily consume her to such an extent that she briefly loses sight of her view that smoking would be bad for her health. In the perception-based variation, the agent's perception-based desire for the pleasure of smoking will perform this role. But in both cases, the agent temporarily loses sight of her view about the badness of smoking at the point of action.

On the reading that allows in hard cases, what happens—in those cases, at least—is that the agent follows the pleasure-based desire against her resolution without losing sight of the resolution. She may continue to see the reasons she holds count against smoking. How would such a view explain why she acts against that resolution? It would have to appeal, I think, to the idea that the agent is so set up, in terms of her character and basic desiderative dispositions, that despite identifying with her resolution, her recognition of the availability of the pleasure engages her inclinations and overrides her resolution. In other words, she is desideratively predisposed to act irrationally against her better judgement given the prospect of the pleasure. At the point of action, her pleasure-based desire overrides the desire manifest in her resolution, even though she identifies with the latter.[24]

If the agent is clear-sighted, one might wonder how a reason-based version of the conflicting non-rational desire could get purchase. Ex hypothesi the agent fully grasps the resolution at the time of action and yet is led astray by a belief about the act she ultimately rejects.

One might suggest that the two beliefs (the belief underlying the resolution, and the belief underlying the non-rational reason-based desire) needn't be contradictory: an agent can, without any contradiction, both believe that she shouldn't smoke on grounds of health and also believe that smoking would be pleasant.

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[22]The specific kinds of hard cases that are rejected will vary with the view; see, e.g., Hare (1952: 124–6) and then Smith (1994: Chap. 5), Davidson (1970) and then Bratman (1979: §4).

[23]See Stroud and Svirsky (2019) for discussion.

[24]This more naturally aligns the hard reading with the Humean theory of motivation and the soft reading with an anti-Humean theory of motivation.

But this won't quite do, since a contradictory set of beliefs can easily be derived. After all, given her resolution, the agent in question presumably also accepts that the pleasure of smoking is not a reason to smoke. If one, in turn, suggested that perhaps the agent could fail to bring the two contradictory beliefs *together* at the point of action, this again won't quite do. For in that scenario we don't have fully clear-sighted cases of *akrasia*—there will still be ignorance at *some* level.

A better suggestion is to note is that on this picture the desiderative force of a desire need not directly correlate with the evaluative cognition that underlies it. The agent may believe the pleasantness of the act is entirely outweighed by other considerations, but nonetheless desire the pleasure more than the alternative. Despite believing the pleasure of smoking is no reason to smoke, the desire for that pleasure may override the desire to act in accordance with a resolution not to smoke on grounds of health.

13.7   Enkratic Agents

Enkratic agents are similar to akratics in (1) having formed a resolution for a course of action and (2) finding themselves with errant non-rational motivations conflicting with that resolution. The difference is that enkratic agents, unlike akratics, (3) manage to resist their errant motivations and follow their resolution.

How does an agent move from *akrasia* to *enkrateia*? The answer will again vary depending on the range of cases of *akrasia* the account allows in, and also on whether the susceptibility stems from reason-based or perception-based weakness.

In cases where the akratic action is explained by the agent temporarily losing sight of her resolution, she will have to seek ways to prevent her from losing this awareness. This will naturally vary depending on whether the loss is owing to reason- or perception-based interference. If, for example, the agent lost sight of the resolution not to smoke owing to a perceptual trigger brought about by seeing people smoke in a pub garden, she might avoid that setting for a while. Or if it was brought about by her reading some novel in which the hero smoked, she might try to avoid such literature, at least for a period. These are avoidance tactics. But similarly, she might try, more positively, to keep her mind on her resolution. She might try to rehearse the reasons she wants to give up smoking each day, so that they become ingrained and second nature. Or she might take a course of cognitive behavioural therapy. And so on.

If there can be hard or clear-sighted cases of *akrasia* then sticking to a resolution won't just be a matter of keeping sight of it, since the agent can have a clear grasp of the resolution at the very point she acts against it. With such cases, it would seem that in order to make progress towards *enkrateia*, some underlying change in her basic desiderative dispositions would be required. She would have to find a way to make it so that her desire for the pleasure of smoking is weakened, and so doesn't override her resolution. In fact, though, some of the above-mentioned strategies could still help. Avoiding (perceptual) triggers of desires, for example, might be a way of

enervating the underlying desiderative disposition (which was allowing pleasure-based desires to override the resolution); spending time focusing on the benefits of smoking may help strengthen the desiderative force of the resolution so it overrides the pleasure-based desires. And so on.

The agent will count as enkratic so long as, even given her contrary desire, she sticks to her resolution/choice. In fact, we may even allow her to have an occasional lapse without disqualifying her as enkratic. We might say, in such a scenario, that she acts akratically, without becoming akratic (as indeed Aristotle allows one can act unjustly without becoming unjust (*NE* V.6.1134a17–23)[25]). Of course, if the lapses become frequent, the agent will be sliding back to *akrasia*. But so long as the transgressions are infrequent (or of diminishing frequency), we may still be happy to think of her as a (lapsing) enkratic agent.

Finally, we should note that even if our agent does slip back to *akrasia*, she may, of course, regain *enkrateia* later on, or, indeed, slide further back to vice. Many manage to give up smoking for a time and then slip back into *akrasia* or discontented vice. Some may even slide back to a contended vicious state.

13.8   Virtuous Agents

If the akratic agent was distinguished from those who came before by gaining control of her resolutions/choices, and the enkratic agent in turn distinguished from the akratic by gaining control of her actions, the virtuous agent goes one stage further still. She completes our picture of the education of desire by also gaining control of her non-rational desires, thereby eliminating (or making minimal) the conflict still present in enkratic agents.

As before, we should first ask: how might an enkratic agent make this transition? Again, this will depend on whether the conflicting non-rational desire is reason- or perception-based. In general, desires, on Aristotle's account, involve cognising that there is something good or otherwise valuable (e.g. pleasant) about the action in question (*De an*. III.10.433b11–12). Hence if we can take away such a cognition, we will take away the desire (the cognition of the object of the desire is, as it were, a necessary condition for the desire). Now, reason-based desires, on Aristotle's view, involve *believing* there is something valuable or pleasurable about the action in question. So our question becomes: how might an enkratic agent stop believing, e.g., that it would be pleasant to smoke?

One way would be to grasp clearly that the short-term pleasure could lead to other short- or long-term pains. The short-term pleasure of smoking, for example, could lead to other discomforts and pains (short-term: sore throat, yellow fingernails, palpitations, etc.; long-term: respiratory problems, emphysema, chest pains, heart problems, throat and lung cancer, etc.). If the agent doesn't merely think that

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[25]I discuss the latter idea in detail in Pearson 2006.

smoking is bad because it contravenes her health, but recognises it leads to other pains, this could undermine the pleasure-based desires. Similarly, repeatedly eating cream cakes will lead to the displeasure of being overweight and other painful health complications. Focusing on such points may enable the agent to cease believing the cigarette or cream cake pleasurable, or at least not overall. And if she achieves this, the corresponding desires should disappear.[26]

Unfortunately, all too often, even if the agent can achieve this, the *desire* to smoke won't necessarily disappear. And Aristotle has a ready explanation for why. In addition to belief-based desires, we also have perception-based desires. Thus, even if the agent can effect a change of belief, this alone won't necessarily stop her *seeing* the act in question as pleasurable. Smoking may still *appear* to her to provide a pleasurable sensation. The cream cake may still light up as a pleasurable, sweet, tasty, creamy delight, begging to be placed on the tongue.

A strategy we saw in the shift from *akrasia* to *enkrateia* may help at this stage. If there are certain situations or circumstances which the agent finds trigger perception-based desires, she may try to avoid those situations. If, for example, seeing someone smoking in a context in which she would previously have greatly enjoyed smoking (on a hot sunny day, dining al fresco, after a few drinks) is what generated the perception-based desire to smoke, she could try to avoid such situations until the perception-based desire weakens or disappears. If a desire for a cream cake is triggered by a perception-based encounter in her favourite coffee shop, she might avoid that shop for a while. And so on.

Nature may also provide a helping hand here. If our enkratic agent sticks to her resolution, gradually, over time, she will often find the errant non-rational desires diminish. A smoker who sticks to her resolution to give up will typically find, over time, that her perception-based desires to smoke diminish. Either seeing others smoke will no longer trigger a desire at all, or else it will trigger a very faint one, one that is not seriously tempting. There may, of course, be certain flare-ups. On a hot sunny day after a nice lunch washed down with a couple of bottles, the agent may find herself with a desire to smoke, but even these, one might naturally expect, will diminish over time.

Must the conflicting desire entirely disappear if the agent is to qualify as virtuous? Must the virtuous agent, that is, be entirely unconflicted? Some passages in Aristotle suggest this. In *NE* I.13, he refers to the non-rational motivations of enkratic agents as obeying reason (i.e. not defeating the latter), while in courageous and temperate agents they are 'still more ready to listen'; for in them they 'speak, on all matters, with the same voice as reason' (1102b14–28; see also *NE* III.12.1119b15–18; *NE* VII.9.1151b34–1152a3). However, in other passages he seems to allow that virtuous agents can be *slightly* conflicted. In *EE*. III.1, he claims that courageous agents are

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[26]Hence, Aristotle thinks that for virtuous agents what is unqualifiedly good is also unqualifiedly pleasant, and vice versa (*EE* VII.2.1235b21-1236a7).

afraid 'slightly or not at all' in the motivational sense (1228b17–19).[27] 'Slightly', here, suggests that a small degree of conflict wouldn't disqualify one from virtue. This concession would allow our ex-smoker a slight desire for a cigarette, without ceasing to be virtuous. *Enkrateia*, by contrast, would be reserved for conflicts that are more than merely slight.

In fact, it is also worth noting that the virtuous agent need not eradicate each and every evaluative impression that is in some way in tension with her choice/resolution. In fact, to do so in some circumstances might well be a sign of vice. In his discussion of courage, Aristotle makes it clear that the courageous agent, though fearless in facing up to fearful things, will nonetheless feel the emotion of fear (*NE* III.7.1115b7–15). The reason for this is that her life is valuable—she is virtuous, after all—and in the sorts of cases Aristotle has in mind—e.g. in battle or other extreme emergencies—she is knowingly risking her life. Hence the courageous agent will have a distressful evaluative impression consonant with fear (in his *Rhetoric*, Aristotle defines fear as a pain or disturbance caused by envisaging some destructive or painful evil in the future (II.5.1382a21–22)). In fact, failure to experience this would qualify her as excessively fearless, which is a vice (*NE* III.7.1115b24–28, cf. II.7.1107a33–1107b4). Courageous agents, then, will in some sense be distressed by the course of action they are resolved on.

Similarly, there's reason to think that virtuous agents may also sometimes be aware that acts they shouldn't indulge in would nonetheless be pleasurable. Granted, they shouldn't find the prospect of *some* things pleasurable in any way (illegal or highly immoral activities, for instance—see *NE* II.7.1107b8–15), but given that Aristotle's temperate agent isn't an ascetic, but takes pleasure in the things she ought as she ought (*NE* III.12.1119b15–19), it would seem hard for her not to view certain activities as potentially pleasurable, even when knowing she shouldn't do them. It would, for example, seem strangely demanding to insist she shouldn't find the prospect of lying on a couch even slightly more pleasurable than going for a gruelling six-mile run in the rain (which she judges required on grounds of health). And why shouldn't she be aware it would be just a tiny bit more pleasurable to watch her favourite TV show than spend the evening working through her tax returns?[28] Granted, she should generally take pleasure in virtuous activity (see, e.g., *NE* II.3.1104a3–13)—when she goes on the gruelling run, she'll probably enjoy it to some extent. But in certain cases, it seems likely that the chief satisfaction of acting virtuously will be in achieving the virtuous end. As Aristotle explicitly notes with respect to courage, 'it is not the case, with all the virtues, that the exercise of virtue is pleasant, except insofar as it reaches its end' (*NE* III.9.1117b15–16).

So perhaps he could allow our now-virtuous ex-smoker both to realise that smoking would be pleasurable in some respect (the evaluative impression) and to have a very slight desire to smoke. *Enkrateia* would, by contrast, be reserved for

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[27]For further discussion of the charmony point, and the p/harmony point, and the passages mentioned, see Pearson 2012: 241–245.

[28]For more on both the courageous and the temperate cases, see Pearson 2011b, 2012: 238–240.

agents who have evaluative impressions that aren't consonant with virtue, and who possess desires that generate conflict that is more than merely slight.

<p style="text-align:center">* * *</p>

This completes our sketch of the education of desire in Aristotle. As noted, the goal was to employ him to help us consider how we might educate our desires. What sort of education is required will, of course, depend on which stage we are at. But in charting the spectrum of shifts from a contented vicious agent to a virtuous agent, most of us should be able to place ourselves somewhere. Those who are already fully virtuous are clearly very lucky and won't have any homework. The rest of us will have more or less to do. On Aristotle's view, a central point to bear in mind is that we have different kinds of evaluation and desire: belief/reason-based, on the one hand, and perception-based, on the other. These can interplay in interesting ways, and may come apart or one lag behind the other. The account developed will also have a bearing on the education of desires in children. In order to be brought up well, children will need to be encouraged not merely to form the correct judgements, but also the correct perception-based appearances and responses. And while the former is itself a challenge, the latter is just as important, and yet considerably more difficult, given the variety of evaluative appearances a child may encounter and from such diverse sources. And since the habits we form in childhood can be very difficult to change, it will make no small difference which ones we form (*NE* II.1.1103b23–25).

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Chapter 14
The Right Desire?

Michael Winter

Abstract Aristotle suggests we follow the practically wise person's lead as we strive to become morally good. And this advice is not offered as some abstract theoretical principle about the nature of the good life. Instead, it is supposed to be practical advice we can all use to become better people. But is this good advice?

For Aristotle's practical advice to be useful, we need to know more about the conceptual framework he has in mind when offering this advice. Considering Aristotle's notion of correct desire, the distinction between natural and fully developed virtue, and reflecting on how these concepts connect to the doctrine of the mean and habit helps fill in some of the gaps. Once we understood these ideas in connection with one another, we are in a position to appreciate Aristotle's profound advice about a crucial aspect of moral education.

Keywords Virtue ethics · Desire · Aristotle · Practical wisdom · Habit

14.1 Introduction

Aristotle suggests we follow the practically wise person's lead as we strive to become morally good, and this advice is not only offered as some abstract theoretical principle about the nature of the good life. Instead, it is supposed to be useful practical advice we can all use to become better people. But is this good advice? I cannot think of anyone I know offhand who embodies all of the moral virtues, and even if I could, how helpful is that for me here and now in this particular situation? To whom should I look?

For Aristotle's advice to be useful, we need to know more about the conceptual framework he has in mind when offering it. Aristotle thinks that some human desires are genuinely good while others are bad, and that real moral education involves

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aligning our actual desires with what we ought to desire. To appreciate this idea, we need to get a sense for the standard Aristotle uses to distinguish between good and bad desires. Once we have this standard in clear view, we can come to see how it is that any of us is capable of coming to know what right desires are because we all have natural dispositions toward virtue, which, when cultivated and habituated, are capable of blossoming into full virtue. Key to this process is our ability to recognize the good actions of moral exemplars even if we never make contact with individuals who embody all of the virtues.

14.2   Right Desires

Near the beginning of Book 6 of the *Nicomachean Ethics* Aristotle talks about the right desire, and more specifically, about truth agreeing with right desire. Coming to appreciate these ideas puts us in a better position to understand how Aristotle is offering a method for shaping our desires to become morally good.

In a rather difficult passage Aristotle says the following that:

> ...moral excellence is a state concerned with choice, and choice is deliberate desire, therefore both the reasoning must be true and the desire right, if the choice is to be good, and the latter must pursue just what the former asserts (Aristotle 1985).

Aristotle remarks "both the reasoning must be true and the desire right, if the choice is to be good..." Let's break this claim into its components and try to understand what each one is. A good choice consists of having true reasoning and right desire. When we look back on our lives, we can surely identify some good and bad choices we made. Bad choices make it more difficult to flourish. Think of the decision to buy the used car that turned out to be a lemon. Remember all the frustration the car brought into your life? There was the unreliability, the endless repairs, the financial drain, the constant worry that the car would break down and leave you stranded. Looking back, it is easy to see that buying that car was a bad choice, and that doing a bit more homework, shopping around, and possibly spending a bit more money upfront for the model rated well by respected reviewers would have probably been a better choice.

When we set out to buy a car, we have to buy a model that we can afford and one that suits our situation well. If I am on a limited budget, then I must consider the initial purchase price of the car, the costs of taxes and insurance, operating costs of the vehicle and the projected maintenance expenses. If I pick a vehicle that is going to strain my budget in any of these areas over the long run, this vehicle is not a good choice. Choosing to buy a vehicle I cannot afford is a mistake. I may have been convinced by advertisers and marketers that the brawny sports utility vehicle with its rugged suspension and extra ground clearance is the car I want. But if my budget does not allow for the fuel and maintenance costs of this vehicle, choosing to buy it would be a bad choice for me because I desire something that ultimately leads to my own frustration, which is going to make it more difficult for me to flourish. If I settle

on a more efficient sedan instead, my desires may better align with my situation in life. But desiring the correct type of car for my life situation is only a part of the choice. There are many different sedans offered by different manufacturers. How do I decide which one to purchase? I should do some research, possibly beginning with sources that rate cars of the sort I am considering. I might seek experience from some other owners to find out about their level of satisfaction. I should test-drive several different models to see how comfortable the seat is and how it feels to drive the car. If after all of this research I come to decide that a particular car is the best for my situation, then chances are, I will have made a good choice. My reasoning would be true or correct in the sense that I paid attention to objective data about the quality, reliability, and performance of the car. I also made an effort to ensure that smaller details would meet my subjective criteria. Attention to all of these factors is really important for this type of decision. My "desire was right" to the extent that I wanted something that would help me flourish. My "reasoning was true" in so far as I did the thorough research to ensure that this particular car was a good fit for me and my lifestyle.

We might distinguish between wants and needs to help bring some of these points more clearly into focus. Wants are things we would like or things that we happen to desire. Needs are things that genuinely contribute to our flourishing. Some of the time we want what we need, but we often want what we do not need. It is doubtful that anyone could come up with a comprehensive list of genuine human needs, but we can point to at least some needs common to human beings all over the world. Every human being has the need for knowledge, leisure, pleasure, food, drink, rest, shelter, clothing, communication, companionship, political liberty, and the opportunity to make decisions and to act on them. The idea is that there is a set of properties, dispositions, or potentialities that constitutes human nature. When these properties, dispositions, and potentialities are cultivated and developed, human beings stand the best chance of flourishing. Identifying basic human needs requires observing human behavior to find out what makes beings of our kind flourish.

Suppose you come home to find a potted plant on your doorstep on your birthday from a secret admirer. The florist who delivered it misplaced the card somewhere specifying what type of plant it is and how to take care of it. Assuming you want the plant to produce ripe, juicy fruit, you will need to do some research to find out what type of plant it is to determine how much water it needs, whether it requires lots of light or not, what type of soil is most suitable, if the plant can remain in the pot indefinitely, etc. After looking at the plant carefully, determining what type of leaf structure it has, you look around online and discover that you have a cherry tomato plant. Now that you know what type of plant it is, you have an important piece of information to guide you in creating an environment in which this plant has the best chances of flourishing. You dig a small hole in a sunny spot in the yard, water the plant once every 2 days being careful not to overdo it. You also find the recommendation to use a liquid fertilizer once every 2 weeks. Lastly, you learn that optimal flavor comes when the surface of the tomato is glossy and the color is even.

Just as plants have a set of properties that identify and individuate them, so do humans. And just as we can study and observe a plant to determine what its nature or

function is, we can observe human behavior to discover fundamental aspects of human nature. As the plant's nature provides the parameters within which the plant will flourish, the same is true of human beings. Once we know enough about the nature of the plant or the human being, we are in the best position to see what sorts of activities and environmental conditions are needed for it to flourish. If we are careful in attending to these conditions with an eye to the nature of the organism, we create the optimal conditions for flourishing. Of course, flourishing is not guaranteed because there are factors beyond our control that may ruin the whole endeavor. Perhaps there is an invasive insect that attacks our plant at night when we are not keeping watch. Even if everything else is done right, this sort of occurrence can destroy any opportunity the plant has to flourish. As human beings are remarkably more complex than tomato plants, the chances of things going wrong are far greater.

We might sum up Aristotle's remark "both the reasoning must be true and the desire right, if the choice is to be good. . ." this way. Two necessary conditions for a good choice are that the reasoning that leads to the choice is good and the desire is correct. These two conditions are not sufficient for a good choice because there are other factors that might influence whether a choice is good, such as moral luck. Good reasoning is inferentially correct, thoroughly considered, and attends relevant facts about a given situation. Correct desires fit with basic human needs, which are features of human nature that must be cultivated for a human being to flourish. When we understand "true reasoning" and "right desire" in this way, we can see that when both of these conditions are met the most critical aspects of a good choice are satisfied. Furthermore, this notion of a good choice is an objective in the sense that it is grounded in facts about the world, including facts about what constitutes human flourishing. This assumes that there are objective facts about the world and that human beings are capable of coming to know at least some of these facts. More specifically, human nature is an objective feature or set of features about the world, and we are capable of coming to know something considerable about it. When our choices conform with this knowledge of our nature—the set of fundamental human needs—we are making correct choices. This is not to say that these are the only correct choices we can make because there are plenty of choices in our lives that are fairly remote from our basic needs, such as the choice to have vanilla or chocolate ice cream for dessert. But genuinely moral choices, choices connected to human flourishing, can be judged to be correct or incorrect based on these standards. And since these standards do not depend on our subjective preferences or what some group decides, they have a genuine claim to objectivity.

Our rational nature is also the standard for determining what right desires or human needs are. Even though it might be difficult or impossible to specify a complete set of basic human needs common to all human beings everywhere, we can surely identify some, such as the need for knowledge and companionship. Of course, we might come across an extremely reclusive individual who does not want to be around anyone else, but can't we use the distinction between powers and their operations to explain such a case? Human beings are social by nature, and we cannot flourish in isolation. Someone who is extremely reclusive has probably been badly wounded by other human beings at some point in life. We would expect that if the

emotional damage done to the recluse could be healed, such a person would likely be more comfortable in the presence of other human beings. Something similar can be said about knowledge. Far too many individuals are unfortunately raised in environments where a love for learning is not developed and prized. But even those who seem to have no interest in reading or developing their minds want to know the truth if they think it is being hidden from them, even when the truth is difficult to take. Think about going to a doctor due to some nagging pain. Even if the doctor finds cancer, we still want to know. This knowledge is hard to face, but we cannot resist wanting it. Or consider a situation where a woman expects her boyfriend or husband has been unfaithful to her. Doesn't she want to know whether this is really true, even the truth is extremely difficult to hear? This desire to know the truth is wired into us; it is part of our very nature. We all have a need for knowledge because of our rational nature. This and other needs are very important in providing an objective standard for determining whether are not choices are correct.

These ideas about right desires and human needs furnish essential elements in the model Aristotle offers about how we become morally educated. Doing the morally right thing means shaping our character so that we reliably choose well for the right reasons. Good choices require "true reasoning" and "right desire." But as essential as these components are in Aristotle's understanding what it takes to be morally good, we need to consider some concepts connected to his doctrine of the mean to see how this model can be rounded out and implemented for people who are striving to be morally good.

14.3   Virtue and the Mean

> Virtue, then, is a state of character concerned with choice, lying in a mean, i.e. the mean relative to us, this being determined by a rational principle, and by that principle by which the man of practical wisdom would determine it (Aristotle 1985).

These remarks get to the very heart of Aristotle's virtue theory and they offer insight into why this theory has been found to be so attractive to so many. There is a surface level simplicity to what is said here about the mean. Beneath the surface are some deep insights that help fill out Aristotle's model of moral education.

Many are attracted to virtue theories of ethics, and Aristotle's theory in particular, because it seems to offer a high degree of flexibility in furnishing advice about how to live a good life. You won't find Aristotle presenting lists of moral rules to be followed always or formulas applying universally to every set of circumstances to yield a correct prescription about what to do. What we find instead is advice to choose the mean, or the intermediate between extremes. Avoid excess and deficiency. If we are at a wedding where food is abundant and delicious, it would be a mistake to overindulge by eating as much of everything we see. It would be equally inadvisable to pass entirely on any opportunity to indulge in some unusual gourmet treats. Steering clear of the extremes on both sides and following the middle course is the path to virtue. What could be more commonsensical than this advice?

The basic idea of choosing a mean is quite straight forward in the sense that we should avoid the extremes in all that we do, but some basic questions arise immediately. How do we know what the extremes are? How do we know what the mean is? Aristotle tells us to follow a "rational principle" and to follow the lead of the practically wise person. What is this rational principle? Who is this practically wise person? There might even be a dilemma here. Either I am practically wise or I am not. If I am, then the advice about following the lead of the practically wise person is useless. If I am not, then how will I know this person when I see them? Are there any such people around? Does the practically wise person have to be perfectly virtuous?

An additional concern is that it looks like Aristotle's doctrine of mean might lead to a type of ethical relativism, which would be an unwelcome result for a philosopher like Aristotle who seems to think there are objective facts in ethics (Winter 2011). If the mean is the basis of deciding how to act and it is relative to different individuals and each person differs from others, then we seem to be left with some type of relativism. If the mean varies from individual and may even change within one individual, and if being virtuous consists of choosing the mean, it looks like what is good/bad or right/wrong will be always changing. In the midst of this fluctuation, where is the stability required to get the sort of objectivity in ethics Aristotle seems to want?

Another worry is that the mean is so vague or indefinite as to make the doctrine either empty or practically useless. Here is a more precise way of stating this objection about the vagueness or indefiniteness of the mean (Anagnostopoulos 1994). The mean is always indefinite because it is impossible to provide a determinate description of the mean applicable in every case in which there is a mean because every situation differs from others in highly specific ways. When I am thinking about how much turkey I should eat at a holiday meal, I need to consider what I ate that morning, the limitations imposed by my low cholesterol diet, how hungry I happen to be at the moment, and so no. When someone else at the table is making the same type of choice, all of these factors may be very different. The person next to me at the table may have no trouble at all with cholesterol, but might have a gluten intolerance instead. The deliberation for her about how much turkey to eat might center around the brine the turkey was soaked in before cooking—did it contain wheat or not? If it did, perhaps she should eat none at all. If it did not, she might have a generous helping. In other words, the general formula "choose the mean" is well and good, but it does not get any teeth until it is specified. But once specified it no longer has the sort of generality needed to provide universal guidance. Since *eudaimonia,* or flourishing, is defined in terms of virtue, which is defined in terms of the mean, both virtue and flourishing will be as indefinite as is the mean. Since an essential component in the definition of virtue is indefinite in this way, we should wonder how virtue could be defined with any type of precision.

We should be cautious though. There may be a plausible way of understanding the indefiniteness involved here that does not render the doctrine of the mean hopelessly vague. If there is such a construal, then an appeal to it may provide for an answer to the charge that indefiniteness filters down to many other important elements in the ethical theory.

The mean is indeterminate to the extent that it is relative to individuals in two important respects. (1) The mean is relative insofar as what specifically constitutes a mean for any particular individual with respect to some action will vary for each individual. The quantity of meat that Milo the wrestler should eat is different from the amount a figure skater, for example, should. (2) A mean is also relative in the way that it can change for any particular individual with respect to some particular action. The amount of meat Milo should eat in his prime while training is not the same amount he should eat after his retirement. When these two types of relativity are thought of together, it looks as though the indeterminacy involved with the mean is quite radical.

But it is too quick to say that the mean is entirely indeterminate. There are important respects in which the mean is determinate. Aristotle thinks that for every mature properly functioning moral agent there is a mean for any non-vicious activity within the agent's power. By contrast, vicious actions like theft, adultery, and murder have no mean at all (Aristotle 1985). Secondly, he thinks that the mean can, in fact, be determined for all individuals where there is a mean. This second point leads to a third: that there is a specific, determinate standard for deciding what the mean is for any individual with respect to any non-vicious activity at any given time, namely, right reason (Aristotle 1985). And last, for every virtuous action, the mean consists in performing the action itself. This point appears to be perfectly general as long as the action is done for the right motive—this is necessary for all virtuous actions. The mean is determinate in several important ways.

Let's think about how right reason embodied in the practically wise person, or *phronimos,* establishes a specific standard according to which it is possible to decide what constitutes a mean regarding any particular action for any agent. We may find a way of understanding the mean that renders it fairly determinate.

How is it possible to find an objective, determinate standard in the case of the mean? Let's reconsider the quote from Aristotle about the mean from the beginning of this section. "Virtue, then, is a state of character concerned with choice, lying in a mean, i.e. the mean relative to us, *this being determined by a rational principle, and by that principle by which the man of practical wisdom would determine it.*" (italics mine) The mean can be relative to different individuals and it can vary in the ways we have mentioned, but this relativity and variability take place in the context of a standard by which the mean can be fixed ". . .a rational principle. . .by which the man of practical wisdom would determine it." The idea is that the person with practical wisdom, the *phronimos*, provides a reference point for fixing the mean. The *phronimos* is an individual who possesses all of the moral virtues because practical wisdom and the moral virtues come together as a package—this is known as the unity of virtues thesis (Aristotle 1985). Aristotle's idea about using the *phronimos* as a standard seems to have its foundation in his function argument (Aristotle 1985). There Aristotle argues that since the characteristic activity or function of human beings is reason, human excellence or flourishing consists in performing activities typical for a rational being and performing them well. The *phronimos* embodies all of the perfections that human flourishing requires. Since human beings all possess the same core capacities or potentialities that typify the species, it is reasonable to

understand the *phronimos* as a standard of excellence and perfection for all human beings. There is a determinate way of specifying what the mean would be regarding any particular action.

Well, we might think this would be great if we had such a person around as a role model to give us advice every time we faced some significant moral decision, but such people are rare if they exist at all. We can all think of some individuals who embody some virtue or other, say courage or generosity, but it is much more difficult to think of someone who possesses *all* of the virtues. Such moral superheroes are rare indeed. Doesn't the absence of these role models undercut any hopes there might be for getting an objective standard for the mean?

Not necessarily. Even if we never come into contact with a *phronimos* in the course of our life, there is still a way to use the *phronimos* as a standard for determining what the right choice would be in some set of circumstances. A few different ideas can help us see how this might be so. The first component is Aristotle's idea of natural virtue (Aristotle 1985). All of us share a set of basic core dispositions to be virtuous at birth; these come with our rational nature. So having a rational nature carries with it a disposition or potential to be kind, generous, temperate, just, etc. Plants and lower animals do not have these dispositions, but humans do. Of course, not all of these dispositions will become full-fledged virtues. Developing a disposition toward a virtue into a full virtue requires time, a good upbringing, good role models, some degree of fortune, etc. Let's think about the virtue of courage for a moment. If Aristotle is correct about these matters, then we are born with a natural virtue or disposition to be brave. One thing needed for this disposition to develop is an environment in which brave acts are possible. We need not think of situations involving burning buildings with trapped children, or automobiles hanging off of the edges of cliffs like we might see in Hollywood movies. Ordinary situations present plenty of opportunities for courage. A child has to face the prospect about telling the truth to an angry parent, or a student must find the courage to apologize to friend whose feelings she has hurt. A manager has to lay off a worker she really likes. A friend has to find a way to tell another that he drinks too much. Ordinary life situations are ripe soil for opportunities for courage.

Good role models are important too. When an elementary school child sees another stand up for a vulnerable classmate who is being bullied, the seed has been planted for a future courageous act. The child who is performing this noble act helps to inspire others by providing a concrete example of what others might strive to do in similar circumstances. The act of standing up for another on the school playground may not be a fully virtuous act in the sense that it does not arise from a fully mature virtuous disposition, but it still gives other children something to aim for, which can be an important element on the road to virtue. Or, consider cases where someone might be really strong in one particular area, say in giving money to help others, but weak in another—may be with respect to temperance. This person is not a *phronimos* because there are aspects of the character they still need to improve—properly regulating how much they eat and drink. But even though this person has significant shortcomings of character, they can still be an important role model for others with their generosity. In fact, if a person comes into contact with

other people in life who each display all the different virtues, then this individual has the role models necessary to become virtuous herself. We can try to be generous like person A, courageous like B, temperate like C is, and so on. We can imagine what it would be like to have all of the virtues—we simply take the instances we see in many different individuals and imagine them all in one person, leaving the shortcomings behind. Having a completely virtuous person in our midst is not required to have an objective standard for determining the mean. We are all potentially that *phronimos* ourselves, and it is this potential that enables us to imagine what it might be like if we ourselves were to be completely virtuous.

One way of making this point more concrete is to consider this question: What would the *phronimos* do if that person were in my shoes? Imagine that you typically overeat at holiday meals, which should not be so difficult to picture for many of us. This year you decide you are not going to overdo it. You plan to be in the company of many family members, many of whom you like and respect. Some of these people look up to you, so it would be nice to make a positive impression on them by not overeating. You ate too much last year at this meal, and you have resolved to avoid that this year, but you don't want to go to the other extreme by eating too little, especially since you do not want to risk offending your hosts. How are you going to determine how much turkey to have at the meal?

One important source of information for you could be the experience of overeating from past holiday meals. Maybe last year you ate a turkey leg and a wing, which together with everything else was simply too much. The memories of overindulging stick with you and can be an important guide this time around. Of course, this information is not enough by itself to get you to the mean, but it helps focus attention on one of the extremes. Another good source of information is others you know at the table. Your Aunt Agnus, for example, might always seem to eat just the right amount. Even though she is a slightly built, older woman, you can take these factors into account when you compare the amount she eats with what you are trying to eat. So, if she eats only a small piece of turkey and she is half your size, you might help yourself to roughly double what she takes. There are social considerations to take into account too. If your mother works really hard on her green bean casserole dish because she knows you really like it, then it would be wise to factor in saving some extra room for a larger portion of that to help show your appreciation. One other important consideration is that this past year you found out that you have elevated cholesterol. The doctor encouraged you to try a low cholesterol diet for some time before resorting to drugs to bring the levels down. Since you know that dark meat is higher in cholesterol than light meat, you should probably avoid eating dark meat this year—the leg and wing are out.

What is happening in a situation of this sort is that a person is effectively asking what the virtuous person would do if such a person were in his or her situation. Of course, the virtuous person would be temperate, so knowing the right amount and choosing it would not be difficult for that person. But since we are considering a person who lacks the virtue of temperance, that person has to try to look at the situation from a different perspective. Even though our less than temperate person does not have the benefit of seeing the situation just as a temperate person would,

such a person still has resources at their disposal to get a pretty decent approximation of what they ought to do. Seeing matters from the virtuous person's perspective is not automatic—the closer a person is to acquiring a full virtue, the easier it will be. And after the meal is complete and the person thinks back on their choices, this person will have more experience and information to help guide their choice the next time similar circumstances present themselves whether the right choice was made on the earlier occasion or not. Eventually, by getting to a point where the right amount is chosen in one set of circumstances and by repeatedly choosing the right amount in others, the person will begin to see things as the virtuous person sees them, and decisions of this type will become easier and easier. Once choosing the mean rises to the level of a habit, very little deliberation is required to get it right. Deliberation will be utilized mostly in difficult or unusual circumstances. An important point to remember from this discussion is that if the *phronimos,* where this person is understood as a theoretical model of how to act, were to understand the dispositions of any agent and had a thorough understanding of the relevant circumstances, the *phronimos* would be able to determine what course of action is most desirable for the agent in question. In other words, if a fully virtuous person were present and this person knew all of the relevant factors about the situation, our dispositions and our past, this virtuous person could tell us what we should do in these circumstances right now. In this way, it is possible to fix the mean objectively, even though it might be very difficult to do from a practical standpoint.

Thus, we have a method and a standard for determining what right choices are applying this standard helps us become morally better individuals. Our standard is the practically wise person who is the theoretical embodiment of correct desires. Since we all share the same function, we all have the same natural virtues, which when developed are capable of becoming full-fledged virtues. How are they developed? By asking ourselves how the virtuous person would consider the factors in the choices we make. Using our own experience and what we observe in others, we can develop virtues over time by constantly recalibrating our choices toward the mean. Once good choices become habitual, the moral virtues begin to settle into the fabric of our character. We should say something about habit to help tie these ideas together.

14.4   Habits and the Moral Life

> . . .moral excellence comes about as a result of habit. . . it is also plain that none of the moral excellences arises in us by nature. . .Neither by nature, then, nor contrary to nature do excellences arise in us; rather we are adapted by nature to receive them, and are made perfect by habit (Aristotle 1985).

Aristotle begins this passage by telling us that moral excellence comes about as a result of habit. Moral excellences, or virtues, are not to be identified with habits because we could have habit without having a moral virtue—consider any bad habit, such as biting one's nails, or morally neutral habits like how we hold our hand when

reaching for a doorknob. But we cannot have a moral virtue without habit, because habits are automatic and regular, and automaticity and regularity are both features of moral virtues. Let us think again about the virtue of courage to shed some light on this. A courageous person is the type of person who is confident, and who stands up to fear in the face of danger for the sake of some important good. Now suppose a person is walking down the street and comes upon a dangerous situation where a building is on fire and a frightened child is screaming for help from a second-story window. Situations of this sort call for immediate action, and the brave person will respond quickly and spontaneously. There is simply no time to stand by and assess the various dangers, to calculate the amount of time it might take to get to the window, to look around for others who might help, etc. A person who is not brave may well have to think through a lot of these variables, and in so doing runs the risk not saving the child. The person who is not yet brave may have even faced other dangerous situations before, and may have done the correct thing in those situations. But this scenario is different from those because every particular case is different. The stable disposition of the brave person issues in immediate action in the appropriate circumstances. A large part of the reason why the brave person can act spontaneously in the right situation is that acting bravely has become habitual for this individual. When the context clues are in place, the brave person's habitual behavior kicks in, resulting in swift, immediate action.

Now just because bravery is habitual for the courageous person does not mean that saving the child is a mindless act. Because every dangerous situation is unique, the brave person must be attentive to all the particular aspects of this situation which may bear on the goal of saving the child. But, because the impetus to act is automatic, and since the person does not have to muster up the will power to face immediate dangers, his actions will be smooth and fluid in a way similar to how a master of a craft acts with dexterity and fluidity. A master car mechanic reaches for the perfect tool designed to remove a sticky bolt at a difficult angle. The amateur mechanic, by contrast, fumbles around with less adequate tools before realizing a trip to the auto parts dealer is required to get the tool to do the job right.

It is hard to imagine a person successfully charging into a burning building to save a child without acute awareness of the most relevant details of this particular situation. Sure, some aspects of the act are spontaneous, automatic, and mindless. But many of the most distinctive features of the action are not: Which route will be most likely to get me to this frightened child? How is the building is laid out? How is the fire progressing? By which route will I get out? How will I carry this child? What will I do if I find others in need along the way? There are indefinitely many questions of this sort presented by every individual situation, and the courageous person must be attentive to them all. Having habitual aspects of the act frees up the mental energy required to focus on these other important details.

The virtue of courage is a stable disposition to act a certain way in appropriate circumstances, and part of what makes this disposition stable is its grounding in habit. It is not uncommon to hear psychologists today repeating a point William James learned from William Benjamin Carpenter—that our nervous system grows to the modes in which it has been exercised (James 1890). Neurons that fire together,

wire together. By acting courageously, we literally become a courageous person, because acting in this way shapes us at the neural level, which makes it much easier and more natural over time to do the morally appropriate thing. Habits become our second nature, constituting a significant part of who we are, which is why it is so important to attend to our habits carefully, especially when our nervous systems are highly shapeable at younger ages.

14.5   Conclusion

We have before us now a sketch of Aristotle's theory of how we shape our desires to become morally good. In a general way, we are to follow the lead of the practically wise person, but for this advice to be useful we have to reflect on a few central ideas in the theory: right reason, correct desire, natural versus full virtue, the doctrine of the mean, and habit. This chapter has offered a sketch of each of these concepts and a broad outline of how they fit together. Once we see how these pieces work together we can appreciate Aristotle's profound advice about how we can shape our desires to become morally good.

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Chapter 15
The Stoics on the Education of Desire

Daniel Vázquez

Abstract The ancient Stoics proposed one of the most sophisticated and influential ethical frameworks in the history of philosophy. Its impact on theory and practice lasted for centuries during the Hellenistic and Roman periods. Today, their arguments and theories still inform many contemporary ethical debates. Moreover, some of the framework's main tenets have been used as a theoretical foundation for cognitive–behavioural therapy (CBT), a widely used psychosocial intervention for improving mental health. Much of its lasting impact is the result of the special attention Stoic ethics pays to moral psychology, action theory and education. Stoics consider one of the main components of the development of virtue to be a careful and systematic training of our desires and aversions.

This chapter will offer a clear, succinct and up-to-date discussion of four main topics: (1) the Stoic theory of desire; (2) the complex taxonomies of desire offered by the ancient Stoics; (3) the arguments, educational strategies, and practices the Stoics recommend to discipline our soul and extirpate our irrational desires and finally (4) a brief discussion of the possibility of adapting the Stoic philosophy for the education of desires in the present day.

Keywords Ancient Greek and Roman philosophy · Virtue ethics · Zeno of Citium · Chrysippus · Mental health

15.1 Introduction

Think about the friend or family member you care the most. Perhaps is one of your parents, a sibling, your partner, your child or your best friend. One of those persons whose happiness and well-being you consider of paramount importance in your life. This person gets ill and you take them to the hospital. There, flagrant medical negligence results in a tragic outcome. First, you wish this tragedy had never

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happened. Then, you begin to feel angry. How could this happen? Whose fault it was? The medical personnel offers you some incoherent excuses which make things worse. You cannot hold your anger any longer and reply with the most bitter and hurtful criticisms you can think of; that seems to be the least they deserve.

Soon after, you try to file a lawsuit. But the hospital hires an army of lawyers and in the end, no one is held responsible for the tragedy. You cannot believe it. Grief and yearning for your absent loved one drown you in pain for years. In the end, you discover a desire to take revenge, so you begin to look for an opportunity to take things in your own hands. The plotting takes long, but your anger, instead of yielding, increases with time.

After a long wait, the day to avenge injustice has come. You have everything ready. But the imminence of your revenge begins to cause some second thoughts. Are you doing the right thing? Should you let things go? You also fear that your plan will fail, and you will make a fool of yourself. Despite your best efforts, too many variables remain outside your control. Worse, if everything goes south, you might end up in jail, disgraced and humiliated, an outcome that terrifies you. Whatever happens, even if you succeed in your plans, you feel wretched and discontent. Nothing you can do fulfils your desire of getting your loved one back. Will you ever be at peace with the world? Will happiness be forever beyond your reach?

Even in less dramatic situations, many of us live a daily life full of hesitation, fear of failure, shame, and anger. We constantly endure unfulfilled desires to meet with absent friends, get recognition from those we respect, receive better wages, and have time to enjoy the little pleasures we like. Despite all the differences between our times and those of the ancient Stoics—including all the technological advances and knowledge at our disposal—most of us still live the unfulfilled and miserable life of a fool. But the Stoics claim they can help us. They developed one of the most sophisticated, encompassing, and influential curricula to educate our desires and lead people into a better, more peaceful and fulfilling life. Today, many professionals and academics believe that a good part of the Stoics' methods, strategies, and insights have survived the test of time and can be adapted for our benefit. How justified are we to believe that the writings of these ancient philosophers can still be relevant in our times?

Stoicism began as a philosophical school founded in Athens around 300 BCE by Zeno of Citium. The members of the school congregated and taught under the shade of the Painted Porch—the Stoa Poikile from which they derived their name—a building located on the north side of Athens' Agora. The Stoics were careful and avid students of previous philosophers and engaged in debate with members of other philosophical schools. They developed original and powerful theories in all the areas of philosophy, including logic, physics, and ethics. Although they agreed on their most fundamental tenets, inside the school they also debated, disagreed, and defended competing arguments. After Zeno, Cleanthes of Assos led the school, and after him, Chrysippus of Soli. During these first generations, other notable members include Aristo of Chios, Perseus, and Sphaerus.

Stoics like Diogenes of Babylon, Panetius of Rhodes, and Posidonius exported Stoicism to Rome and the Roman Empire. Unfortunately, we only have fragments

and summaries form the older Stoics.[1] The only complete works by Stoic philosophers that survive to this day belong to three Roman writers: Seneca the Younger, Arrian who wrote down the teachings of Epictetus, and Emperor Marcus Aurelius.[2] However, we also have some fragments from Epictetus' teacher Musonius Rufus, and Hierocles.[3] After the decline of their ancient schools (i.e., groups of like-minded philosophers who met regularly), many philosophers of subsequent eras kept engaging with Stoicism. As a movement, it has seen various revivals, including contemporary articulations and adaptations to which I will return later. You might wonder if their reputation is well deserved. Suffices to say that the Stoic promise regarding the education of desire sounds too good to be ignored.

The Stoics claim that if you learn their philosophy you will never fail to get what you desire. All your fears and pains will disappear, and you will have the unimpeded power to avoid all evil. Furthermore, they believe anyone can benefit from their philosophy, regardless of gender, social status, physical condition, or previous education. There is no magic involved. All you need, they will explain, is to understand the real nature of human beings and things around us, and a firm grasp of our true place in the cosmos.

The Stoic education of desire fits into a larger more ambitious goal: the achievement of tranquillity, enduring joy and, above all, virtue. In particular, mastering our desires contributes to our self-sufficiency, and is the path to authentic freedom. As you might suspect, there is a catch. The Stoics turn the problem of dissatisfaction and fulfilment of desire on its head. Instead of helping us acquire the petty, frivolous or unreachable objects of our current desires, they teach to align our desires exclusively to that which is at our reach and under our control. But, can we really align our desires in this way? Why should we prefer that instead of working to acquire the objects of our current desires?

15.2   The Stoic Notion and Taxonomy of Desire

The obvious objection to the Stoics is that our desires do not seem to be under our control. I might resist my craving for that colourful and fresh macaroon in front of me, but I have no power to extinguish my desire—at least not immediately. Thus, even if good reasons or stronger desires move me away from French confections, I

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[1]H. von Arnim (1903–1924) compiled most fragments in their original language. See also Hülser (1987). For Panetius, see M. van Straaten (1952), and for Posidonius, Edelstein and Kidd (1972). I use the translations by Long and Sedley (1987) and Inwood and Gerson (2008) with little modifications. To refer to the Stoic fragments or reports, I give the reference to the original source using the abbreviations and corresponding numbers in the Long and Sedley edition [LS].

[2]For the Latin edition of Seneca, see Reynolds (1965a, 1965b, 1977) and Zwierlein (1986); for Epictetus see Schenkl (1916), and for Marcus Aurelius, Dalfen (1979). Here I use the translations in Fantham (2010), Davie and Reinhardt (2007), Long (2018), and Gill (2013).

[3]For Musonius Rufus, see Hense (1905) and Lutz (1947), and for Hierocles, von Arnim (1906).

still feel somewhat dissatisfied and frustrated beyond my control. The Stoics, however, conceive desires and our relationship with them in a richer, and far more sophisticated way than this picture allows.

First, the Stoics distinguish between practical impression (*phantasia hormētikē*) and rational impulse (*logikēhormē*).[4] Chrysippus defines impressions as alterations or affections of the soul which reveal themselves and their causes (DL 7.49–51- = LS39A; Aëtius 4.12.1–5 = LS39B). We can understand them as epistemic states endowed with unique content we can express with a proposition (*axiōma*). In the case of practical impressions, their content consists of an evaluation of whether we ought to perform a specific action; if it is appropriate, good, or beneficial to act (Stobaeus 2.86,17-88,2 = LS53Q; Plutarch, *SR* 1057A = LS53S). A practical impression, then, takes the following basic form: *It is beneficial or good or appropriate that I do F* (cf. Salles and Boeri 2014; Brennan 2005).

I am walking down the street when I see a homeless person asking for money. I am immediately stroke by the impression that I should donate any cash I happen to have with me. Having or not this impression falls outside my control. However, — the Stoics insist—I have the power to assent (*sunkatathesis*) or not to the content of my impressions. Concerning certain actions, unless I accept that my impression is true, I will not be motivated to act. For the Stoics, the act of assenting to a practical impression is identified with the rational impulse that causes the action (Stobaeus 2.88, 2–6 = LS33I).[5] In this way, they define a rational impulse as the movement of the intellect towards something which is involved in the action (Stobaeus 2.86, 17–87, 6 = LS53Q).[6]

The Stoics distinguished many types of rational impulses (for the full picture, see Diagram 15.1). They call one of them *orexis*, which is commonly translated with the word 'desire'.[7] Our surviving texts do not include a full definition of this term, but we know it is a type of rational impulse concerned with the apparent good. The Stoics differentiate between correct and incorrect forms of desire, and they call them wish (*boulēsis*) and appetite (*epithumia*), respectively (I shall come back to them later). They also talk about 'selection' (*eklogē*), a type of rational impulse directed

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[4]According to Stobaeus (2.86,17–88, 2 = LS53Q), the Stoics identify rational impulses with practical impulses. See Salles and Boeri (2014) *ad locum*. However, see Gourinat (1996, 2007).

[5]In some sources, assent and impulse seem two closely connected but distinct events (Plutarch, *SR* 1057A = LS53S; Clement, *Strom.* 6.8.69.1 = *FDS* 298). For the discussion see Inwood (1985), Salles and Boeri (2014), and Brennan (2005).

[6]In the same text, the Stoics also distinguish 'repulsions' (*aphormē*), defined as movements of the intellect away from something which is involved in action. To simplify things, I will omit these avoidance behaviors for now, but I will come back to them later.

[7]Our modern use of the word 'desire' is wider than *orexis* and is closer in scope to what the Stoic call rational impulses. Epictetus, however, uses *hormē* and *orexis* in a different way. For him, *orexis* is not a specie or a subordinated genus of *hormē* but two coordinated and mutually exclusive genera, one directed to the apparent good, *orexis*, the other to the appropriate (*kathēkon*) (Epictetus, *Diss.* 1.4.1–2, 3.3.2, 3.3.5; Salles and Boeri 2014; Inwood 1985).
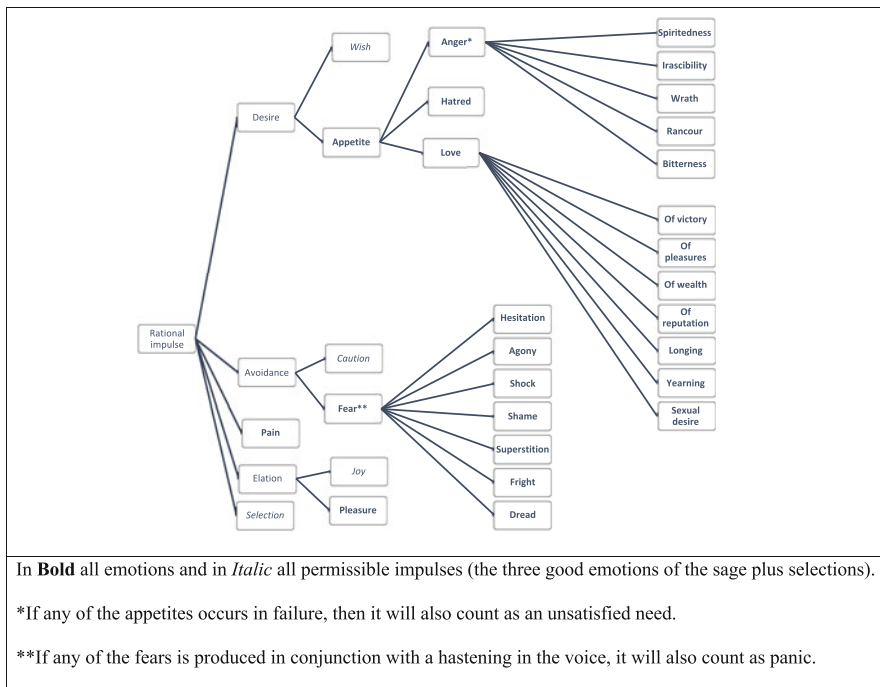
Diagram 15.1   Stoic analysis of desire

not at the apparent good but at the things that are morally indifferent (*adiaphora*), but still advantageous or preferable.

People can assent to practical impressions whose required action is not to be performed immediately but sometime in the future. For example, I might decide right now to climb mount Baintha Brakk—one of the most dangerous peaks in the world to climb. However, I cannot climb it right away. I would have to save money, train, buy the equipment, find out how to get there and, above all, convince my loved ones that risking my life for such a thing is not an absolute stupidity. In these cases, the Stoics talk about 'planning' (*orousis*), a rational impulse consisting in a movement of the intellect to something in the future. We do not have enough evidence regarding the exact relation between planning, desires, and selections. However, it does not seem they are meant to be mutually exclusive. Some desires and selections might count as planning as well. Other terms seem to have been used as types of planning. These include [setting a] purpose (*prothesis*), project (*epibolē*), and preparation (*paraskeuē*) (Inwood 1985).

Now, the Stoics think that it is impossible to assent to a practical impression and have an impulse towards something else (Epictetus, *Diss*. I, 18.1). If I kept my

change in my pocket instead of giving it to the homeless, I did not truly think giving it away was the appropriate thing to do. Notice the severity of the Stoic diagnosis of our behaviour. Even if I have the clearest impression that I should fight climate change, advocate for human rights and help people in need, if I do not lift a finger when I can, for them I do not really believe I should do any of those things.

The common reaction here is to resist the Stoic analysis. After all, people believe smoking causes cancer and yet, they keep lighting their cigarettes every morning. Of course, we should be fighting for a better world, but we juggle too many other things in our hands. We might fully understand the urgency and importance of a task, but exhausted from our jobs and daily duties, our feeble will fails us. We would love to help, but we lack strength. All these responses sound fine, but are we using them as excuses?

The Stoics offer a smart alternative. Instead of appealing to the weakness of the will or simultaneous conflicting motivations, they argue that our reason vacillates between two beliefs. I do one thing, then I rapidly regret it, sometimes even while I am still doing it. At times, they think, we do not even notice the vacillation (Plutarch, *VM*, 446F–447A = LS65G).[8] But that happens because when beliefs fall short of knowledge, they tend to be unstable. The assent we give to our impressions is weak and easily shakeable. This would not happen if we carefully examined our practical impressions before assenting to them. However, since we do not do it at all or do it deficiently, we often assent too blandly to true impressions or, worse, we assent to false ones.

Although severe, the Stoic analysis offers a clear way out of our miserable, unsatisfied lives (if not an easy one!). We need a rational and careful exam of our practical impressions before assenting to them. It also invites us to re-evaluate our beliefs. If I do something that I have some reason to believe is wrong, could it be that despite such reasons, I still consider it is beneficial or good or appropriate that I do it, right here, right now? Is my reasoning sound? Examining our beliefs could lead to discovering that there is no conflict in our beliefs. Perhaps I know smoking causes cancer in the long run, but one cigarette—I might say to myself—will not make a difference and will satisfy my immediate craving. Similarly, I might think people should care about the environment but also that my behaviour will not turn the scales. The Stoics believe only a sage's assent is infallible and immutable. The rest of us, simple fools, commonly rush our judgement. But doing that means disobeying the dictates of the best part of our nature—our reason—, which gives rise to excessive impulses. They call these impulses, emotions or passions (*pathos*): 'They say that an emotion is an impulse which is excessive and disobedient to the reason which constrains, or an <irrational>, unnatural motion of the soul (and all passions belong to the leading part of the soul)' (Stobaeus, 2.88 in LS65A; tr. Inwood and Gerson).

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[8]According to Galen (*PHP* 316, 28–320,28), Posidonius, unlike the other Stoics, defended a psychology of parts in conflict. Scholars disagree on whether or not we can trust Galen's reports (Salles and Boeri 2014).

The Stoics are famous for advocating the elimination of all our emotions. They classify all our appetites, fears, pleasures and pains (*lupē;* also tr. 'distress') as emotions. And they want them all gone. But given the way they conceive emotions, this should be no surprise—by definition they are unnatural, and the Stoics advocate life in accordance with nature. The problem with emotions, the Stoics explain, consists in their intensity. Once people find themselves in emotional states, even if they realise what they are doing is not right, they cannot stop, and are carried away (Stobaeus 2.88, 8–90, 6 = LS65A; Andronicus, *De Passionibus* 1 = LS65B). Chrysippus explains the excess in impulse with an analogy: when we walk, the movements of our legs are not excessive but commensurate with our impulse. We can stop or change direction whenever we want. But when we run, the movement of our legs exceeds their impulse, so they are carried away and unable to stop or change course obediently (Galen, *PHP*, 4.2.10–18 = LS65J). The same happens with emotions. If I lose my temper, I might start doing or saying things that I realise are inappropriate, yet I cannot stop myself. The intensity of emotions also makes them violent, very unstable and uncertain (Plutarch, *VM* 446F–447B = LS65G).

Here I will focus on two emotions: appetite and fear. As I explained, the Stoics classify appetite (*epithumia*) as incorrect desires. Stobaeus' report preserves a definition: 'appetite is a desire (*orexis*) which is disobedient to reason; its cause is believing that a good is approaching and that when it is here we shall do well by it; this opinion itself <that it really is worth striving for> has a <fresh> [power] to stimulate irregular motion' (Stobaeus 2.90,7–11; tr. Inwood and Gerson). They describe the counterpart of appetite, fear, as 'an avoidance disobedient to reason, and its cause is believing that a bad thing is approaching; this opinion that it really is worth avoiding has a "fresh" [power] to stimulate motion' (Stobaeus, 2.90,11–14; tr. Inwood and Gerson).

The Stoic distinguish many types of appetite: anger and its forms [spiritedness, irascibility, wrath, rancour, exasperation, etc.], hatred, unsatisfied need, love of victory, sexual love, longing, yearning, love of pleasures, love of wealth, love of reputation, and other similar things. Under fear, they include hesitation, agony, shock, shame, panic, superstition, fright, and dread. I think is worth looking at the surviving descriptions of these emotions. Below I present two comparative tables with the information given in two of our main sources (tr. Inwood and Gerson) (Table 15.1).

Not all of these descriptions offer equally useful information, and the classification does not go into any further detail. However, there seem to be four main types of appetite: anger, hatred, love, and unsatisfied needs. These main appetites have different objects and qualities. Anger is a reactive emotion. It aims to obtain revenge at someone who we believe has wrong us. Different intensity and duration give rise to distinct forms of anger. Hatred, in contrast, could be directed to anyone, with any excuse, it seems, and its intensity increases over time. Different objects, in turn, give rise to different types of love. Finally, unsatisfied needs have as their objects things someone has already failed to obtain yet keeps desiring. Since people can fail to obtain the object of their different appetites, it seems that any object of appetite could become an unsatisfied need. It is important to remember, however, that for the Stoics

Table 15.1 Types of appetites

Appetites	DL 7.113–114	Stobaeus 2.90,19-91,4 = LS65E
Anger (*orgē*)	A desire for revenge on one who seems to have done an injustice inappropriately	A desire to take revenge on someone who appears to have wronged [you] contrary to what is appropriate[a]
Spirited-ness (*thumos*)	Anger just beginning	Anger just beginning
Irascibility (*cholos*)	–	Swollen anger
Wrath (*mēnis*)	Long-standing and spiteful anger that just waits for its chance, as is apparent in these lines: 'For even if he swallows his resentment for today, still he will retain his spite in the future, until it is satisfied' (Homer *Iliad* 1.81–82)	Anger laid by or saved up for a long time
Rancour (*kotos*)	–	Anger which watches for an opportunity for vengeance
Exaspera-tion (*pikriai*)	–	Anger which breaks out immediately
Hatred (*misos*)	A progressive and increasing desire for things to go badly for someone	–
Unsatisfied need (*spanis*)	Is a desire that that occurs in a failure and that is to say having been separated from its object, is vainly straining for and drawn to it	–
Love of victory (*philoneikia*)	A desire concerned with a [philosophical] school	–
Love of pleasures (*filēdonia*)	–	A desire for pleasures
Love of wealth (*filoploutia*)	–	A desire for wealth
Love of reputation (*filodoxia*)	–	A desire for reputation
Sexual love (*erōs*)	A desire which does not afflict virtuous men, for it is an attempt to gain friends caused by a manifest beauty	Sexual desire is an attempt to gain friends caused by a manifest beauty
Longing (*pothos*)	–	A sexual love for someone who is absent
Yearning (*himeros*)	–	A desire for contact with a friend who is absent

[a]In Seneca (*ir*. 1.3.2–8), anger is just a desire to punish someone

Table 15.2 Types of fear

Fears	DL 7.112–113	Stobaeus 2.91,5–7 in LS65E
Hesitation (*oknos*)	A fear of future action	A fear of future action
Agony (*agōnia*)	–	A fear of failure or, otherwise, a fear of defeat
Shock (*ekplēxis*)	A fear arising from the appearance of an unfamiliar thing	A fear arising from a presentation of something unfamiliar
Shame (*aischunē*)	A fear of bad reputation	A fear of bad reputation
Panic (*thorubos*)	A fear in conjunction with a hastening of the voice	A fear which hastens with the voice
Superstition (*deisidaimonia*)	–	A fear of gods and daimons
Fright (*deos*)	–	A fear of something dreadful
Dread (*deima*)	A fear which produces fright	A fear caused by reason

all these appetites are impulses that initiate actions. If I am waiting to buy a ticket for a train and someone jumps the queue in front of me, I might think 'I will throw my coffee at this person's face to teach him a lesson'. However, if I only think about it but do not initiate any action, then, in the Stoic analysis, I only received a practical impression, but I did not assent to it (unless someone next to me or some other external factor stopped me).

Let us now take a look at the descriptions of fears (Table 15.2). The Stoics differentiate most fears according to their object. An exception is panic, whose main characteristic is the effect on the person's voice. This suggests that people could fall into states of panic regardless of the object of their fear. Thus, panic is not mutually exclusive with the other types. Finally, is difficult to understand how the Stoics understood dread.[9]

Although the Stoics advocate for the extirpation of all our appetites and fears they acknowledge that sometimes people react without giving their consent to any practical impressions. Examples include getting pale, blush, and jumping after being surprised. For the Stoics, these are not emotions but involuntary reactions, morally irrelevant (Seneca, *ir.* 2.3.1–2.4 = LS65X; Gellius 19.1.17–18 = LS65Y; Graver 2007). Moreover, they think that a perfectly virtuous person—a Stoic sage— would have some good emotions (*eupatheiai*). As I mentioned, they call wish the desire which obeys reason. Similarly, the sage will not experience fear but will be cautious. Finally, instead of pleasure, the Stoic sage experiences a reasonable elation they call joy.[10] The Stoic education of desire, as we will see in the next section, consists of learning to replace our foolish emotions with selections and the good emotions of the sage. Diagram 15.1 sums up the Stoic analysis of desire discussed in this section (except for planning and its types).

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[9]For suggestions see Salles and Boeri (2014).

[10]Stoic sages have no pain in the Stoic sense (contractions of the soul disobedient to reason). Good emotions have many subtypes. Wish includes goodwill, kindliness, acceptance, and contentment. Caution subdivides into respect and sanctity, while joy includes enjoyment (although there is also a type of pleasure called enjoyment), good spirits, and tranquility (DL 7.116 = LS65F).

15.3   Teaching and Learning to Align our Desires

The Stoics recognise that aligning our desires with reason requires much more than getting acquainted with the Stoic theory of desire. In this regard, they make heavy use of a medical analogy. Musonius Rufus, for example, argues that: 'Just as a medical argument is no use unless it brings human bodies to health, so too, if someone grasps or teaches an argument as a philosopher, that argument is no use, unless it conduces to the excellence of the human soul' (12.5–19 Hense; tr. Nussbaum).[11] But the Stoics also acknowledged that not everybody faces the same challenges in their education. Some of us are predisposed to certain types of emotions (DL 7.116; Stobaeus 2.93,1–6). Others will find certain circumstances or people, especially irritating. Extending the medical analogy, they talk about diseases, antipathies, and ailments of the soul:

> A disease is an opinion connected to a desire which has settled and hardened into a condition, in virtue of which people think that things not worth choosing are extremely worth choosing, for example, love of women, love of wine, love of money; there are also certain states opposite to <these> diseases which turn up as antipathies, such as hatred of women, hatred of wine, hatred of humanity. Those diseases which occur in conjunction with weakness are called ailments. (Stobaeus 2.93,6-13; tr. Inwood and Gerson)[12]

Given their ongoing analogy with physical illness and medicine, the Stoics frame much of their education of desire as therapy. The Stoic teacher, like a doctor, has to know the patient as much as possible, observe their specific symptoms, circumstances, and previous history before deciding on the best treatment and the moment to administer it (Nussbaum 1994). However, the aim is always the same: to teach the students to critically evaluate their impressions before assenting to them. Moreover, the aspiring Stoic needs to eliminate error, rashness, ignorance, opinion, frivolity, and conjecture from their life, since they are 'hostile to a solid and stable assent' (Cicero, *Academica*, 1 [Varro] 42; tr. Inwood and Gerson; see *Academica* 2 [Lucullus] 66).

As I mentioned, this often takes the form of learning to substitute our emotions with selections.[13] In other words, we need to learn to correct a false belief about the apparent good of an action (an emotion) with the true belief about the action's true value (selection or good emotion). Consider the following case: As every morning, I am close to one of my favourite coffee shops and I receive the following impression: *It would be good to get a Flat White*. Every day, without thinking too much about it, I assent to this impression, so I buy myself a coffee. Under the Stoic analysis, my appetite is a love of pleasures and it should be eradicated. But like me, you may wonder what is wrong with indulging in a small little pleasure like this.

The problem is not the action itself but my belief that my action has any value. If I believe drinking coffee constitutes part of the good life, what am I going to do the

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[11]For the Stoic use of the medical analogy, see Nussbaum (1994).

[12]Epictetus (*Diss*. 1.28.30–33) calls madmen (*mainomenoi*) all people who follows their impressions recklessly.

[13]'Impulses' in Epictetus.

day I can no longer drink coffee? Imagine my doctor tells me I have to cut it out of my diet. At present, I will feel sorrow for myself and envy others. My happiness and tranquillity will be disturbed. Epictetus explains why: 'Keep in mind that desire presumes your getting what you want and that aversion presumes your avoiding what you don't want, and that not getting what we want makes us unfortunate, while encountering what we don't want makes us miserable' (*Ench.* 2; tr. A. A. Long). If I let my desires depend on things outside my control, the quality and worth of my life hang on a wire. I cannot take full control of my life and I become a slave of the object of my desires (*Ench.* 14). For the Stoics this is unacceptable. Since they believe that true happiness and tranquillity are self-sufficient, they think it can be achieved regardless of things outside of our control. For them, a good life is available to everyone, but we can only achieve it by living a virtuous life. Thus, they argue that only virtue has absolute value (Stobaeus 2.84,18-85,11 = LS58E). Any action not connected with virtue cannot be called good. Does that mean I cannot get my coffee fix?

According to the Stoics, many of our actions and their objects are completely indifferent to the development of virtue. Yet, some are according to nature, and thus, appropriate and preferable. So, if drinking coffee has some health benefits, or I find myself in the appropriate circumstance, I can do it. Although my action would be the same, I would be assenting to a different impression: *It would be appropriate to get a Flat White*. The difference is not as small as it seems. Assenting to this new impression implies a huge change in my reasoning and motivation. I will not be drinking coffee for the pleasure but the health benefit or context.

The Stoics offer additional advice on how to manage the damaging expectations of success that come with our appetites and fears. This is known as the Stoic theory of reservation (*hupexairesis* or *exceptio*). Having our impulses with reservation consists of remaining aware of the possibility of failing to secure the object of our desire. We should be especially aware of the multitude of factors beyond our control that can prevent us from getting what we want to do. In my previous example, I could assent to the following: *It would be appropriate to get a Flat White unless I find some impediment to do it* (see Marcus Aurelius, *Ad se ipsum* 5.20, 6.50).[14] Reservation is especially useful in the context of making and fulfilling promises. If we make our promises with reservation, change of circumstances outside of our control will free us from our pledges and the suffering caused by not fulfilling them.

The Stoics know that applying these techniques—replacing emotions with selections and assenting with reservation—is easier said than done. Even if we agree with them, overcoming rashness in specific situations might prove extremely difficult. The Roman Stoics took an especial interest on this problem. The strategies and techniques they offer to deal with rashness, although variated, have at its core some common elements. Many of them are reminders. Admonitions we should know, have constantly in our mind and remind ourselves not only when testing situations

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[14]Alternatively: *It would be appropriate to get a Flat White if nothing happens to prevent it* (see Seneca, *Ben.* 4.34).

arise but also after them. The content of these reminders has often a common structure: they ask us to carefully analyse our circumstance, the nature of the object of our desire, the bigger context, what part of the situation is under our control, the little time we have in this world, or the future scenarios where something external impedes our success. In sum, as Nussbaum (1994) puts it, 'the pupil must be watchful and critical of the way in which she sees the world' (p. 327). Some of the Stoics use colourful images to set up these reminders. Take for example Epictetus' and Marcus Aurelius' reminders of the bigger context and what is up to the gods:

> Keep in mind that you are an actor in a play that is just the way the producer wants it to be. It is short, if that is his wish, or long, if he wants it long. If he wants you to act the part of a beggar, see that you play it skilfully; and similarly, if the part is to be a cripple, or an official, or a private person. Your job is to put on a splendid performance of the role you have been given, but selecting the role is the job of someone else. (*Ench*. 17; tr. A. A. Long; cf. DL 7.37)

> As doctors always keep their instruments and knives at hand to deal with any urgent cases, you should keep your doctrines ready for understanding divine and human affairs and should carry out every action, even the smallest, remembering the bond between the two spheres; you will not succeed in any human action without reference to the divine or vice versa. (*Ad se ipsum* 3, 13; tr. Gill)

Often, the reminder comes with an argument that explains the relevance of the proposed analysis. In his *Consolation to Marcia*, Seneca explains why understanding and reminding the fragile nature of human life help us make the most out of every moment of our life:

> Many times must the heart be reminded, it must not forget that those we love will leave, indeed are already leaving: you should take whatever Fortune has given but realize its security is not guaranteed. Seize the pleasures your children bring, let them in turn take enjoyment in you, and drink the cup of happiness dry without delay: you have been given no promise about tonight—I have granted too long an adjournment—no promise about this very hour. (*De Consolatione ad Marciam* 10; tr. Davie; see also Epictetus, *Ench*. 3, 14, 16, 26)

The Stoic should enjoy what life has to offer at every turn but also keep in mind the impermanent nature of most of the people, circumstances, and things that surround us. But again, this is hard work. When we experience a period of stability in our external environment, we get used to it. For cases like these, the Stoic proposes many exercises that aim to keep our feet on the ground. Some of these exercises ask us to purposely abstain from certain preferred indifferents. Epictetus, for example proposes to take a mouthful of cold water when we are very thirsty, and then spit it out instead of drinking it (*Ench*. 47).[15] The idea is to be always prepared for the eventuality of having to endure thirst and other bodily discomforts. Epictetus construes this as learning to manage our attachments, and considers it the most important training:

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[15]In *Diss*. 3.2.1–5 (=LS56C), Epictetus divides his training program into three topics: desires (*orexis*) and aversions, impulses and repulsions, and infallibility and uncarelessness, or acts of assent quite generally.

> First of all, the highest and most authoritative training, the one standing right at the gates, so
> to speak, is this: when you have an attachment to something, remember that you are attached
> to a thing which is not among those immune to loss but rather to something in the same
> category as a pot or a piece of glassware, so that when it gets broken you won't be upset.
> (*Diss.* 3.24.84; tr. Inwood and Gerson)

Notice again the structure of Epictetus' advice: a reminder to analyse or have in mind the nature of the object of our attachment. All these exercises and reminders aim to make us, in a literal way, as mindful and resilient as possible.

Becoming a mindful Stoic sage, however, looks almost impossible. According to the texts, the Stoic sage is the only one who possesses knowledge, displays virtue, and enjoys tranquillity and happiness. Only the assent of a sage is a stable, unimpeded and perfectly free impulse. Moreover, for the Stoics, sages suppose nothing, cannot be deceived, become infallible and do everything well (*Herculaneum papyrus* 1020, col. 4, col. 1 = LS41D; SE, *M* 7.151–157 = LS41C; Stobaeus 2.111, 18–112, 8 = LS41G). As you might imagine, this description seems to create a dilemma for any teacher of Stoic doctrines. If teachers are not sages, how can they teach what they do not know? But if they claim to be sages, they face incredulity and invite challenges and scrutiny to their every move. Some Stoics were happy to take a challenge:

> Once, when a discussion arose about whether the wise man will form opinions, Sphaerus
> said that he did not. The king wanted to refute him and ordered wax pomegranates to be set
> out. Sphaerus was fooled and the king shouted that he had assented to a false presentation, to
> which Sphaerus nimbly replied by saying that what he had assented to was not that they were
> pomegranates but that it was reasonable that they were pomegranates and that there was a
> difference between a graspable presentation and a reasonable one. (DL 7.117 = Athenaeus
> 354E = LS40F; tr. Inwood and Gerson)[16]

Sphaerus' reply to the king explains how the Stoics might avoid many mistakes. Yet, not all the Stoics claimed to be sages. Panetius, for example did not consider himself a sage nor he claimed to know how the sage would act in every circumstance (Seneca, *Ep.* 116 [book XIX.7]). In his works, Seneca often recognizes his own mistakes, limitations, and warns us not to be too quick to be satisfied with ourselves. He reacts to flattery saying: 'You call me wise, but I see how many harmful things I desire, how I long for things that will hurt me. I do not even realize what satiety shows animals, what should be the limit of food and drink: I still don't know how much I can handle' (Seneca, *Ep.* 59, 13 [book VI.7]; tr. Fantham). For him, as for

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[16]Sextus Empiricus also reports how the Academics challenged the Stoics: 'They confront the Stoics with appearances. In the case of things which are similar in shape but different objectively it is impossible to distinguish the cognitive impression from that which is false and incognitive. For example, if I give the Stoic first one and then another of two exactly similar eggs to discriminate, will the wise man, by focusing on them, be able to say infallibly that the one egg he is being shown is this one rather than that one? The same argument applies in the case of twins. For the virtuous man will get a false impression, albeit one from what is and imprinted and stamped exactly in accordance with what is, if the impression he gets from Castor is one of Polydeuces' (*M* 7.402–10 = LS40H; tr. Long and Sedley).

most other Stoics, the sage is an ideal and its description serves to test our moral progress:

> Now I will explain how you can recognize that you are not wise. The wise man is full of joy, cheerful and calm, undisturbed. He lives on equal terms with the gods. Now examine yourself: if you are never sad, if no hope disturbs your mind with anticipation of the future, if by day and night the condition of your spirit is even and unvarying, alert and happy with itself, then you have reached the high point of human good. But if you constantly desire all kinds of pleasures, know that you are as far short of wisdom as of joy. (Seneca, *Ep.* 59, 14 [book VI.7]; tr. Fantham)

As Nussbaum (1994) points out, since the Stoic teachers recognize their distance from the sage, the relationship with their pupils becomes more symmetrical and anti-authoritarian.[17] Moreover, since learning to align our desires becomes a personal journey, the Stoic teacher becomes a guide, perhaps a more experienced mentor and friend.

At every step, repetition, constancy, and discipline become the key element for progress. The Stoic education of desire requires daily exercise and study. At the beginning of the day, before and after acting, and before we go to bed. If possible, the analysis of concrete situations and the application of general guides should be discussed in person with fellow Stoics. In the absence of this, detailed epistolary interchange, attending lectures, reading Stoic texts, and writing your reflections become a powerful tool.

15.4   Conclusion: Should we Drink the Stoic Medicine?

The Stoic analysis, diagnosis, and education of desire resonate with many people today. Stoicism has inspired, been used, and abused to shape the culture of specific communities.[18] In the last decades, a wider popular interest in Stoicism as a philosophy of life has gained momentum. Certain authors, for example, advocate for a New or Modern Stoicism that preserves all the core elements of the education of desire but puts the doctrines in an up-to-date scientific context (see, e.g. Becker 1997; Irvine 2009; Pigliucci 2017).

Perhaps there is no need to integrate Stoicism with evolution and modern cosmology. Stoic ethics might hold together independently from their claims about the nature of the cosmos (see Engberg-Pedersen 1990; Annas 2007; Irwin 2003). After all, right from the beginning, Aristo of Chios held that Stoic ethics could be practiced without physics and logic (DL 7.160–161 = LS31N). Furthermore,

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[17]For the Stoic sage, see Brouwer (2014) and Cooper (2005).

[18]Sherman (2005) has analysed the legacy of stoicism in military culture. Zuckerberg (2018) discusses the misuse and oversimplification of Stoicism in the far-right online community. For the use of the term 'stoicism' in health literature, see Moore et al. (2012). Stoics are also mentioned as the philosophical foundation and precursors of modern cognitive–behavioural therapy (CBT), a widely used psychosocial intervention for improving mental health (Robertson 2010).

perhaps we could profit from the Stoic therapeutic techniques even if we disagree with the content of some of their ethical doctrines (Nussbaum 1994; Sorabji 1997).

Maybe we should be careful and not get carried away. For most ancient Stoics, the parts of philosophy stand in a strong interdependent relation. It seems that without Stoic cosmology the sage cannot achieve knowledge or evaluate the goodness or appropriateness of concrete situations (Boeri 2009; Inwood 2009). Many of their techniques and exercises depend on a specific and normative concept of nature, divine order, and providence. If we do not accept these doctrines of Stoic philosophy, infallibility, tranquillity, virtue, and happiness slip from our hands. And if these goals remain beyond our reach, the allure of the Stoic life diminishes.

A possible response—suggested by Irvine (2009)—is to adapt the Stoic motto of living in accordance with Nature as living in accordance with (lowercase) reason. This threatens, however, trading the distinctive features of the Stoic advice for a generic truism. Surely we should think before acting, examine the beliefs and assumptions underpinning our emotions, and make conscious efforts to master our desires. Undoubtedly, some people, in certain circumstances, and with specific sociocultural backgrounds, will find Stoic exercises helpful. Perhaps you, like me, will find some of these practices highly ineffective or counterproductive. For example, no matter how much I prepare myself or visualise the possibility of losing my loved ones, the Stoic analysis yields little to no comfort for such eventuality. Similarly, recognising that certain decisive outcome stands outside my control, not always helps me to consider myself less of a moral failure (cf. Tessman 2015). If despite these warnings you still want to give Stoicism a chance, I suggest carrying out a negative test. Instead of assuming these ancient doctrines, practices, and exercises will lead us to happiness, tranquillity, and virtue, examine if practicing them makes you less miserable, troubled, and obnoxious.

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Chapter 16
The Desire in Origen and Gregory of Nyssa

Vito Limone

Abstract The chief purpose of this research is to investigate the notion of desire in the writings of two of the most important Christian philosophers in the late antiquity: Origen of Alexandria (185–254) and Gregory of Nyssa (335–395). In particular, we shall focus on their conceptions of eros in their readings of the *Song of Songs*, namely, in Origen's commentary and Gregory's homilies on the *Song*. In this regard, the present research will consist of three main parts. In the first part, we shall mention the well-known view of the theologian Anders Nygren (1890–1978) who thought that Origen and Gregory had ignored the original difference between eros and agape and overlapped each other. In the second part, we shall explore the occurrences of eros in Origen's commentary on the *Song*, in particular in the Greek fragments of this work, and point out that, due to the semantic ambivalence of eros, which can be either corporeal or incorporeal, he sometimes attaches the incorporeal meaning of eros to agape. The third part is devoted to Gregory's homilies on the *Song*, with focus on three key texts (3.a.-c.), and aims to prove that Gregory's use of eros is similar to that of his literary source, Origen. The main thesis of this study is to evidence that, *pace* Nygren, Origen, and Gregory use eros and agape as synonyms, though they are aware of the difference between their meanings.

Keywords Origen of Alexandria · Gregory of Nyssa · Eros · Agape · Song of Songs

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16.1 Premise: The Divorce of Eros and Agape

In 1930, the Swedish theologian Anders Nygren published the book *Eros and Agape* which has been very influential on the studies in the classical and late antique world and, at the same time, has attracted a lot of criticism over the past years.[1] As well known, in this book Nygren identifies two main words for "desire" in the Greek philosophical vocabulary, namely, "eros" and "agape," and postulates the difference of their meanings. For Nygren, "eros" (ἔρως) stands for the desire for appropriation and, particularly in the Platonic lexicon, for the progressive ascent of the man to the divine, as it is clear from the *Symposium* and the *Phaedrus*. On the contrary, "agape" (ἀγάπη), which is rare in the classical and Hellenistic literature, but occurs at a higher frequency with the rise of Christianity, denotes a spiritual and incorporeal desire, in particular, either the love of God toward the humankind or the divine Son, or the love of each man toward God or the other men (Nygren 1990, 135–173; 41–134).[2] Given these meanings of eros and agape, the core thesis of Nygren is that, since the early Christians attempted to harmonize the Greek terminology with the language of Revelation, they overlapped the meanings of eros and agape and frequently used one in place of the other (Nygren 1990, 177–570).

In this reading of Nygren, a key role is played by two Christian writers, Origen of Alexandria (185–254) and Gregory of Nyssa (335–395),[3] since they both contribute in a significant way to the identification of eros and agape.[4] Concerning Origen, Nygren views him as the first who identifies eros and agape, and ascribes to him the earliest synthesis of the Christian and the pagan conceptions of desire. In particular, he refers to a famous passage in Origen's *Commentary on the Song of Songs*, in the later Latin translation of Rufinus, in which the Alexandrine quotes from Ignatius' *Epistle to the Romans* (7, 2): "My eros is crucified," understands eros as Christ, and appeals the wording in *1Joh.* 4:16: "God is agape," so that he attributes both eros and agape to Christ and employs them as synonyms (Orig., *CCt.*, *prol.* 2, 36).[5] In sum, Nygren believes that Origen ignores the difference between the meanings of eros and agape, and that his interpretation of the passage from Ignatius' epistle is the most cogent evidence of this (Nygren 1990, 388–389).[6] In recent years, scholars have underestimated this view of Nygren and pointed out that, though the Alexandrine

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[1]In this study we shall follow the Italian translation of this book: Nygren (1990).

[2]An accurate exploration of the use of "agape" in the New Testament and early Christian theology is found in: Spicq (1955) and (1958).

[3]For the chronology of life and writings of Origen and Gregory we base respectively on Monaci Castagno (2010) and Mateo-Seco and Maspero (2007).

[4]See: Nygren (1990), 364–391; 431–450.

[5]This interpretation of the passage in Ignatius' epistle is further attested in: Didym., *Comm. in Eccl. 3:13*; Ps.-Dion. Areop., *D.N.* IV 12.

[6]Nygren is in line with: Harnack (1918); this hypothesis is found in: Dögler (1950), 273, and Rist (1995), 255.

uses eros and agape as equivalent in some circumstances, he is fully aware of their different meanings.[7]

With respect to Gregory, the attention that Nygren pays to him in his book is much greater than what he says about Origen. According to Nygren, Gregory does not attribute different meanings to eros and agape and, therefore, he attaches these terms to God. In order to document his own thesis, Nygren quotes many texts from Gregory's literary production, for instance, *The Life of Moses* and his homilies on the Beatitudes and on the *Song of Songs* (Nygren 1990, 434–443). In the past few years, this thesis of Nygren has been rejected by the scholars, who have argued that his approach to Gregory is affected by two biases: firstly, Nygren is persuaded that Gregory does not distinguish the meanings of eros and agape, in contrast with what is found in Gregory's corpus[8]; secondly, he considers the overlap of the meanings of eros and agape in Gregory as a consequence of the attempt to conflate Platonism and the contents of Revelation. In particular, Jean Daniélou thinks that Nygren's misunderstanding of Gregory's use of eros and agape originates from the fact that the Cappadocian regards eros as a specification of agape (Daniélou 1944, 199–208)[9]; following the intuition of Daniélou, also Franz Dünzl, Walter Völker, and Claudio Moreschini claim that Gregory combines the different meanings of eros and agape in a very original way, and that the theological categories of Nygren are not able to correspond to the complexity and fluidity of the mystical terminology of Gregory (Dünzl 1993a, 369–372; Völker 1993, 223–224; Moreschini 1993, 337–339; Moreschini 2016, 129–131).

To sum up, Nygren states that eros and agape were originally provided with two different meanings in the Greek philosophical lexicon, and that the early Christians identified them. In this regard, for Nygren, Origen, and Gregory of Nyssa's contribution to this process of identification was significant, since the former was the earliest Christian writer who treated eros and agape as synonyms, whereas the latter was the thinker who overlapped eros and agape in the most explicit way. As aforementioned, this idea of Nygren has been recently criticized, since the scholars have evidenced that Origen and Gregory superimpose the meanings of eros and agape and, concomitantly, are aware of the semantic difference between them.

On the basis of the above assumptions, this research intends to accomplish two main goals. On one side, it aims to reply to Nygren's thesis and to stress that Origen and Gregory treat eros and agape as synonyms and, at the same time, maintain the difference of their meanings. In order to do this, we shall focus on the use of eros in Origen's *Commentary on the Song of Songs* and Gregory's *Homilies on the Song of*

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[7]See: Crouzel (1963), 70, n. 2; Pietras (1988), 18; Crouzel (1992), 753–755; Cocchini (1998), 35–38; Simonetti and Prinzivalli (2010), 592–593; Caruso (2014), 398, n. 36; Limone (2015); Limone (2016a); Limone (2016b).

[8]As it is attested in Gregory's corpus, the different meanings of agape and eros are not unknown to him. In this regard, he is aware of the meaning of agape as love of God for the mankind, or as love of the human being for God, and of the meaning of eros as passion and physical desire.

[9]This scholar bases his interpretation on the following passage of Gregory: Greg. Nys., *Hom. in Cant.* XIII. The thesis of Daniélou is restated by: Maspero (2007).

Songs. On the other side, the objective of this study is to underscore that the similarity of Origen and Gregory with respect to the use of eros is not accidental, since Gregory's conception of eros is deeply influenced by Origen. Our research will consist of two main sections: in the first part, we shall investigate the use of eros in Origen's exegesis of the *Song of Songs*; in the second part, we shall devote our attention to the occurrences of eros in Gregory's homilies on the *Song of Songs*, with focus on his relation to Origen.

16.2   Eros in Origen's *Commentary on the Song of Songs*

Before turning to Origen, it is worth formulating two general premises.

First of all, as it has already been demonstrated by the scholars, Plato's dialogues, in particular the aforementioned *Symposium* and *Phaedrus*, attest to a semantic ambivalence of eros: on the one hand, it signifies an acquisitive desire which ceases to exist when it achieves possession; on the other hand, it denotes a creative desire, namely, a desire for perpetual possession of the good and to bring forth in beauty.[10]

Secondly, as said above, Origen's *Commentary on the Song*, originally in ten books, has been passed down to us in the partial Latin translation of Rufinus of Aquileia (345–411), dated to 410–411.[11] Nonetheless, an epitome, transmitted under the name of Procopius of Gaza (V century A.D.), contains several Greek fragments of Origen's *Commentary on the Song*, published by Maria Antonietta Barbàra in a recent edition which also includes some fragments from other sources.[12] Although there is still no agreement among the scholars about the importance of these fragments,[13] they give us the opportunity to have access to some original Greek passages of Origen's *Commentary on the Song* which have been excluded by Rufinus in his Latin translation of the Alexandrine, as, for example, the Fr. 1 (appendix), and they allow us to make a comparison between the original Greek text, which the fragments transmit, and the Latin text of Rufinus. This comparison between the Greek fragments of Origen's *Commentary on the Song* and the Latin translation of Rufinus has evidenced that Rufinus translates the terms ἔρως and ἀγάπη, which occur in the Greek fragments, respectively with the Latin words *amor*, or *cupido*, and *caritas*, or *dilectio*, and that he sometimes uses the word *amor* to translate both ἔρως and ἀγάπη.[14] This detail is not secondary for the purpose of our research: given that Rufinus is proved to use the Latin word *amor* for both eros and agape, and that we intend to explore Origen's use of eros in his exegesis of the

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[10]See: Markus (1955); Armstrong (1961); Rist (1995), 53–59.

[11]On this see: Hammond (1977), 393–394, 429; Fedalto (1990), 149.

[12]Barbàra (2005).

[13]Some believe that they belong to the original text of Origen's *Commentary on the Song*, e.g., Guérard (2003), some are more suspicious, see: Auwers (2003) and Harl (1993), 157, n. 8.

[14]On this see: Limone (2015); Limone (2016a); Limone (2016b).

Song, the *Commentary on the Song*, in the Latin version of Rufinus, is not a trustable source; therefore, we shall devote our attention only to the Greek fragments.

The term eros occurs six times in the Greek fragments of Origen's *Commentary on the Song*. The first occurrence is found in the Fr. 2 (appendix), transmitted by the so-called Barberinian catena (dated to the XIII century), of which we also dispose of the corresponding Latin translation of Rufinus (Orig., *Fr. in Ct.* 2 [app.]).[15] At the very beginning of this fragment, Origen exposes the caveat that some Greeks have regarded eros as the tension of the soul to the "vault of heaven" (οὐρανία ἀψίς), formula which is derived from Plato's *Phaedrus* (247B.1),[16] and that the Holy Scripture does not ignore the ambivalence of eros, so that it uses eros both for the passional and carnal desire, for example, that of Amnon for his sister Tamar (*2Sam.* 13,1–2), and agape for the spiritual and theocentric desire, for example, that of Isaac for Rebekah (*Gen.* 24:67), or that of Jacob for Rachel (*Gen.* 29:17–18). Nevertheless, Origen underlines that the Scripture is not always consistent with this difference: in fact, in *Prov.* 4:6 eros is applied to a spiritual entity, that is, the divine Wisdom.[17] In synthesis, on the basis of what is contained in the Fr. 2 (appendix) of Origen's *Commentary on the Song* we can deduce two main results: firstly, the Alexandrine restates the above said ambivalence of eros, that is, eros denotes either the acquisitive desire, or the creative desire, namely, the desire for the incorporeal; moreover, although the Holy Scripture attempts to prevent the reader from falling victim to the ambivalence of eros and to apply two different words, eros, and agape, to convey two different meanings of eros, namely, acquisitive desire, and desire for the incorporeal, it ends up with treating them as synonyms.

The second occurrence of eros is in the Fr. 10, where Origen comments on *Ct.* 1:8: "If you do not know yourself, most beautiful of women, follow the tracks of the sheep and graze your young goats by the tents of the shepherds," and attaches the term ἐραστής, "lover," to the bridegroom, that is, Christ, who threatens the bride, that is, the Church, to abandon her, if she follows the shepherds, namely, the demons (Orig., *Fr. in Ct.* 10). The third and fourth occurrences of eros are found in the Fr. 23 and 25, which are respectively about *Ct.* 2:8 and 2:9: in these texts, we find out the adverb ἐρωτικῶς, which conveys, in the former case, the tension of Christ to the soul and, in the latter case, the tension of the soul to Christ (Orig., *Fr. in Ct.* 23; 25). Particular attention is to be devoted to the fifth and sixth occurrences of eros in the Fr. 32 and 44 of Origen's commentary. In these fragments the Alexandrine argues that Christ progressively moves away from the soul, and this progressive separation of Christ from the soul increases the desire of the soul for Christ, so that Christ shows up at the height of the soul's desire. In this context, Origen employs the formula

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[15]On this see: Barbàra (2008).

[16]This formula is found in some passages in Origen's *Against Celsus*, see: Orig., *C.Cels.* I 20; V 2; VII 44. About the circulation of this formula in the early Christian literature, with focus on Origen, see: Méhat (1975) and Markschies (2001), 98, n. 8.

[17]The parallel Latin translation of Rufinus quotes *Sap.* 8:2 as well; see: Orig., *CCt.*, *prol.* 2, 22. Concerning the difference between the *Fr. in Ct.* 2 (app.) and the corresponding Latin version of Rufinus see: Limone (2015), 424–425.

ἐπιτείναι τὸν ἔρωτα to express that the love of the soul for Christ is intensified and increased by the absence of Christ himself (Orig., *Fr. in Ct.* 32; 44).

On the basis of the data so far collected we can deduce the following results.

First of all, in accordance with Plato's conception of eros, Origen is aware of the semantic ambivalence of this term, which can signify either the passional and carnal desire, or the spiritual and incorporeal desire.

Secondly, as the Holy Scripture so Origen attempts to differentiate the opposite meanings of eros, and names the carnal and passional desire "eros," whereas the spiritual and incorporeal desire "agape." Nevertheless, neither the Holy Scripture nor Origen is faithful to this differentiation: though the former refers eros to the acquisitive desire, as in *2Sam.* 13:1–2 and *Gen.* 24:67, it also attributes eros to a spiritual and incorporeal being, namely, the divine Wisdom, as it results from *Prov.* 4:6; likewise, the latter generally uses eros in relation to the physical desire, as it is clear from his exegesis of the biblical episodes of the passion of Samson (*Iud.* 13:1–7), or of the old men for Susanna (*Dan.* 13:10),[18] but in the fragments of his reading of the *Song* he applies this term exclusively to the desire of Christ for the soul, and vice versa, of the soul for Christ.

In conclusion, it is worth mentioning once again that Origen utilizes the expression ἐπιτείναι τὸν ἔρωτα to mean that the desire of the soul for Christ is "intensified" by the progressive separation of Christ from the soul. This is a very interesting point, and we shall be back to this afterward.

16.3   Eros in Gregory of Nyssa's *Homilies on the Song of Songs*

While Origen's *Commentary on the Song* has been passed down to us mainly in the partial Latin translation of Rufinus, integrated with some Greek fragments, the fifteen homilies of Gregory on the *Song*, delivered over the last years of his life in Nyssa, Cappadocia, have survived in the original Greek.[19] As expressly declared by Gregory himself, Origen is the main source of his interpretation of the *Song*.[20] As Origen, so Gregory is aware of the semantic ambivalence of the word "eros": this is documented by many passages of his homilies on the *Song*, in which he attaches to the word "eros" some adjectives, for instance, "heavenly," "pure," "impassible," and

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[18]See: Orig., *Fr. in Prov. 30:16*; *Fr. in Prov. 30:17*; *CIo.* XXVIII 5, 34.

[19]The main clue for this hypothesis is the number of similarities between the homilies and *The Life of Moses*, which is dated to the old age of Gregory; on this see: Dünzl (1990); (1993a), 32; Moreschini (2016), 90, n. 4. In relation to the place in which these homilies were delivered, though Jean Daniélou placed them at Constantinople, see: Daniélou (1966), most of the scholars agree about Nyssa in Cappadocia, see: Heine (1984); Dünzl (1993a), 26; (1994), 25; Maraval (2007); Moreschini (2016), 90–92.

[20]Gregory explicitly quotes Origen in: Greg. Nys., *Hom. in Ct.* I. With respect to the debts of Gregory's interpretation of the *Song* to Origen's commentary see: Dünzl (1993b).

"divine," with the purpose to highlight the incorporeal nature of eros. Though he intends eros mainly as a corporeal and physical desire, he sometimes identifies eros with agape, and indifferently refers to a disposal of eros and agape (διάθεσις ἐρωτική, and ἀγαπητική) (Greg. Nys., *Hom. in Ct.* I; IX) and of an arrow of eros and agape (βέλος τοῦ ἔρωτος, and τῆς ἀγάπης) (Greg. Nys., *Hom. in Ct.* IV; XIII). Additionally, Gregory's definition of agape as an "intimate relationship to what is desired" (Greg. Nys., *An. et res.*) is identical to his definition of "phíltron," which is originally synonym of eros and is used by Gregory of Nazianzus (329–390) with reference to the love of God (Greg. Nys., *Hom. in Eccl.* VIII).

In light of what we have seen in Origen, we shall now focus on the use of eros in Gregory of Nyssa's *Homilies on the Song*. Although this homiletical corpus does not contain a significant number of occurrences of the word "eros," it supplies us with some elements that contribute to our understanding of Gregory's conception of eros. In this regard, we shall devote our attention to three key texts (3.a.; 3.b.; 3.c.).[21]

The first text is found in the very opening lines of Gregory's first homily on the *Song*, in particular in the course of his allegorical interpretation of the characters of the bridegroom and the bridge:

> 3.a. "What is described there is an account of a wedding, but what is intellectually discerned is the human soul's mingling with the Divine. That is why the one who is called "son" in *Proverbs* is here called "bride", and Wisdom, correspondingly, is transferred into the role of bridegroom. This is to assure that the human person, once separated from the bridegroom, might be betrothed to God as a holy virgin (see: *2Cor.* 11:2), and, once joined to the Lord, may become "one spirit" (*1Cor.* 6:17) through being mingled with that which is inviolate and impassible, having become purified thought rather than heavy flesh. Therefore since it is Wisdom who speaks, love (ἀγάπησον) her as much as you are able, with your whole heart and strength; desire (ἐπιθύμησον) her as much as you can. To these words I am bold to add, «Be in love» (ἐράσθητι), for this passion, when directed toward things incorporeal, is blameless and impassible, as Wisdom says in Proverbs when she bids us to be in love (ἔρωτα) with the divine Beauty." (Greg. Nys., *Hom. in Ct.* I)[22]

In line with Origen's interpretation, Gregory intends the bridegroom as the Wisdom and the bride as the individual soul.[23] Gregory argues that the allegorical meaning of the *Song* is the "union," that is, the ἀνάκρασις,[24] of the divine Wisdom and the individual soul, and that this union originates from the erotic desire of the individual soul for the Wisdom. Gregory further supports this interpretation with the reference to *Prov.* 4:6, in which—as we have already seen in Origen—the Holy Scripture exposes the exhortation that the Wisdom be the object of an erotic desire. In addition, Gregory states that, in the desire for the divine Wisdom, that is an

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[21]The English translation of these texts is of R.A Norris Jr., see: Norris (2012), 25 (3.a.), 203–205 (3.b.), 403–405 (3.c.).

[22]See also: Orig., *CCt.*, *prol.* 2, 22; *Fr. in Ct.* 2.

[23]Comparative studies about the readings of the *Song* of Origen and Gregory are: Meis (1995, 1999).

[24]The Cappadocian derives this term from the mysteric terminology, as it is further documented in Clement of Alexandria (150–215), see: Clem. Alex., *Strom.* VII 12, 79, 4, and Origen, see: Orig., *C. Cels.* III 41; *CIo.* XIII 11, 67.

incorporeal being, the passion of the soul is transformed into impassibility (Greg. Nys., *Hom. in Ct.* I). Gregory restates this view some lines later, in particular in the course of his interpretation of the Holy of Holies, that is considered as the inaccessible, divine beauty, thanks to which the soul transforms its own passion into impassibility (Greg. Nys., *Hom. in Ct.* I). In synthesis, the most significant result of the text 3.a. is that Gregory regards the eros for Wisdom as the passion for an impassible being, claims that the tension of the soul to the Wisdom is a progressive transformation of its passion into impassibility, and that the soul gets free from this desire only as soon as it is wholly converted into impassibility.

As it has already been emphasized by Richard Sorabji (Sorabji 2002, 195–196), this occurrence of eros is evidence of Gregory's attempt to harmonize two contradictory principles. In accordance with Plato, who divides in the *Phaedrus* (264A-257B) the faculties of the soul in rational, spirited, and appetitive, and with the Neoplatonists, in particular Plotinus (Plot., *Enn.* III 5, 1–9),[25] Gregory accepts the principle that the passional faculty is a natural constituent of the soul, and that this faculty is to be moderated—this is the well-known principle of "metropátheia." On the basis of this principle, eros is that passional faculty of the soul which belongs to the soul itself by nature, from which the soul cannot get free, and which the soul is committed to keep under control. In relation to the second principle, it is the impassibility, the so-called "apátheia": traditionally ascribed to the Stoics, but appreciated by Plotinus as well, this view regards the passions as psychophysical effects of wrong judgments, which are to be eradicated by the proper activity of our rational faculty (Plot., *Enn.* I 1, 1–6; I 8, 4; II 3, 9). While for the first principle the passional faculty is a natural faculty of the soul and, thus, eros is a passion which the soul can only moderate and keep under control, for the second principle the nature of the soul is rational and, therefore, the soul has the commitment to get free from every sort of passions, including eros.[26] As stated earlier, the occurrence of eros in the text 3.a. sheds light on Gregory's intention to conflate the above opposite principles: on the one hand, he conceives of eros as a passion of the soul and, in particular, as a passional desire for the impassibility; on the other hand, he argues that the passional desire of eros transforms itself into impassibility at the height of the desire itself.

The second text further proves that the above principle that the passional faculty belongs to the nature of soul is the basis of Gregory's conception of eros in his *Homilies on the Song*. In the course of his exegesis of *Ct.* 3:7–8, in particular of his allegorical explanation of the "bridal bed," which the Holy Scripture describes as surrounded by scary, armed warriors, Gregory says:

> 3.b. "For what ornamentation can be supplied for a bridal bed by sixty hoplites, whose study is the terror of battle, whose finery is a sword held before the body, whose terror is that which

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[25]This principle is also found in Aristotle, see, e.g., Aristot., *Eth. Nicom.* 1227B.6–12; *Eth. Eud.* 1221B.11–17, and in Posidonius' fragments, passed down to us by Galen, see: Posidonius *apud* Galen., *Placit. philos.* IV 7, 23–24. For an overview of Posidonius' theory of passions, which intends to combine Stoic and Platonic elements, see: Kidd (1971).

[26]About the combination of these principles in the Stoics: Knuuttila (2004), 47–80.

comes by night? (By the term "fear", after all, the text indicates the fearful consternation aroused by certain nocturnal terrors, and this is what it attributes to these hoplites). So we ought by all means to look for a sense in these expressions that is consonant with our earlier interpretations. What sense is that, then? It seems that the divine beauty evokes love (ἐράσμιον) because it is fearsome; it reveals itself as coming from elsewhere than any corporeal beauty. For here it is what is pleasant to the eye and gentle and set apart from any fierce or fearsome disposition that induces passionate desire in us, but that unsullied Beauty is a fearsome and terrible strength. For since the passionate and filthy lust for things bodily, which resides in the fleshly members like a band of robbers, lays snares for the intellect and frequently seizes it and carries it off captive to its own will, which has become hostile to God, as the apostle says: "The mind of the flesh is hostile toward God" (*Rm.* 8:7), on this account it is appropriate for a divine love (θεῖον ἔρωτα) and longing to originate out of what stands in opposition to corporeal desire, so that wherever feebleness and indulgence and lazy relaxation give rise to such desire, in that place a terrible and astonishing strength may become the stuff of divine love (θείου ἔρωτος). For it is when manly strength has given fright to that which mothers pleasure, and has put it to flight, that the soul's pure beauty is revealed, it being unsullied by any affliction of corporeal desire." (Greg. Nys., *Hom. in Ct.* VI)

In this text Gregory reactivates a difference which originates from Plato and is employed by Origen, as above said, namely, the distinction between two forms of eros: on one side, eros is the acquisitive desire for the corporeal beings; on the other side, it is the desire for the incorporeal beings, for instance for God. The Cappadocian notes that the desire for the incorporeal things implies the control over the passions, so that the scary appearance of the warriors around the bridal bed is allegory of the control over the corporeal passions. Once again, Gregory demonstrates to agree with the Platonic view that the passional faculty is a natural constituent of the soul and is bipartite.

The third and last text from Gregory's *Homilies on the Song* about eros is found in the homily XIII, in particular in the course of his interpretation of *Song* 5:8: "I am wounded with love." In this text Gregory exposes his definition of eros as "intensified agape" (ἀγάπη ἐπιτεταμένη), which has attracted the attention of scholars. The text runs as follows:

3.c. "Anyone, therefore, who focuses attention on the church is in fact looking at Christ – Christ building himself up and augmenting himself by the addition of people who are being saved. She, then, who has put the veil off from her eyes sees the unspeakable beauty of bridegroom with a pure eye and in this way is wounded by the incorporeal and fiery arrow of love, for agape when intensified is called love (ἐπιτεταμένη γὰρ ἀγάπη ὁ ἔρως λέγεται). This occasions people no shame if love's archery is not fleshly; on the contrary, they boast the more in their wound when they receive the dart of immaterial desire in the very depth of the heart. And this is exactly what the bride did when she said to the young women: "I am wounded by love" (*Ct.* 5:8)." (Greg. Nys., *Hom. in Ct.* XIII)

In relation to this text, two aspects are worth mentioning. First, the scholars have completely ignored that Gregory's definition of eros as "intensified agape" (ἀγάπη ἐπιτεταμένη) is a reformulation of an Origenian periphrasis that we have already mentioned, that is, ἐπιτείναι τὸν ἔρωτα. Secondly, in this passage Gregory uses the expression: "is called" (λέγεται), which implies that the Cappadocian bases his assumption on an external source (Greg. Nys., *Hom. in Ct.* XIII), probably Origen

himself or a popular perception of eros. As for Origen, so for Gregory the notion of agape and that of eros as passional desire for the impassibility overlap with each other.[27] In the last text Gregory combines the notion of eros with that of intensification, which is mentioned at the very beginning of his homiletical corpus as well (Greg. Nys., *Hom. in Ct.* I): the transcendence of the nature of God in relation to the human nature implies that the passional desire of the soul for the impassible divine nature is not allowed to be satisfied, but it increases in a progressive way, because the higher is the divine nature in relation to the human nature, the more "intensified" is the passional desire of the soul for the impassible Godhead.[28] From this we can deduce a significant difference between Origen and Gregory: for the former, the passional desire of the individual soul for Christ is satisfied at the height of the desire itself, in particular, it is exhausted by the appearance of Christ himself, whereas for the latter this desire is not to be satisfied, since the individual soul is not allowed to have access to the transcendent and impassible Godhead.

In sum, the definition of Gregory of eros in the text 3.c. informs us about how the Cappadocian attempts to conflate the aforementioned opposite principles: he assumes the passional faculty of the soul as a natural constituent of the soul itself and, thus, underscores that the soul is not given the opportunity to get free from this faculty; at the same time, he is persuaded that the passional desire for the impassibility transforms itself into impassibility. Nevertheless, the thesis of Gregory sounds paradoxical: on the one hand, he claims that the individual soul is provided with a passional desire for the impassible God and that this passional desire is transformed into impassibility; on the other hand, he maintains that the impassible God is beyond the individual soul, that is not allowed to bridge the infinite divide between the human and the divine natures.

16.4   Conclusions

In light of the research pursued so far, it is worth summarizing the main steps of our exploration of the desire in Origen and Gregory, in particular on the use of eros in their readings of the *Song of Songs*.

As said at the very beginning of this investigation, Nygren states that the original semantic difference between eros and agape in the Greek lexicon is overshadowed by the early Christians, especially Origen and Gregory, who confuse the terms.

Following Plato, Origen is acquainted with the semantic ambivalence of eros, so that it means either the acquisitive desire for the corporeal things, or the desire for the incorporeal things. In order to face this semantic ambivalence, both the Holy

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[27]In his *Homilies on the Song* Gregory generally employs eros with reference to the incorporeal desire for the Logos, for example: Greg. Nys., *Hom. in Ct.* XV. See also: Greg. Nys., *Hom. in Ct.* XIII, in which eros and agape are utilized as synonyms.

[28]On this see: Lettieri (2008), 69–80.

Scripture and Origen attempt to express the desire for the corporeal things with the word "eros," the desire for the incorporeal things with the word "agape." Nevertheless, both the Holy Scripture and Origen sometimes refer to the desire for incorporeal things with the term "eros": for instance, in the fragments of his *Commentary on the Song* Origen understands eros as the desire of the soul for Christ, and vice versa, of Christ for the soul, which is satisfied by the encounter of them at the height of the desire itself.

A similar case is that of Gregory. He is also aware of the semantic ambivalence of eros, which denotes either the desire for the corporeal things, or the desire for the incorporeal things. Nonetheless, although Gregory intends to call the desire for the corporeal things "eros" and the desire for the incorporeal things "agape," in his homiletical corpus on the *Song* he always uses eros with reference to the incorporeal desire. In particular, Gregory regards eros as the passible desire of the individual soul for the impassibility, that is, for God. This strategy of Gregory to consider eros as the incorporeal desire in his exegesis of the *Song* is the effect of Origen's influence on his thought. Notwithstanding this similarity between Origen and Gregory, for Gregory the passible desire for the impassibility is not to be satisfied, since God is transcendent in relation to the human soul.

In conclusion, at odds with the thesis of Nygren, Origen, and Gregory know the semantic difference of eros and agape, but, since the meaning of agape fits one of the two meanings of eros, they end up with using eros as a synonym of agape.

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Chapter 17
The Salvation of Desire: Saint Augustine's Perspective

Juan José Pérez-Soba

Abstract Saint Augustine makes desire the axis for his understanding of human life. On it, he establishes the relationship with God as its origin and end, through the creation and necessity of the encounter with Christ.

In this way, he establishes the via *interioritatis* as a reference to the truth of desire, which must find in original love both the point of departure for and the response to the problem of evil.

He integrates the ontological principle of existence with the affective principle of transformation in the beloved. At this point, we can see an important evolution from the initial principle of *uti* and *frui* in an integration of the value of personal alterity into this movement, which opens it up to the experience of friendship as a necessary light in human life.

The conception of desire is essentially dynamic, and in it is where we see the relationship it establishes between the bodily senses and the light of intelligence.

Desire lives internally in deep paradox; it rests only in the end that cannot reach by itself what we must understand as the "Salvation of desire." In this sense, Saint Augustine takes an affective and operative vision of grace. Thus, the relationship between the gift and the beatitudes will be the ultimate truth of desire, capable of reaching the happiness promised by God.

Keywords Love · Creation · Salvation · Alterity · Affection

"Do not go out, return to yourself. Truth dwells in man's interior. And if you find that your nature is mutable, transcend to yourself" (*De Vera Religione*, 39, 72). In this phrase, we can summarize the key that allows Saint Augustine to enter into the mystery of human personhood. In fact, he uses it to establish the internal structure of the *Confessions*, which describes his own life as an encounter with God by means of

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a double movement through which God *draws him to himself* and reveals himself to him. This key contains a precise anthropological significance in which the integrity of the human person can be seen within a theological framework where affections play a fundamental role (Flórez 1965). It involves an original perspective in which the encounter with truth is the axis of personal salvation, because, in it, a man finds certain participation in eternity. The specificity of his approach lies in that it is intrinsically linked to a loving truth, as the only one that involves the human person in his entirety and responds to his identity from a perspective that makes the person partake of the divine life. That is what this beautiful cry expresses: "he who knows the truth, knows it; and he who knows it, knows eternity. Charity knows it" (*Confessiones*, VII, 10, 16).

We are referring to a specific mode of knowledge, in which the relationship between the person and the God is always implied; to a fundamental search that defines the life of man and involves the person in his entirety. Its first place is the created reality of man in the divine image, which is geared toward a plenitude that subsists in man as a divine flame. As the holy doctor often says, "the good is to unite myself to God" (*Confessiones,* VII, 11, 17).

The manner in which the aforementioned way is presented reveals that its defining point lies on a shift towards man's interiority. The "return to oneself," which appears to negate the first movement of exteriority, sustains this way in the God–man relationship. It is not so much a negation of exterior things, as it is a principle of unity that allows us to understand the meaning of intimacy from *order*, sustained by the transcendent relationship that leads to God. This dynamic relationship carries a cognitive and dialogical sense in man in such a way that for him the end of human desire is nothing other than, "to know myself, to know you" (*Soliloquia*, II, 1, 1). Hence, the precise name of via *interioritatis* is given to the way of interiority by which man discovers the divine light (via *illuminationis*) that illuminates his way with truth's eternity, saves him and makes him say: "hence, warned to return to myself, I entered in my inward self [*intima mea*] with your guidance... Oh eternal truth, and true charity, and loved eternity!" (*Confessiones*, VII, 10, 16).

The steps of this way are existential, that is, they are understood insofar as they are experienced in a way that involves man's liberty. It is the person himself who discovers his inward self in such experience. Saint Augustine centers his theological understanding of *confession* in it, which is the key to his way of entering his inward self. It involves the ability to express the intimate truth that God has revealed and that he does not know completely. This is the scope that introduces us to affectivity, because affectivity is always understood as a way of becoming present to oneself, a form of intentional and truthful presence (Di Giovanni 1965b).

17.1   Love and Desire

From this way of being present to oneself, which is the dynamic basis of human identity, the bishop of Hippo is able to outline an entire dynamism that must be traversed in order to arrive to the repose in God. Hence, he is able to identify a range of levels in this movement of the soul that allows us to better understand the role of affectivity in his theological thought, which always stems from God's first Love.

In his manner of experiential reflection, the author follows the structure of conscience, because the knowledge of oneself is a central point in the itinerary. He has a dialogical (we could say "confessional") idea of conscience, always united to a previous movement that gives it a first meaning. Saint Augustine understands it form the category of *mystery* due to the question that arises inwardly: "I asked a great question to myself and asked my soul why it was sad and why it disturbed me greatly, and it did not know what to answer me" (*Confessiones*, IV, 4, 9). It is a question he asks himself after the death of his closest friend that causes this disturbance. In such awakening to conscience, the experience of suffering plays a central role as an event that is able to cause in man a return to himself in his search for the truth that transcends and identifies him. Suffering allows him to access an inward presence he had not previously valued sufficiently. There is a type of human vulnerability that touches this inward self and lounges man to a quest for a type of meaning that encompasses life as a whole (Grygiel 2002).

Man can come to know himself from an interior light of cognitive nature that ultimately comes from, and places him before, God. Therefore, man must acknowledge God both as transcendent and intimate at once: "You were, then, more inward to me than my inward self and higher than the highest in me" (*Confessiones*, III, 6, 11). This marks his interiority with the truth about himself engulfed in such light. God's position in relation to man is based on a radical difference of ontological nature; but one only becomes aware of it when, in fact, one already *desires*; when a man is necessarily in movement toward God.

Love is the beginning of the movement, with a metaphysical radicality. It is based on the famous affirmation: "*Pondus meum amor meus; eo feror, quocumque feror*" (*Confessiones*, XIII, 9, 10). The word *pondus*[1] carries the sense of the first foundation of the dynamic of love (Cain 1976). It involves an ontological beginning that centers on God's position as the source of attraction of all things and on love as the principle [*avrch..*] of universal movement (O'Brien 1958). This comparison finds its roots in the Aristotelian resolution of the *e;rwj* within the metaphysical conception of the Greek philosopher interested in solving Parmenides' Eleatic problem. The movement exists, and it is not mere appearance, because all things are drawn by God "as being loved" (Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1072b3. Méndez 1990). Without losing this ultimate foundation in being, Saint Augustine highlights its anthropological aspect, because his interest lies primarily in understanding how man is able to partake of this initial universal movement of attraction to God, with his existential

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[1]Besides the one already cited: Ibid, IV, 14, 22; 15, 27; VII, 17, 23; X, 4, 5; 40, 65; and XIII, 7, 8.

importance rooted in creation. Thus, he outlines a movement of love that is necessary in its inception, but in which conscience and liberty have an essential role. This starting point *is not a movement*, but a principle of movement, as it occurs with weight; therefore, it can be attributed to God, for it contains no imperfection, something impossible for the Greek philosopher. "Prior to the motion there seems to be a tendency or inclination to the lovable object which is yet not the motion. This tendency or inclination precedes both the motion to, and the possession of the object. In the loving agent, in the lover, it is the dynamic force and thus the first cause both of the motion, and later of the possession of the object" (Diggs 1947).

We have arrived at a necessary distinction between the original principle and the interior movement of man, between a creature inserted in this movement and the eternity to which he is called. This distinction allows us to speak of the Love in God without attributing an imperfection to him. Yet, inasmuch as everything is linked to this movement, the relationship between desire and love in man is not clear. According to the author, effective desire and natural tendency are completely parallel, as in Middle Platonism (Giacon 1964).

In any case, we can distinguish in this situation the twofold aspect that characterizes human affection: an initial passivity due to the reception of something, but that in man is also dynamic as a calling to his liberty, in a quest for the meaning to understand the truth about himself. The final creative framework, with its absolute value, necessarily introduces God in this dynamism with a principle of revelation. In Saint Augustine, the topic of God does not focus on his existence, but on creation, as an essential point needed to overcome the Manichaean view of an evil God creator.

Hence, according to the author, affection, and particularly desire, contains a clear sense of mediation between the first ontological movement and the free conscious action of man. His nature can be understood as an "affected being," recognizing in his inward self a presence that moves him. The saint explains it as an interior thrust whose cause ultimately refers to God, to whom he says, "You struck my heart with your word, and I loved you" (*Confessiones*, X, 6, 8). This initial strike always appears in the horizon of a happy life due to a divine calling, because, "We all desire to live happily, and there is not a single one among humankind who does not assent to this affirmation, even before it is made" (*De moribus ecclesiae catholicae*, I, 3, 4). The radical attraction to happiness gives unity to the human experience and to the role of affections in his inward self.

In this dynamic, Saint Augustine experientially places deficiency as a beginning (something proper to desire); man's weakness and his own misery are always in the beginning. Yet not exclusively, for the reference to the original love of God always opens him up to hope, and requests a bigger love: mercy. Man must discover himself in his radical frailty but rooted in the calling of divine love to plenitude, is the place where he finds his true identity. In this point, corporeality is of key importance. It involves the correlation between misery and mercy (*In Iohannis Euangelium tractatus CXXIV*, tr. 33, 5). In Saint Augustine's thought, the body has a necessary mediation in human experiences. The bishop of Hippo grants a big role to the corporeal senses, also regarding spiritual realities. In this respect, he explains the possibility of man to be affected by reality and discover a meaning that surpasses

them, because they are in fact related to the eternity of truth in the spirituality of intimacy (Capánaga 1958). Through the senses, man already experiences the way of interiority and transcendence in a particular manner, which corresponds to the affective world of the human heart that defines man.

Hence, he identifies a double reference in man with regard to the affective world that characterizes human intimacy: man lives in internal existential tension, an aspect the saint never fully resolves. On one hand, there is the dynamism he discovers as *desire*: the movement toward plenitude, which adopts many aspects of the classical *e;rwj,* as Plato understood it; as the impulse "of generation and of birth in beauty" (Plato, *The Symposium*, XII, 206, E). On the other hand, there is a great intuition that resolves the severe deficiency of Greek thought, which could not discover the *origin* of desire *in a creating love*. The original and creative love of God is essential in giving desire its own consistency. Man must not abandon himself to desire, for rather, it allows him to discover the saving plan of God.

Therefore, the cognitive capability of love to reveal its own origin, is fundamental. We must keep in mind that this reference to the principle of desire, precisely the one Plato considered the main point necessary to speak of a truth regarding the *eros* (Reale 1997), is now the one Saint Augustine understands as the definitive point for man. It is what makes him say, "man was created so a beginning could exist, for it did not exist before him" (*De Civitate Dei*, XII, 21. Cfr. Arendt 1978). He is referring to man's experience that where there is a personal love, there is something new in the world. With this loving existential novelty, the world's confinement to a fatalism incapable of bringing about any type of novelty is destroyed. Love bursts into the cosmos with a transcendent value in which its radical openness to salvation must be perceived, due to its relation to an ever-greater love it can unite to (Kampowsky 2008).

This is the reference point needed to understand the role of memory in the Thagastian doctor as a fundamental beginning of human action as a type of "memory from birth" (Kampowsky 2013). Thus, affection is attached to the identity of man anchored in a gift received from a father, a generative fundament that contains the promise of salvation. Everything refers to a creating and life-giving first gift. Hence, he attributes the proper name of "gift" to the Holy Spirit, that is, he conceives him as a "person-gift" (*De Trinitate*, V, 11, 12), a reality he will always consider as the need for grace in human existence. We must bear this last reference in mind because it contains an interesting interpersonal relationship that the saint intuits and that we will explain at the end of our short study.

With his reference to the beginning, Saint Augustine stresses the dynamic difference between desire and love, from a lover's point of view; although he finds it difficult to later articulate both of these within the human action. He must resort to an innovative affirmation that becomes a light in the understanding of affections. They do not occur separately, rather, a harmony can be seen among them, founded in presence itself as the fundament of an original love. That is, love must be considered the first mover of every affective movement. Saint Augustine describes affective variety from the first love thus: "The love that longs to have what is loved, is desire; the one that rejoices in having it, is joy; the one that flees that which opposes it, is

fear; the one that is felt when that which is feared occurs, is sadness" (*De Civitate Dei*, XIV, 7). Is a dynamic relationship sustained by the intentionality of becoming one with the loved; the different ways of attaining this union give room to various affections, man can learn and interpret these meaning. Thus, the entire dynamic of affection participates in the logic of love, which, especially, introduces it in God's intimacy (Simon 1987).

17.2   Radical Affectivity and the Meaning of Love Between "*uti*" and "*frui*"

By viewing affectivity in a dynamic way and as the principle of liberty, the bishop of Hippo finds a base to proceed with a new terminology of love, particularly regarding the difficult question of the translation of the Greek terms "*eros*" and "*agape*". Initially, the saint held Saint Ambrose's synthesis between Origin, who had given a Christian meaning to the term *eros*, and Cicero, who acknowledged a social and personal value in *caritas*, with its clear affective fundament. The pair *love-caritas* was still understood from a dialectic of opposition. It was Saint Augustine who saw an unquestionable truth that greatly illuminated the realm of affectivity: *charity is a type of love*, it can oppose a disordered love, but not an affective love. "Love" had to be taken as the generic word that would later sustain the interior dialectic of affections. Our author abandons the *love-caritas* opposition when he places love as the base of the pair "*caritas-cupiditas*" (Arendt 1996).

Thus, for the first time, *love* is considered the base of all other affections and asks for their interior order, this is the base of the Augustinian conception of *ordo amoris*. He obtained the expression from Origin's commentary on the *Song of Songs*, which stated that the attraction of love must be ordained toward the loved one, and within the ultimate love of God, that orders all other loves. The Alexandrian says, "Thus is the order [of love] and its measure: in God's love there is no measure, no mode, but this one – that you show it all the love you can. In Christ Jesus, God must be loved with one's whole heart, soul and strength. There is no measure in this. In the love to neighbor there is a measure, for he says, 'you should love your neighbor as yourself'" (Origen, III).

In fact, this order proper to love grants certain intelligibility to affection, which was not clear in the preceding tradition, for the aspects of passion exhausted the understanding of *eros*. By contrast, in Saint Augustine it is possible to speak of a *logic of affections* that explains their interior order.

In this context, the Augustinian theory of the duality of love emerges, which he initially expresses through the pair "*uti-fruti*." We find the formula in his first philosophical works and expresses it thus: "*Frui* is the love that unites itself to a certain thing for its own sake; *uti*, on the other hand, for use" (*De doctrina cristiana*, I, 4, 4). He addresses love differently in each type; the being that is loved "*propter se*" ("for its own sake") now becomes the point that gives order to

all other things. As it appears in his writings, the division has a sense of unity, it deals with that which is ultimately wanted. It is a term that is exclusive from any other. Through it, our saint incorporates a free and conscious intentionality in the lover, always understood as a response to the good before him. This novelty will be an important part of his thought and he will never abandon it. In fact, it becomes indisputable in Early Scholasticism.

The stated division is a synthesis used to resolve a twofold question that became the central concern for Augustine with regard to his own life: the problem of *evil*. Distinguishing between both types of love allowed for a simple way of defining mortal sin from a disordered love: "For all human perversion, also called vice, entails wanting to use that which must be enjoyed and enjoy that which must be used" (*De diversis quaestionibus octoginta tribus*, q. 30. Cfr. Di Giovanni 1965a).

We must analyze this approach regarding a disordered love that explains human evil. Due to Augustine's own experience of guilt, the problem of evil became for him a recurring topic and the main reason that led him to Manicheism. He felt the need to explain the interior division that dominated him, similar to that which the poet Ovid expressed: "*video meliora proboque, deteriora sequor*" (Ovid, 7, 20–21). Manicheism proposed a simple solution by attributing the source of evil to an evil god who had created the material world; this left man free from responsibility, for his somatic part could not help but go against the spirit. Our saint was able to free himself from such errors, for he understood that the reality that identified man and illuminated his experience could not be denied: the fact that man was created and called by God in liberty to respond to him. He had also understood that both matters, creation and liberty, were deeply united. An emanationist sense of the world leaves no room for human liberty, and merely apparent liberty is not capable of illuminating the truth of man's life.

The solution that the revelation of the Christian God offered to him parted from the unquestionable historical fact of God's will to establish a free covenant with man as the font of salvation. Hence, the issue of evil that haunted him remained on the opposite pole of the relationship. It could not be attributed to God nor to his work; thus, it had to lie on the human *form of response*, not on the simple fact of responding, which was both necessary and free. By responding to the love of God expressed in creation, man could love badly, in such a way that by loving good things in a disordered manner, they would separate him from, God. To explain this fact, our saint relies on the double movement supplied by the initial ontological *pondus*: heavy realities fall, and light ones ascend. This duality of movements specified by their ends, allows him to recur to symbolism, depicting heaven and earth as two different poles of attraction in man. He refers to the two possible horizons man encounters, which also sustain his division *caritas-cupiditas*. The base of the two loves adds the subject of the end to the subject of ontological attraction, from a creative point of view, as he describes it with regard to the account of creation: "To whom will I tell this? How will I convey the weight of concupiscence that leads to the abrupt abyss, and the sublimity of the charity that comes from your Spirit, who hovered above the waters?" (*Confessiones*, XIII, 7, 8).

The step from the ontological to the personal realm is achieved by the mediation of an attribute of love that can only be explained through affection: *love transforms the lover into the loved one*. This is a distinctive reality of affection that Saint Augustine naturally inserts in the dynamic sense of God's image within an underlying exemplarism: to be made in the image of something includes the tendency to transform into the exemplar that attracts him. In our case, the movement of love includes a new characteristic: it is sustained in love itself, insofar as it contains a *conversive* meaning. This is the deep sense it had acquired in Platonism, as Pseudo-Dionysius expresses it, "all created things are converted to its cause" (PSEUDO-DIONYSIUS, c. 9, §6). On one hand, the ultimate and ever-present fundament is the basic attraction to the good that is creatural and radically good due to the divine ordering. On the other, there is a deviation from the end in which man falls by *loving* good things *in an evil manner*. Based on this reasoning, he can formulate the definition of sin. "All sins are contained in one reality, that whoever commits them, separates himself form divine things, which are truly stable, and turns to those that are mutable and uncertain" (*De libero arbitrio*, I, 16, 35).

Having understood the framework of this division, we can now describe the dynamism it performs, for in it, the role of affection is shown with all its transformational value. Saint Augustine spends time explaining this effect of love, giving clear examples that leave no doubt. He explains it thus, in his *Commentary on the First Letter of Saint John*: "Just as one is, so is his love. Do you love the earth? Then you are earth. Do you love God? What will I say; that you are God? I dare not say it for myself, let us listen to the Scriptures: 'I say, you are gods and sons of the Most High' (Ps 81:6)" (*In Epistolam Iohannis ad Parthos*, II, 14). This progressive transformation of the lover into that which he loves, becomes part of the understanding of the dynamic of love in High Scholasticism. As Hugh of Saint Victor formulates it: "for this is the force of love that transforms the lover into the loved one" (Hugh of Saint Victor).

This transformation cannot be understood without the *intentionality of the lover*, which in love includes a particular end. Love is necessarily attracted by something good, but we choose the *manner* in which we love from an interior preference. Here, the moral dimension is very explicit in our author, within a clear logic of love in which the correlation between love and liberty is the axis of human action: "There is no one who does not love, but he must ask himself what he loves. Let us not encourage not to love, but to choose what we love. But what do we choose, if we are not first chosen? Because we do not love if we are not first loved" (*Sermo*, 34, c. 1, 2).

Love emerges as a necessary foundation for any type of action. One never chooses between loving and not loving, but between the preferences among the different types of love in which liberty is implied, bringing about the *ordo amoris*. The final expression, which seems to present an enigma, involves the foundation of this priority of love that dominates Augustinian thought (Beschin 1983). The matter of choice is placed in relation to a freedom that precedes our own and chooses first; this is the way Saint Augustine breaks with any way of understanding freedom as mere autonomy. For him, it must be understood from the dynamic of love that

precedes and conforms it. He cannot understand it unless it is seen from a preceding end that gives reason to its movement and points to love as its beginning. He begins with the loving experience as a response to knowing we are loved, in order to include this principle in freedom. The pair "being loved-loving," which is presented as something more obvious and fundamental, illuminates the pair "being chosen-choosing," which is harder to understand. In fact, our author draws on the personal strength that the experience of "being loved" gives to man in order to propose it as the base of all human actions. In this way, the act of choosing is rearticulated, with strong biblical roots. The beginning of any choice, which can be referred to as its principal analog, does not entail choosing things. It involves "being chosen" as a person, with the vocational sense he has learned from Sacred Scripture, which has helped him understand the proximity of God to man. Only from the fact of "being chosen," which necessarily requires a first love that gives it meaning, is it possible for us to choose with a true reason that takes love as a fundamental light for life.

It is hard to find, in such a simple sentence, this type of anthropological content, so well-articulated and full of lights that help to comprehend the value of our actions with their personal implication. Our main concern here is to highlight the affective dimension as the mediation between "being loved" and "choosing." The interweaving of affection and liberty can be seen within an interpersonal dimension. Its dynamic character becomes very clear in the fact that, ever since the first moment in which the passive-receptive dimension is predominant, the value of a free response grows until it constitutes human action.

17.3   The Role of Intentionality

In this dynamic process, the love that guides all the other affections is the one that proposes the actions' ends. This is a constant in Saint Augustine that helps him avoid Platonic Intellectualism, which his theory of knowledge seemed to accept. The real ends of actions require an interior movement in order to become a reality. It is never about a merely intellective apprehension; the reality of *intention* always involves a specific mode of intentionality in which desire, attraction, and knowledge of the loved one are essential.

Our saint will develop the intentional value of affections in a twofold realm. The first is the reality of human action and the end that illuminates it. The second involves virtue, in the sense of building the *ordo amoris* with the primacy of a loving intentionality.

With regard to the intentionality of actions, Saint Augustine will be the great advocate of love as the reality that characterizes the end of any action. He defines a *proper intentionality of love* very differently from one that is simply productive or based on calculating results. Rather, it configures the internal intention that culminates in the truly desired end, beyond the object of attraction.

In his *Commentary on the First Letter of Saint John*, our saint develops this idea to shine light on the understanding of the *morality of human acts*. He does so in order to separate himself from any false and immediate identification with affection without first discerning the diverse value of the different types of love. He says: "The acts of man are not distinguished except by their root of charity. (. . .) Love and do what you want: if you keep silent, keep silent by love; if you cry out; cry out by love; if you correct, correct by love; if you forgive, forgive by love; the root is interior love" (*In Epistola ad Parthos*, VII, 7). In this point, it is important to notice in the expressions the "intimacy-transcendence" dynamic.

In this renowned text, we must highlight the correct translation of the famous expression, "*dilige, et quod vis fac*." The verb "*fac*" is in the indicative mood and not in the subjunctive; thus, the alleged translation, "love and do as you wish," so often done in thoughtlessness, is invalid; it ought to be translated as, "love and do what you *want*." The difference is clear: for Saint Augustine, the act of loving does not justify anything as licit according to our own free loving will (as you wish); rather, it is *effective*, it internally drives man to do one thing over another (do what you want). Ultimately, it gathers the same imperative with which Jesus said in the parable of the Good Samaritan: "do likewise" (Lk 10:37). It is important to understand it as an overcoming of Pelagianism, so that the will may follow an initial affection (mercy, in the Samaritan's case), in which God's gift introduces salvation for man. Therefore, it must be interpreted in line with another anti-Pelagian affirmation: "do what you command and command what you wish" (*Confessiones*, l. 10, c. 29, 40). The love that sustains the dynamic of gift becomes the mover and intelligence of human want. The initial freewill is found in God, whose love creates the good, but not in the man who responds to a good that does not create.

The role of the specifically affective mover possesses its own intelligibility: love makes it possible for us to know with the "eyes of faith" (Rousselot 1910), and not with a mere exterior calculation. This knowledge "from the heart" is essential for human action, especially regarding the perception of the end. Thus, this initial dynamic of affection is the base of the *intention* in human action, its fundamental light. All of this leads him to pen an expression regarding the value of human acts that has been greatly accepted: "It has been considered not what one does but with what spirit one does it. For this is the light in us, because the good spirit with which we do what we do is manifested to us: *everything that is manifested is light*" (*De sermone Domini in monte libros duos*, II, 13, 46).

The initial duality we have previously mentioned, and which carries an evident moral connotation, will be the turning point in Saint Augustine' attempt to resolve the matter of desire with reference to God. "*Propter Deum*" becomes a definition of the will's rightness, which must respond to the original love that unites it to God as its definitive Good. Yet regarding its initial point, in terms of the movement of the appetite, desire seems to look for its own satisfaction and it can only be loved "*propter me*." The mere reference to the appetite is not capable of showing the difference, grasped in the paradox of desire, which, by containing a deficiency in search of plenitude, ultimately tends to its own annihilation (Veuthey 1950). The only difference of "*uti*" with respect to "*frui*" as a transcendent end, does not bypass

the issue of what man wants for himself. Such reference to how specific to an end a person must be, is scarcely found in Augustine.

In contrast, it does make itself present as the definition of the conversive order, which is the fundamental sign of its relationship with God and sustains the validity of the "*uti-frui.*" Its value cannot be restricted to mere appetibility but must open up to the anthropological reality of lovingly uniting oneself to God, which in turn seeks to go beyond this pair (Di Giovanni 1964).

This constitutes an inheritance that will remain throughout the Middle Ages and will reach its first systematization in Saint Bernard, who makes "*propter,*" understood in a personal sense, the very specification of love (Saint Bernard 1963). We must refer to this interpretation by the Cistercian monk because of its clear Augustinian roots, for it will help us to better understand implicit aspects in Augustine's thought. As Jean Leclercq has shown with precision, the dynamic that the Cistercian describes comes from the *affective* conception of love (Leclercq 1992). The root of this interpretation lies in the same divine initial presence of loving character and grace; and it is the reason for the entire dynamism he describes in *De diligendo Deo*, as a growing transformation that relies on God's profound movement that attracts man in order to save him. This conviction explains one of his boldest expressions: "Thus, deification is to be affected" (Saint Bernard, 10, 28). We have not erred in our parallel with this inference; on the contrary, it is a great light needed to understand the entire reach of the following text by the holy bishop, in which he describes deification as a process of affection that will lay the foundation for man's salvation: "And since it is necessary for what is loved to affect the lover in itself, it occurs that what is eternal affects the soul with eternity. Hence, in that regard, the happy life is eternal. For, what is eternal that can affect the soul with eternity, if not God?" (*De diversibus quaestionibus LXXXIII*, q. 35, 2).

17.4 Its Necessary Integration Within a Friendship

The central role of divine salvation is thus clear in Saint Augustine's conception of affection, yet we must now explore another aspect we have not addressed directly. In the entire process of affection we have researched, the centrality of the relationship with God is visible, and it is affirmed to the point of overshadowing the entire scope of man's worldly activity, which cannot be presented as the ultimate end nor can it bring about the reality of transformation for man. This reality must be addressed because it refers to the daily aspects of human life, without which a happy life is impossible. It is a field opened by the aforementioned mediation of corporal senses. We cannot conceive it as a formless space sustained by a saving thread to God that keeps us from falling into a chaotic abyss. The idea of *order* is so deeply present in Augustine's mentality that he cannot conceive but a God who creates a good that harmonizes all things. The spiritual order sustained by God must be expressed in an order of material realities that derives from his light.

It is here that *virtue* appears, and our saint conceives it in the context of the four cardinal virtues, an Saint Ambrose's inheritance (Saint Ambrose, *Expositio in Lucam*, V, 62 and *De officiis ministrorum,* I, 27–50). These are still conceived in a Stoic Roman Ciceronian way that does not exclude the role of affections but orders them interiorly. Saint Augustine's novelty of presenting the virtues as the *ordo amoris* is borne here. "Virtue leads us to a happy life, nothing at all can be declared to be a virtue if it is not the love of God. For what is said regarding the four-fold virtue, is said, as I understand it, from the diverse affection of love itself" (*De moribus Ecclesiæ catholicæ et de moribus manichæorum libri duo*, I, c. 15, 25).

This specific *order* based on the dynamic of love is above all *integrative*, that is, it is expressed as the conjunction of different affections ordered in a superior intentional direction that proceeds from the divine love by charity. Thus, it is not a matter of a simple juxtaposition of affective movements, but of a real direction to a superior end. Therefore, our saint insists on the founding role of charity, given to him by the *Ambrosiaster*, from which he considers charity "the mother of all goods" (Ambrosiaster; Falanga 1948). The goods proper to human actions allow for the conjunction of all affections in the different human actions at the sight of the ultimate end, which only charity can assure. For Saint Augustine, the new order that charity establishes by leading us to the union with God bears witness to all the virtues as *concrete modes of loving*. He describes the virtues from the dynamic of love, of which they are a specification: "There is nothing better for the greatest good than to love God with one's whole heart, whole soul and whole mind. (. . .) that which preserves from corruption and the impurity of love, and is proper to temperance; that which makes him invincible before all discomforts, and is proper to fortitude; that which makes him renounce all subordination, and is proper to justice; and finally, that which always makes him be on guard to discern things and not let himself be surreptitiously deceived by lie and fallacy, which is proper to prudence" (*De moribus Ecclesiæ catholicæ et de moribus manichæorum libri duo*, I, c. 25, 46).

This new integrating dynamic of affections allows virtue to help us act faster, safer, and more joyfully—characteristic features of affections that help us to understand the dynamic of virtue within a journey to happiness.

Nonetheless, the role of human relationships in this process of integration is not clear. The previous doctrine dealing with the "*propter,*" which is exclusive with regard to God as the end of upright love, does not help in this respect (*De doctrina Christiana*, III, 10, 16). The "*propter Deum*" defines charity in a way that the role of the neighbor even seems compromised as a mere occasion to love God (*De doctrina christiana*, I, 27, 28). Nevertheless, a deeper evaluation of our author allows us to see the role of *friendship in this intuition*, in which the analogy of love is the way to knowing the Trinity, according to what the famous formula expresses: "You see the Trinity if you see charity" (*De Trinitate*, VIII, 8, 12; Granados 2002). This must be considered the third level of Saint Augustine's thought on affections.

The following step involves the issue regarding the role of man as the end of such volition. According to the first doctrine of the *frui*, man must be loved with a love of *use*. This is an affirmation that will later change, when, in the love of friendship (Macnamara 1961), a friend is considered the end of the act of love.

It also takes us to the path of understanding God, which reaches its climax in *De Trinitate*. There we find a relationship with a trinitarian structure: "Love is from a lover, and with love something is loved. Here are three: the lover, what is loved and love. What is then love, if not a certain life that unites two or that wants to unite them, mainly the lover and what is loved?" (*De Trinitate*, VIII, 10, 14). It is a new path in which personal alterity as such finds its value in a new appreciation of interpersonal relationship and that transcends the mere appetibility that dominated the understanding of the pair *uti-frui* (Nédoncelle 1970). In this itinerary of understanding, the core issue is no longer the problem of evil, but the manifestation of the person through love; mainly, the wonder of becoming a lover and discovering a vast affective world governed by God's salvation. Although this intuition is not sufficiently developed by our author, it suffices to mention it in order to understand its openness to the new riches his flaming heart desired.

17.5   A Global Vision

"They built two cities, two loves: the earthly city, the love for self even to the contempt of God; the heavenly city, the love of God even to the contempt of self" (*De Ciuitate Dei*, XIV, 28). From what we have said, we can now better understand this essential expression by Saint Augustine, from which he builds a first theology of history. The love and mover of the cosmos help us to understand a human history full of greatness and misery, in which the conversion to God and to our own void are always in conflict.

This cannot be seen as a radical dualism, but rather as the internal battle experienced by man. Ultimately, the power of grace is such that victory is guaranteed. God's attraction remains and is capable of saving the one who responds to it. Affections, which touch the innermost part of man, explain all human relationships as well as social and epochal movements.

The globality of the Augustinian vision is such that it is the reason why his doctrine was taken up and reinterpreted time and again as inspiration and reflection regarding that knowledge centered on the via *interioritatis*, which explains the quest that determines our existence. Saint Augustine is a teacher who is able to helps us, at the present time, to save affections from a certain enclosed intimacy that does not illuminate life as a whole and does not know how to integrate time, for he leads us to the greatness of knowing about our own identity and about building a story.

All of this under the condition that we learn the enlightening language of affection that allows the lover to enter the innermost part of the loved one to enrich his life. "Give me someone who loves and feels what I say. Give me someone who desires; give me someone who hungers; give me in this solitude a pilgrim who thirsts, who sighs for the font of the eternal homeland; give me someone thus and know what I say. For the evangelist says, 'He whom the Father draws comes to me'" (*In Ioannes Evangelium tr.* 26*,* 4).

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Chapter 18
The Education of Desire According to Aquinas

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Abstract This chapter intends to give an account of how both the passion of desire and the desire of the will should be educated, following the teaching of Saint Thomas Aquinas. For this, this chapter is structured in two distinct parts: the first explains the existence and nature of desire (Sects. 18.1–18.3), while the second deals with its education (Sects. 18.4–18.5).

The first part begins by looking for the meaning of the term in the work of Aquinas. The question is then asked about the existence of desire. And finally, the nature of desire is addressed according to the various types of appetites: the natural, the sensitive and the rational. The fundamental importance is emphasized of the ordination of all appetites to the ultimate end, without which there would be no desire.

The second part begins by addressing the morality and educability of desire, identifying the virtues required for its ordination to a life according to reason. And finally, the education of desire within the framework of affective education in family life is elaborated. The importance of the *experimentum* in the child as a presupposition for any further education is highlighted. The education of the passion of desire is then explained mainly through the virtue of temperance from the prudence of the parents. The chapter concludes with the perfection of desire through theological virtues.

For the study of this topic, the contributions of authors from the Thomist School of Barcelona have mainly been followed.

Keywords Desire · Education · Appetite · Virtue · Aquinas

In his commentary on Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, Saint Thomas Aquinas (1969, II, lect.2, n.3) defends the existence of an ultimate end that is not sought for another end. He argues that if this were not the case and one proceeded to infinity, man could never reach any end and therefore all his desires would be frustrated.

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However, that would be contradictory with nature, since desire is something natural, an inclination inherent in all things.

This thesis forms part of the entire Aristotelian–Thomistic tradition to this day. An example of this is found in Francisco Canals, maximum representative of the Barcelona Thomist School, who presented it as a fundamental thesis in the thought of Aquinas (1987): without the first desire of the ultimate end, "we would have to recognize the empty and inconsistent nature of all desire and the impossibility, therefore, of all choice, of all free volition, of all determination through the will of the rationally commanded activities in man" (1987).

That every desire of man lies in the ordination towards the ultimate end will allow us to find the proper place for the education of desire within the dynamism of the perfecting of man.

18.1 Desire in the Work of Thomas Aquinas

In order to situate the theme of desire in the work of Saint Thomas (Chenu 1974; Manzanedo 2004; Pinckaers 2009), we should begin by specifying what terms he uses to refer to it. And with Manzanero (1987), we conclude that are two: *desiderium* and *concupiscentia*. The different meanings of these terms in the work of Aquinas are found in Peter of Bergamo's *Tabula aurea* (1873) and Ludwig Schütz's *Thomas-Lexikon* (1895).

The term *desiderium* comes from the verb *desiderare*, which etymologically means to stop seeing a star (*de-sidus*) and, from there, to note the absence of something and to go in search of it (*desiderium*) (Ernout and Meillet 1951). In the works of St. Thomas, it designates precisely the appetitive movement towards an absent or unpossessed good (1888, I, q.20, a.1 c.). If that good is desired without prior apprehension, then the desire corresponds to the natural appetite, such as when Aquinas refers to the love, desire and hope that beings without knowledge have (1891, I-II, q.41, a.3 c.). If there is a prior sensitive apprehension, then the desire corresponds to a passion of the concupiscible sensitive appetite that moves towards a pleasing good, as occurs in animals and men (1891, I-II, q.23, a.4 c.). And if there is a prior rational apprehension, then the desire corresponds to an operation of the rational appetite or will that moves towards a rational good, which is why he speaks to us of the desire of angels (1888, I, q.58, a.1 ad 2).

On the other hand, the term *concupiscentia* comes from the verb *cupere*, which means to desire something fervently and which is personified in the god Cupid (Ernout and Meillet 1951). Hence, in St. Thomas, it rightfully designates the passion of desire, thereby identifying with the second of the mentioned meanings of *desiderium*. Indeed, the sensitive appetite of that which is pleasant takes its name— *appetitus concupiscibilis*—from this passion (1891, I-II, q.30, a.1 c.). Since the sensitive appetite is a power with a corporeal organ, desire or concupiscence in the strict sense entails a bodily transmutation, unlike rational desire (1891, I-II, q.22, 1 c.). In this case, only in a broad sense is *concupiscentia* used to refer to other desires, that of the natural appetite or of the rational appetite (1891, I-II, q.71, a.1 ob.2).

These meanings correspond to the Aristotelian terms ὄρεξις and ἐπιθυμία. Thus, if ὄρεξις designates appetite in a broad sense, as *desiderium* does, for its part ἐπιθυμία restricts its meaning to the passion towards the good that is pleasant for the sense, such as *concupiscentia*; this connection between *concupiscentia* and ἐπιθυμία is very common in the Fathers of the Church, reaching Saint Thomas (Guthrie 1993).

These terms are present in practically all of Aquinas' work. Nevertheless, in the *Index Thomisticum* (Busa et al. 2005) we note that the places where they appear most frequently are, in order from highest to lowest:

(a) *Desiderium*: *Summa Theologiae, Scriptum super Sententiis, Summa contra gentiles* and *Super Psalmos Davidis expositio*.
(b) *Concupiscentia*: *Summa Theologiae, Scriptum super Sententiis, Quaestiones disputatae de malo* and *Sententia libri Ethicorum*.

Of all these, therefore, the *Summa Theologiae* is the work in which both terms appear most often; and, in this, in the *secunda pars*, both in the *prima secundae* and in the *secunda secundae*. This highlights that Saint Thomas addresses desire, both in general and in its specificity as a passion, from a moral perspective.

18.2   The Existence of Desire

Having identified the meaning of the term "desire," we can now ask ourselves about its existence. To do this, we can first turn to that criterion that allows us to recognize the truths evident to the conscience. This criterion is seen as a preknown one whose existence should not be in doubt (Forment 1992). This criterion of truth is of deep Augustinian roots and fully assumed by Saint Thomas. It is the one that leads to him to distinguish a dual knowledge of the soul: the essential and the existential; of the latter, he states "The knowledge that anyone has of the soul as to what is proper to themselves, is the knowledge of the soul as to what it has to be in such an individual" (1970, q.10, a.8 c.).

In this way, every man knows without the need for concepts, judgments or reasoning, the existence of his desires, both sensitive and rational. And he is in no doubt about it. The object of his desire may be confusing to him, or the nature of the desire, but not that he is desiring. Let us quote Saint Augustine to demonstrate this recognition of desire—in this case, of the rational desire to know itself: "Wherefore, by the very thing that is sought, it manifests itself more as known than as unknown to itself. For one knows that one seeks and does not know oneself, when one seeks to know oneself" (2006, X, c.3, n.5).

Secondly, we can turn to that other criterion that allows us to recognize the truths evident to what Balmes calls "common sense". This criterion is seen as another preknown one that cannot be doubted, for example "the correspondence of our sensations with an outside world, not purely phenomenal, but real and true" (1963; Forment 1992). From this deeply realistic perspective, which marginalizes the

aporetic "problem of the bridge", it is manifested as evident the existence of desire in other men and even in animals, that we see moving in one way or other towards certain goods that they do not have—we will not now enter into the question of the existence of desire in angels and in God, which are outside the scope of that which is evident to our intellect. If desire did not exist in animals and men, all attempts to train the former or educate the latter would be meaningless, since the starting point of both activities is none other than the desire that moves them. Consider, for example the statement that Aristotle makes at the beginning of Metaphysics, without which education in wisdom is impossible: "All men naturally desire to know" (1982, I, c.1).

18.3   The Nature of Desire

Let us now move on to understanding the nature of desire. It will be convenient to start from that desire that is best known to us, that is the sensitive desire.

18.3.1   Sensitive Desire

Saint Thomas clearly identifies the sensitive desire with a passion, that is with an act or operation of the sensitive appetite and therefore it must be distinguished both from cognitive operations and from operations of the rational or natural appetite (1891, I-II, q.23, a.2 c.). Like all passions, as has already been mentioned, the sensitive desire entails a bodily transmutation, as it is an operation of an appetite with a corporeal organ (1891, I-II, q.22, 1 c.).

The object of this passion is the pleasant good, not the arduous good and therefore its subject is the concupiscible appetite, and not the irascible (1891, I-II, q. 23, a.4 c.). However, Aquinas distinguishes three passions of this appetite whose object is the pleasant good: love, desire and joy. The specific nature of sensitive desire, which distinguishes it from love and joy, is its movement towards the good not yet possessed, but supposed in it the complacency proper to love and as ordained to its rest proper to joy (1891, I-II, q.25, a.2 c.).

It is important to highlight this relationship with love and joy. Indeed, without the prior complacency of love nothing would be desired; nor if the movements of desire were not ordained by nature to cease upon the appetite achieving the beloved and desired. It is therefore contrary to the very nature of things the desire for what is not loved, or the desire that is incapable of being satiated; if these desires do indeed occur, it is because what has been previously judged as a pleasing good is something that is not, or something has been judged as attainable which it is not either. Therefore, it must be said with Saint Thomas that "concupiscence or sensitive desire is the first effect of love, which gives rise to the greatest pleasure" (1891, I-II, q.36, a.2 c.); however, for the same reason, the delay of the desired good or its removal is the cause of sorrow.

It is also interesting to distinguish desire from its contrary passion. In this case, we must start from the prior distinction between the pleasant good and the unpleasant evil. There are again three passions that reject this evil: hatred, aversion or flight, and sorrow; and each one is contrary to the three mentioned ones: hatred is the disliking of unpleasant evil, aversion is the movement of flight from that evil, and sorrow is the cessation of this movement once the hated evil ensues (1891, I-II, q.23, a.4 c.). In this way, the passion contrary to the sensitive desire is the movement of flight. It is very easy to see the corporeal manifestation of these two movements, since desire clearly entails a physical approach to the beloved good, while aversion is a distancing from the hated evil.

Another characteristic that should be noted of the sensitive desire is its fervour, which is closely linked to the aforementioned corporeal condition. That is why Saint Thomas says that *concupiscentia* is nothing but intense *desiderium* (1958, III, d.26, q.1, a.3 c.); on another occasion he refers to it as *fervor*, which he gives as the effect of sensitive love, which causes the intense desire to obtain the beloved good (1891, I-II, q.28, a.5 ad 1). That explains that sensitive desires are more fervent than intellectual desires. Nevertheless, sensitive desires usually exceed the measure required to satisfy themselves because of their intensity and can therefore cause a greater distaste than that experienced before being satiated; this is what happens, for example when eating or drinking without moderation (1891, I-II, q.33, a.2 c.).

Aquinas distinguishes two types of sensitive desires. The first are those that correspond to the inclinations of the natural appetite, about which we will talk later; these natural desires are, for example those for food and drink, and intercourse. However, there are then the acquired desires that entail a cognitive apprehension of a good to which one is not inclined by nature, such as a trip and a profession. That does not mean that a good desired with the natural desire cannot also be desired with the acquired desire, since cognitive apprehension incorporates a singular concretion of that good; that is why man can naturally desire food, and then acquire the desire for Camembert cheese, for example. Natural desires are thus common to men and animals; they are always finite, because they are determined by nature, and when they are satisfied, *delectatio* or pleasure is reached. However, the acquired desires are exclusive to man because even though they are sensitive they are accompanied by reason; hence, they are characterized by a certain infinity, which is something proper to reason—St. Thomas gives the example of desiring limitless wealth—in this case, the *delectatio* produced when the desired good is obtained is called *gaudium* or joy (1891, I-II, q.30, a.3–4).

18.3.2 Natural Appetite

What we have seen vis-à-vis sensitive desire has led us to talk on the one hand of those desires that follow the natural appetite and, on the other, of those that are accompanied by reason. Let us now see what this natural appetite consists of and

whether one can speak of a desire of that appetite that is prior to cognitive appre-hension. We will then talk about the desire of reason itself.

In Saint Thomas, the "natural appetite" is understood in several ways. In a broad sense, he refers to the inclination of anything to a good suited to its nature; in this way, any power of the soul desires its object with the natural appetite. In other places, he restricts the meaning to any appetite, except for the rational. And finally, he understands by "natural appetite" in a proper sense as "a certain inclination to good by their natural constitution, without knowledge, as plants and inanimate bodies. Such an inclination towards good is called *a natural appetite*" (1888, I, q.59 a.1 c.). We will use it according to this more proper meaning.

We will not enter here into the demonstration of this natural appetite, for which we refer to a recent work by Antonio Prevosti, from the Barcelona Thomist School (2016). Regardless, it should be noted with Prevosti on the one hand that the affirmation of the natural appetite is linked to that of the purpose in nature and, more generally, to the principle of purpose according to which every agent works for an end; and on the other, that the natural appetite will allow the sensitive and rational appetite to be understood adequately, and therefore of the desire in each one.

What interests us in this study is to ask ourselves whether there are desires in this natural appetite. To this, we must answer first that every natural appetite loves. Natural love is the connaturalness of the natural appetite towards what it desires, which is its perfection; Saint Thomas (1891, I-II, q.26, a.1 c.; Astorquiza 2002) gives the example of gravity, which consists of the connaturalness of a heavy body with its centre. This natural love is the principle of the movement by which the subject is directed towards the desired good. Therefore, it must be said that this movement is what we call "desire". Therefore, a natural desire of its own perfection must be affirmed in every entity: "Every creature, even insensitive ones, naturally desires its end" (1856, I, d.1, q.4, a.1 arg.1).

It is important to emphasize that this natural desire with which all things are moved by the connaturalness of love is towards an ultimate end, as we read at the beginning (1969, II, lect.2, n.3). And this ultimate end is God, whom all things naturally desire (1888, I, q.44, a.4 ad 3).

Thus, being unable to reach it through knowledge, the way all things move towards God is by resembling his Goodness by acquiring perfection itself, which is divine likeness (1961b, II, c.46).

Therefore, we can conclude this section by affirming the existence in every entity of a natural appetite, whose love or connaturalness with the entity's own perfection is the principle of the movement or desire to reach it; and that this natural desire is ultimately a desire of God.

18.3.3   Rational Desire

Having addressed natural and sensitive desire, we are left with only the higher desire to address, which belongs to the rational appetite. It was mentioned earlier that

sensitive desire in man is accompanied by reason. Let us now see whether desire also exists in reason itself.

The natural appetite, which inclines to perfection itself, occurs in every entity, including those of a rational nature. St. Thomas identifies various natural inclinations of man in the *Summa Theologiae* (1891, I-II, q.94, a.2 c.): First is the inclination that is common to every substance, which leads it to preserve its own being; then the common one to every animal, which moves it to beget and raise offspring; and finally there are those that are specific to man, which move him to know the truth about God and to live in society.

These natural inclinations entail moral demands that we know as "natural law". Indeed, that to which he is inclined, man apprehends as good and, therefore, as something that must be sought. Therefore, for natural desires to become rational desires, the apprehension of intellect is required; this captures the very reason of good, and therefore the rational appetite or "will" may desire not only a particular good, such as the sensitive good, but also the universal good (1888, I, q.59, a.1 c.). However, the will would not desire anything if the prior ordination of the natural appetite did not occur. As Aquinas teaches: "Each power of the soul is a form or nature, and has a natural inclination to something. Wherefore, each power desires by the natural appetite that object which is suitable to itself" (1888, I, q.80, a.1 ad 2).

Moreover, every act of the will requires a first one as a foundation, but already belonging to the rational order. In this way, apprehension by the understanding of the universal good moves the will to desire the ultimate end. This is what Canals affirmed at the beginning of this chapter as a fundamental thesis of the teaching of Aquinas.

While the natural appetite is characterized by being moved by another—which is the divine Intellect—the rational appetite, on the other hand, moves itself towards the end (1891, I-II, q.1, a.2 c.). This dominion of one's actions is possible because every rational substance subsists in its being, and this makes it the possessor of its being and its acts. Hence, the voluntary act very clearly manifests the grounding of the act in the being and, moreover, the dignity of the subject that acts rationally. It is what leads to this subject being called "person", as Saint Thomas so aptly teaches (1888, I, q.29, a.1 c.).

As occurs in the passionate order, rational desire presupposes and is born from rational love of the good in which the will connaturally indulge itself; and it ordains itself to rest in a rational joy: "Intellectual nature so as to rest therein when possessed, and when not possessed to seek to possess it, both of which pertain to the will" (1888, I, q.19, a.1 c.).

When the desired good is the Supreme Good, then man is heading towards his true happiness. Indeed, only an infinite Good can fully satisfy the desire for the infinity of rational nature: "Final and perfect happiness can consist in nothing else than the vision of the Divine Essence ... man is not perfectly happy, so long as something remains for him to desire and seek" (1891, I-II, q.3, a.8 c.).

This rational desire that we identify in man, and of which we have experience in the innermost of our conscience, we must also affirm in angels; thus, for example Saint Thomas affirms that angels may desire new revelations (1888, I, q.58, a.1 ad 2;

q.60, a.3 c.). It happens as in the Blessed, who may desire the glorification of the body (1891, I-II, q.67, a.4 ad 3). However, it is not so in God. Indeed, desire implies the lack of a good, which the appetite then moves to achieve; and that is incompatible with divine perfection. There are rational love and joy in God, but not desire (1888, I, q.20, a.1 c.).

18.3.4   Analogy of Desire

Having identified and distinguished the types of desire, namely natural, sensitive and rational, we can ask ourselves whether what is understood about the nature of desire is expressed in the same way in all these cases. And it is clear that we must answer that all of them are expressed according to a certain analogy (Prevosti 2016).

To understand this analogical predication of the term "desire" we must consider what is said in common and then identify the differences. It seems that what is common to all desire is the relationship between the movement of the appetite and the desired good that is not yet possessed. However, this relationship is different in each type of desire with respect to the subject and to the object. Regarding the subject, it moves itself more in some cases than in others. And with respect to the object, some desires are more united than others to the object. And we understand that this defines what proportionally differentiates the types of desire.

Thus, it must firstly be said that desire in its most proper sense is the rational desire. Indeed, man and angels move themselves in order to achieve the desired good, which is very close to the will given the immateriality of the union that is achieved with intellectual operations.

A smaller proportion describes the sensitive desire, which is a passion of the appetite and that is not so many moves as it is moved; that is why Aquinas points out that, "although it does not belong to the soul in itself to be passive and to be moved, yet it belongs accidentally" (1891, I-II, q.22, a.1 ad 2). The proximity of the appetite to the desired object is, in this case, less, since the material conditions for its achievement mediate.

And finally, "desire" is predicated in an improper sense of natural desire, because in this case the appetite does not move at all, but is entirely moved; and the good is therefore much further from the subject by the latter's reliance on an external agent.

18.4   The Morality and Educability of Desire

Indeed, because the proportion between the movement and the desired good occurs more properly in the rational desire, we can recognize in this a condition of morality that does not occur in the other desires. Aquinas is very clear on this: moral good and evil is only properly found in rational desire. And if we consider it in the sensitive desire it is only insofar as it is under the rule of reason (1891, I-II, q.24, a.1 c.). In this

way, there are no good or bad sensitive desires for being desires, but for being convenient or contrary to reason. Thus, one may want money to help someone in need or to be unfaithful; in the first case, the passion will be good, but bad in the second case.

Sensitive desire, like all passion, indirectly influences the will, which is the power in which the morality of human acts resides. This happens in two ways. Firstly, because the vehemence of desire concentrates the appetitive attention of the subject in such a way that the same will is affected; and secondly, because this sensitive vehemence also concentrates the attention of the imagination, consequently affecting the judgment of the reason on which the act of the will depends (1891, I-II, q.77, a.1 c.). If this influence of passion on the will moves to a sin or morally bad act, it must be said that it supposes a certain diminution in its malice—although not complete— in that it antecedently weakened the will (1891, I-II, q. 77, a.6 c.). Therefore, the sin originated by passion is said to be a "sin of weakness": "hence, the Philosopher compares the incontinent man to an epileptic, whose limbs move in a manner contrary to his intention" (1891, I-II, q.77, a.3 c.).

This weakness is caused by other prior sins, which tilt the appetites in the opposite direction to the order of reason, but above all by original sin, which corrupted nature. Aquinas, therefore, uses the term "concupiscence" not as a sensitive desire without paying attention to its morality, but as a disorder in the concupisible appetite: "and in so far as the concupiscible is deprived of its order to the delectable, moderated by reason, there is the wound of concupiscence"(1891, I-II, q.85, a.3 c.). For its part, the disorder in the will caused by sin, which affects the rational desire, is called "malice".

While the natural appetite is determined by its object, it is not so with the sensitive appetite as governed by reason and with the rational appetite. Habits are therefore needed by which it is disposed stably for its appropriate operation (1891, I-II, q.50, a.3); these habits are moral virtues. However, this is even more necessary as appetites are injured by original sin; however, against this the virtue acquired by the powers themselves is no longer enough—Divine grace is necessary (1891, I-II, q.109, a.2), which infuses supernatural virtues in the powers.

Temperance is the virtue that perfects sensitive desire, moderating it in order that it follows reason: "Temperance, which denotes a certain moderation, is chiefly concerned with those passions that tend towards sensible goods, viz. desire and pleasure" (1897, II-II, q.141, a.3 c.).

If we consider rational desires, we can identify the virtue of justice as firstly perfective of them. It provides the will to give each one their own, and that includes the desire for justice to be done. Thus, for example when speaking of the punishment of sinners, Aquinas says one should desire not so much this punishment as justice (1897, II-II, q.25, a.6 ad 3). We may see more clearly the presence of desire in one of the potential parts of justice, which is the virtue of religion. When Saint Thomas addresses this, he frequently mentions desire as that which moves to the prayer of petition: "The Lord is said to hear the desires of the poor, either because desire is the cause of their petition, since a petition is like the interpreter of desire" (1897, II-II, q.83, a.1 ad 2).

Now, rational desire is found above all in friendship, which is not so much a virtue as something that accompanies virtue. In friendship, both the presence of the friend and the good for the friend as if it were for this friend are desired (1891, I-II, q.28, a.2 c.).

We can also identify a projection of the virtues of the sensitive appetites in the rational part, in that rational desires require moderation or strengthening. In this way, studiousness is the virtue that moderates the rational desire for knowledge of the truth in order to not fall into the vice of curiosity, and magnanimity is the virtue that strengthens the rational desire to acquire honours proper to virtue. These rational desires are nevertheless accompanied by passions, and hence the work of these virtues is concerned with both rational and sensitive desires. This is very important for education, because to promote virtues in the will one has to start promoting virtues in the sensitive appetites. A child who possesses sensitive modesty will be well disposed for the virtue of chastity, and a child who possesses sensitive hope or trust will be well disposed to the virtue of magnanimity.

Finally, charity is the theological virtue that perfects the rational desire of the will ordained by grace to the friendship with God. Saint Thomas explains that, in the same way that love, desire and joy are followed in the sensitive part, so it happens in the rational part; thus, charity is the virtue which perfects both love and rational desire and joy in order to the supernatural friendship with God (1897, II-II, q.28, a.4 c.). However, if the reason for difficulty is added in the attainment of eternal happiness, we will have to distinguish another theological virtue different from charity, namely hope (1897, II-II, q.17, a.1).

All this perfectibility of desire through the virtues becomes educability if we consider it from the perspective of the need for help of another to acquire them. Hence, education is defined by Aquinas as the promotion of children to the state of virtue: "Nature does not tend only to the generation of the offspring, but also to its conduct and promotion to the perfect state of man as man, which is the state of virtue" (1858, IV, d.26, q.1, a.1 c.).

18.5 The Education of Desire

The definition of education given by Aquinas identifies marriage as its natural place and parents as the main educators. Moreover, education in the family culminates in the process initiated with procreation and subsequent parenting in perfect continuity with both. Hence, education can be considered a "second procreation" (Martínez 2011), because it promotes virtue in the child, which is like a "second nature". Let us, therefore, see how desire is educated within the heart of family life; here, I will continue my study on the education of the passions in Saint Thomas Aquinas (2019).

18.5.1   Affective Education in the Family: The Experimentum

The continuity between procreation, upbringing and education requires the growth of the virtues of the soul to be accompanied by adequate development of the body that helps life according to reason; indeed, as Aquinas indicates: "reason is strengthened as the movement and emanation of moods rest" (1858, IV, d.27, q.2, a.2 c.). This allows the identification in the child of several stages that are characterized by a gradual calming of the passions and the growth of rational life (1858, IV, d.27, q.2, a.2 c.): "infancy" until the age of seven, in which the child receives the upbringing and finds himself still in a "spiritual womb" (1897, II-II, q.10, a.12 c.); "childhood" until the age of 14 years, in which education begins and the child is sent to school; "adolescence" until 25 years old, in which the child can already understand by himself; and "youth", in which his prudence allows him to marry, which is a sign of having reached the end of education.

However, the connection of passions with corporeality, which is the principle of individuation, entails different dispositions in each child, which we know as "temperament". And as passions, in turn, provide for rational life, there are some children who, due to their temperament, are more inclined to some rational operations and virtues, and other children to others: "In this way one man has a natural aptitude for science, another for fortitude, another for temperance" (1891, I-II, q.63, a.1 c.). Therefore, the education of the child should begin by addressing the passions according to his particular "temperament", and this even when the child does not yet have the use of reason and finds himself in that spiritual womb mentioned previously; in this case, it will be the parents' reason that should ordain their children's passions so that they are adequately provided of virtue.

The medium for this education of the passions in the child who still does not respond to the interpellation of reason is the so-called *experimentum* (Echavarría 2002), which is an association of sensitive memories that share something in common (I, lect.1, n.17). It should be noted with Aquinas that these memories are intensely imprinted on the child's memory, as he is greatly surprised by novelties (1949, tr.II, III, n.6). This experience of the infancy then acquires in the child the value of the principle for subsequent education in virtue (1961a, I, c.11, n.1).

These memories that constitute the *experimentum* are also ordained by the judgements of the cogitative faculty when comparing them to each other (Echavarría 2008). This allows the common factor among all memories to be recognized, and to judge them as harmful or useful, thus moving the sensitive appetite to put the passions into action (1950, I, lect.1, n.15; 1953, a.13 c.). While the child has no use of reason, this sensitive judgement, which shapes the *experimentum*, is carried out at the behest of the natural appetite, which inclines him to the good that suits him by nature and, ultimately, to the ultimate end without forgetting however that he also depends on the temperament according to the corporeal condition of each child, and also on the consequent passions (1891, I-II, q.77, a.1 c.). The parents' prudence should be ordaining or educating this experience of the child, both regarding those

things that will be kept in the memory and, above all, of those that are useful and harmful to him. One of the means to do so is language; indeed, the child imitates the parents' language and designates things in the way his parents do, even when he does not yet understand the meaning of what he hears. In this way, the language of the child, which is participatory of his parents, is integrated into his *experimentum* and serves as a principle for the subsequent ordination that he will execute with reason (1969, VII, lect.3, n.17).

The most relevant part of the *experimentum*, as Martín Echavarría (2002) teaches, is that it does not exclusively have as its object the external sensitive good, but rather refers mainly to itself, given that the most fundamental connatural inclination of the soul is love of the self. Thus, this entire set of perceptions and sensitive judgements configure in the child a perception and judgement about himself, which we could call *experimentum sui*. It can be deduced hence that affective disorders in children are due to a false image of themselves, a wrong *experimentum*; thus, as Echavarría explains: "To cure a person of their deviations of character ... it is necessary to dismantle the false image, or the network of representations, that have been made of himself and reality" (2002).

18.5.2   The Education of Desire in the Family

But how does the child achieve an *experimentum* that serves as the ordaining principle of his desires?

Firstly, because of the experience of parental love. Love is the first passion, which, as we already know, is the principle of desire. Sensitive love originates through the natural inclination to good in which the sensitive appetite is satisfied through connaturalness (1891, I-II, q.26, a.1 c.). The child performs that inclination when he experiences parental love, responding with a connatural love towards his parents. The child perceived himself as being something of his parents, located in a spiritual womb, certainly, but still very physical and sensitive: mainly the arms and caresses of his mother. In this belonging, the child also experiences himself as coming from and similar to his parents; and as something similar is loved through connaturalness (1891, I-II, q.27, a.3 c.), this first connatural love of the child towards the parents arises, especially towards the mother (1891, I-II, q.27, a.1 c.). Hence, the child forms an *experimentum sui* in which he judges himself as an image of his parents and as a good loved by them. This *experimentum* is a necessary requirement for subsequent education, and without this experience the child's heart is fundamentally injured in its affectivity, which is very difficult to heal from a merely natural perspective.

This love has several effects on the child, effects which continue to configure his *experimentum*: a willingness to receive the good that comes from the parents; complacency through the presence of parents; and, finally, sorrow in their absence and the fervour, or the vehement desire, to be with them (1891, I-II, q.28, a.5). That is the most fundamental desire that arises connaturally in the child, the effect of the

experience of parental love. However, the vehemence of this desire is such that it should be appropriately moderated by the parents themselves, thus providing the child with the virtue of temperance.

And what is said about this fundamental desire must be said as a consequence of every other desire present in the child's life: food, toys, etc., but without losing sight of the fact that what will be the ordaining principle of all the others will be the desire to be with the parents. Saint Thomas thus distinguishes different parts of temperance according to the desired goods (1897, II-II, q.143–169): shame before dishonourable acts, honesty of virtue, abstinence from food, sobriety of drinking, sexual chastity, moderation in pleasures of the touch, clemency before punishments, meekness before the desire for revenge, humility before the desire of one's own excellence, studiousness before the desire to know the truth and the modesty of the external acts, eutrapelia before games and modesty in dress. All these virtues, which form part of temperance, must be educated in the child; however, if we were to explore each in detail it would be an extensive pedagogical treatise. Nonetheless, let us consider three of them for their strong involvement in the education of the *experimentum*: humility, honesty and shame.

Humility is the moderation of the desire for excellence (1897, II-II, q.161). Since this entails a true judgment about one's self, we consider that for the education of humility there is nothing more appropriate than the proper configuration of that *experimentum sui* of which we previously spoke.

On the other hand, the child who desires the presence of his parents and the good that comes from them will then also desire that honesty of the virtuous life that the parents wish for him (1897, II-II, q.145), which is manifestly appropriate for education. This is what affectively moves the child to desire to behave well, who is always grounded in the presence of his parents, who like that good behaviour. In contrast, the continued absence of parents and the experience of feeling himself in strange hands is a cause of distrust vis-à-vis his own behaviour.

Finally, there is also another passion that is highly appropriate for education and that comes to the aid of the desire for virtue. It is shame or the fear of falling into a dishonourable act (1897, II-II, q.144). Thus, if the presence of the parents moves the child to behave well, it also causes him to be ashamed of acting badly because it displeases his parents. It should be of no surprise then that the aforementioned repeated absence of the parents leads the child to behave badly, since the fundamental reason for him to behave honestly is missing, namely the presence of his parents. Such behaviour is very often a means the child uses to get the attention of his parents, and thus obtain that presence he misses.

However, the child can see his desire to behave well reinforced through sensitive rewards, and his fear of falling into evil thanks to punishments. It is the right method for education, as most parents know from experience; and it is effective insofar as the child understands himself to be loved, even when he is punished. This allows the child to be provided with an education in the virtue of justice, which ordains the rational desire for the just. Disorder occurs when there is an excess of rewards accompanied in addition by the absence of the parents, which is what the child most desires; or an excess of punishments, which leads the child to judge himself as bad.

The latter highlights another passion that is very important in the education carried out by parents, and this passion is mercy. This is a kind of sorrow that suddenly occurs in the concupiscible appetite through the apprehension of the evil of another experienced as one's own (1891, I-II, q.35, a.8). Parents must correct and even punish their children when they do wrong, but always with a merciful heart, which means condoling with the child in his grief for having done wrong. This has three effects, according to Aquinas (1891, I-II, q.38, a.3; q.40, a.5): first, the child is relieved in his grief by not feeling the punishment to be excessive; second, he feels loved, which is a cause of joy, which mitigates sorrow and third, it strengthens hope by seeing a possible correction of his behaviour; in other words, mercy increases the trust the child has in his parents, otherwise, the child ends up judging himself as bad and despairing of good; then he falls, on the one hand, into sloth or sorrow that he finds distressing, which drowns all good desire (1891, I-II, q.35, a.8); and, on the other, into resentful anger against those from whom he expected good, against his parents (1897, II-II, q.35, a.4 ad 2). This mercy should not only be experienced by the child in the relationship with his parents, but also with his brothers and friends, who help each other to achieve the desired good and avoid the abhorred evil; a beautiful experience of childhood friendship is the principle of friendships according to virtue in adult life.

And since mercy is absolutely necessary for education in the face of the error of naturalism in education denounced by Pius XI (1930), this reflection must be concluded by affirming the need for the perfection of all human desire through mercy, which ordains the desire of the contemplation of God. This also concerns education in family life because, as Aquinas teaches, "the most important good of marriage is the offspring, which must be educated in the worship of God" (1858, IV, d.38, q.1, a.1 c.). Hence, parents should primarily promote the desire to contemplate God in heaven. The path will be none other than theological charity, that is, an endearing friendship with the Heart of Jesus and a filial relationship with God the Father and the Virgin Mary, strengthened by a prayer of petition in which the child presents his wishes with all trust or theological hope. This will perfect the *experimentum*'s education also during the child's infancy. Even when he has not experienced parental love, he will always be able to find in that divine and human Heart that which he lacked in his childhood, which left him wounded, and in trust he will then heal his heart.

It serves to conclude this study on the education of desire the psalm with which Francisco Canals also concludes his work on the metaphysics of knowledge and which he describes as "prayerful supplication as a word emanating from the human heart, expressive of the yearning desire or craving of the vision of God face to face" (1987); prayer that parents should teach their children to enliven in them the desire of God: "My heart says of you, "Seek His Face!" Your face, Lord, I will seek" (Psalm 27, 8).

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Chapter 19
Attention and Education: Key Ideas from Charles S. Peirce

Jaime Nubiola

> *"L'attention est la forme la plus rare et la plus pure de la générosité."*
> Letter from Simone Weil to Joë Bousquet, April 13, 1942.

Abstract People working in education easily discover that the key to intellectual growth is attention, because there is where will and intelligence come together. Or, to put it negatively, attention difficulties—what students call "concentration problems"—very often reflect breaches in the intimate convergence of affectivity and rationality that frequently result in inefficiency and unproductivity. The objective of this chapter is to recover some of the brilliant insights, not fully appreciated until now, of the American philosopher and scientist Charles S. Peirce (1839–1914)—the founder of pragmatism and one of the "fathers" of contemporary psychology—on the crucial role that attention plays in shaping our inferences and interpretations, that is, in human learning. Aristotle affirmed that human beings began to philosophize when they were moved by wonder, but complementary to this view is the thesis of Charles S. Peirce that the trigger for any genuine research is surprise. It is not only mere admiration that moves us to investigate, but also that which surprises us and demands our attention. Clarifying the role of attention opens the way to a better understanding of desire in moral education. The teachings of Charles S. Peirce—provided here with some textual support—may be extremely useful.

Keywords Attention · Effort · Surprise · C. S. Peirce · Pragmatism

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19.1 Introduction[1]

People working in education easily discover that the key to intellectual growth is attention. Experts from all disciplines are voicing that mobile phones and electronic devices of all types are stealing the attention and minds of young people who are no longer interested in what educators want to teach them. It is a commonplace among teachers and the general public the assertion—which is usually also done with claims of scientific rigor—that the Internet, cell phones, and the proliferation of digital devices in our society are deteriorating the attention capacity of children, young people and, of course, a good number of adults. This might be somehow a myth (Furedi 2015), but the role of attention in learning is without any doubt a key issue for education.

The objective of this chapter is to recover some of the brilliant insights, not fully appreciated until now, of the American philosopher and scientist Charles S. Peirce (1839–1914)—the founder of pragmatism and one of the "fathers" of contemporary psychology—on the crucial role that attention plays in shaping our inferences and interpretations; that is, in human learning. The chapter is composed of five sections: (1) A brief presentation of the contemporary approach to attention; (2) An introduction to Charles S. Peirce as a scientist, philosopher, educator, and psychologist; (3) Surprise as the trigger of attention: the role of abduction; (4) Some key ideas from Charles S. Peirce for educating attention; and (5) Conclusion.

19.2 The Contemporary Approach to Attention

Although the use of the notion and the term "attention" seems clear in ordinary language, scientists do not agree about its precise definition, nor about its mechanisms. One well-known definition of attention is the one found in William James' *The Principles of Psychology* (1890):

> Every one knows what attention is. It is the taking possession by the mind, in clear and vivid form, of one out of what seem several simultaneously possible objects or trains of thought. Focalization, concentration, of consciousness are of its essence. It implies withdrawal from some things in order to deal effectively with others, and is a condition which has a real opposite in the confused, dazed, scatterbrained state which in French is called *distraction*, and *Zerstreutheit* in German.

In spite of its central role in mental life, attention has been mostly overlooked or neglected in philosophical and psychological studies (Siéroff 2007). Nowadays, attention is a central notion for economy since all the advertising and entertainment businesses are competing among themselves for the attention of their users: the

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economy of attention is a real issue for the market (Davenport and Beck 2001; Lanham 2006). Nevertheless, the real psychological processes of attention are poorly understood.

By the 1960s, neuroscience began to transform the study of human behavior in general and attention in particular with new technological devices such as functional magnetic resonance imaging which allows to identify activity in different parts of the brain when the subjects think, feel, or act. Where attention is concerned, most experiments involve vision and hearing, since those systems are more suitable for measurement. But, "there's no single, widely accepted way to measure attention, which involves lots of mental processes [...] Research now suggests that like *consciousness* or *mind*, *attention* is a term for a complex neurological and behavioral business that seems like more than the sum of its parts. There's no tidy 'attention center' in the brain" (Gallagher 2009). As this author summarizes:

> Neuroscience's truly groundbreaking insight into attention is the discovery that its basic mechanism is a process of selection. This two-part neurological sorting operation allows you to focus by enhancing the most compelling, or "salient," physical object or "high-value" mental subject in your ken and suppressing the rest. Outside an elite scientific circle, however, this finding's implications for everyday life have been stunningly unremarked.

This point should be highlighted from the beginning: attention is a process of selection. The world is full of stimuli, and when someone pays attention (involuntarily or voluntarily) to some event (for instance, to a car crash when driving, or a movie on a screen at night when one is at home) most of the rest of the world remains in oblivion: "your attentional system selects a certain chunk of what's there, which gets valuable cerebral real estate and, therefore, the chance to affect your behavior. Moreover, this thin slice of life becomes part of your reality and the rest is consigned to the shadows" (Gallagher 2009). On the contrary, when something occupies our mind so intensely that we are not able to draw our attention to the movie we want to watch, we realize that we have a problem, that something disruptive interferes with our train of thoughts, claiming for our attention. This example of common everyday experience already suggests the relevant emotional component involved in attention.

"The intelligence can only be led by desire, For there be desire, there must be joy and pleasure. The intelligence only grows and bears fruit in joy. The joy of learning is as indispensable to studies as breathing is to running" (Weil 2012). Happiness is, for most of us, the by-product of focused attention on only one person or activity that interests us; on the contrary, fragmented attention is the most common source of anxiety and distress.

This process of selective attention is essential for learning and intellectual growth. Understanding cognitive processes underlying attention has the potential to help in the design of educational strategies that optimize the development of this capacity and promote children's socio-emotional adjustment and their ability to learn at school (Rueda et al. 2016). When students report that they have "attention difficulties" (what in Spain is known as "concentration problems"), this very often reflects some breaches in the intimate convergence of affectivity (emotion) and rationality (reason and will). This intimate gap frequently results in inefficiency and

unproductiveness. The solution lies not in mere effort, the breath holding, eyebrows frowning, or the muscle contractions, that children do when teachers ask them to pay attention, as Simone Weil describes. On the contrary, she explains: "Attention is an effort, perhaps the greatest of all efforts, but it is a negative effort" (Weil 2012). Weil adds:

> Attention consists in suspend our thought; letting it become available, empty and able to be penetrated by the object. It means holding the idea close to oneself, but at a lower level and not in contact with it, forced to utilize the diverse knowledge we have acquired [. . .]. And above all, our thought must be empty, expectant, without searching, but ready to receive the object meant to penetrate it in its naked truth.

Everything said until now clearly suggests that there are different types and levels of attention. For this reason, in order to get a clearer view of the complex behavior of attention, it is useful to classify the different forms in which it appears in our observation. Since the beginning of the twentieth century—as it may be read in the entry on attention in Baldwin's *Dictionary of Philosophy and Psychology* (1901–05)—two main sorts of attention are commonly distinguished: one type, identified as "reflex," "passive," or sometimes inappropriately called "spontaneous," on the one hand; and "voluntary" or "active" on the other hand. Attention would be *reflex* when drawn without the subject's foreknowledge by an unexpected stimulation (like the car crash we see when driving), and *voluntary* when (1) it follows a purpose to attend, or (2) pursues an object intrinsically *interesting*. If the first of these cases is called "volitional," the second may be named "unvolitional" or "spontaneous," both being "voluntary."

As it was mentioned above, attention is always a *process of selection*, of selective directedness of our mental lives, but the nature of this selectivity is one of the main points of disagreement between the experts of this field and it is also what makes the phenomenon so interesting to study. In some cases attention seems a *perceptual* phenomenon; in other cases it is a phenomenon related to *action*. In some instances the selectivity of attention is *voluntary*, but in other instances it is nonvoluntary, driven, quite independent of the subject's volition, because of the high salience of attention-grabbing items in the perceptual field. Sometimes attention requires effort, but most of the time—as Weil's quotation suggests—it is a *negative effort*, which demands the obviation of distractions. "The difficulty of giving a unified theory of attention that applies to attention's voluntary and involuntary instances, and to its perceptual and enactive instances, makes attention a topic of philosophical interest in its own right," concludes Christopher Mole (2017).

In this somehow perplexing intellectual situation, it might be very useful to get back to the figure and thought of the American scientist and philosopher Charles S. Peirce (1839–1914), who "made a good many quantitative experiments to ascertain what he could of the nature of consciousness and of attention" (*CP* 7.396, c.1893).[2]

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[2]The habitual convention for quoting Peirce is used along the chapter: *CP* refers to his *Collected Papers*, followed by the number of volume and paragraph and the year of composition.

19.3   Charles S. Peirce as a Scientist, Philosopher, Educator, and Psychologist

The figure and thought of Charles S. Peirce have remained neglected for decades, but since the last years of the twentieth century there has been a general renewal of interest in his work. The late American novelist Walker Percy wrote on Peirce that "most people have never heard of him, but they will" (Percy 1989), and it seems that this prophetic statement is becoming a reality. In recent times, the figure of Peirce has been gaining an ever-increasing relevance in very different areas of knowledge: astronomy, metrology, geodesy, mathematics, logic, philosophy, theory and history of science, semiotics, linguistics, econometrics, and psychology (Fisch 1980). In all these fields, Peirce has been considered a pioneer, a forerunner and even a "father" or "founder" (in the cases of semiotics and pragmatism, for example). As Plowright (2016) has recently asserted, "it is arguable that Peirce's contribution to thinking was, indeed, revolutionary."

Although Charles S. Peirce was a philosopher and a logician, he was first and foremost a real practitioner of science. Not only was he trained as a chemist at Harvard, but for thirty years (1861–1891) he worked regularly and strenuously for the U. S. Coast Survey as a metrologist and an observer in astronomy and geodesy. Having done research in astronomy, mathematics, logic and philosophy, and in the history of all these sciences, Peirce tried all his life to disclose the logic of scientific inquiry. In addition to his personal experience of scientific practice, his sound knowledge of the history of science and of the history of philosophy helped him establish a general cartography of scientific methodology. In this sense, following Hookway to a certain extent (1985), I think that the most accurate understanding of Peirce's philosophy is to see him as a traditional, systematic philosopher, one who deals with the modern problems of science, truth, and knowledge from a highly valuable personal experience as a logician and as an experimental researcher in the bosom of an international community of scientists and thinkers.

Peirce made relevant contributions to deductive logic, but he was primarily interested in the logic of science, and, especially, in what he called "*abduction*" (as opposed to *deduction* and *induction*), which is the process whereby hypotheses are generated in order to explain the surprising facts. Indeed, Peirce considered abduction to be at the heart, not only of scientific research, but of all ordinary human activities. Science is, for Peirce, "a living historic entity" (*CP* 1.44, c.1896), and "a living and growing body of truth" (*CP* 6.428, 1893). Already in his early years, Peirce identified the community of inquirers as essential to scientific rationality (*CP* 5.311, 1868). The flourishing of scientific reason can only take place in the context of research communities: the pursuit of truth is a corporate task and not an individual search for foundations. Throughout his life, but especially in his later years, Peirce insisted that the popular image of science as something finished and complete is totally opposed to what science really is, at least in its original practical intent that constitutes science "is not so much correct conclusions, as it is a correct method. But the method of science is itself a scientific result. It did not spring out of the brain of a

beginner, but it was rather a historic attainment and a scientific achievement" (*CP* 6.428, 1893).

During 5 years, from the fall of 1879 until December 1884 Charles S. Peirce worked as a part-time lecturer in logic at the recently created Johns Hopkins University, in Baltimore, Maryland, where graduate studies involving research were developed for the first time in the United States. As his students remember, Peirce was an inspiring teacher for committed and advanced graduate students, but perhaps unintelligible to others. For instance, Christine Ladd-Franklin remarks that Peirce as a teacher did not attract because of "anything that could be called an inspiring personality" but rather "by creating the impression that we had before us a profound, original, dispassionate and impassioned seeker of truth" (Ladd-Franklin 1916). Joseph Jastrow, another student of Peirce, highlights that "a deep conviction of the significance of the problems presented and a mastery of the intellectual processes were his sole and adequate pedagogical equipment" (Jastrow 1916).

Since 1862, Peirce became acquainted with experimental psychology, a discipline that had just crossed the Atlantic from Germany. He was considerably impressed by the works of German psychologists such as Weber, Fechner, Wundt, and Helmholtz. In his years at Johns Hopkins, Peirce developed experiments in psycho-physics with his student Joseph Jastrow, which were published as "On small differences of sensations" (1885). This made him not only one of the first experimental psychologists in the Americas, but the very first to use sophisticated statistical methods for evaluating psychological experiments (Bellucci 2015; Fisch 1986).

Several authors have stressed the great importance of psychology in Peirce's work, although his role for the development of contemporary psychology has been almost totally neglected in favor of the dominant figures of his colleagues William James and G. Stanley Hall (Cadwallader 1975; Hendrick 1993). It seems important to note that Peirce developed a full semiotic theory that makes it possible to better understand the attention behavior. To put a simple example, when our mobile phone rings, it calls our attention, but the object of the sound is not to listen attentively to the ringtone, but rather to pick up the phone. The call of attention is addressed toward our action, and our action is embedded in a *habit*: we are used to picking up the mobile phone when it rings (or at least we are costumed to check the name or number of whoever is calling or texting us in order to decide if we want or not to attend to the call or text).

The center of Peirce's psychology is the notion of habit. As he writes in his *Minute Logic*, "the taking of habits [...] is the very market-place of psychology" (*CP* 7.367, c.1902). A recent author adds: "habits represent a thread that runs throughout all of Peirce's writings" (Massecar 2016). In one of Peirce's seminal anti-Cartesian papers, with the title "Some Consequences of Four Incapacities", there is a description about how attention affects our nervous system taking habits, that deserves to be quoted here in order for us to get a glimpse of Peirce's approach as a psychologist (*CP* 5.297, 1868):

> Attention is roused when the same phenomenon presents itself repeatedly on different occasions, or the same predicate in different subjects. We see that *A* has a certain character, that *B* has the same, *C* has the same; and this excites our attention, so that we say, "*These*

have this character." Thus attention is an act of induction; but it is an induction which does not increase our knowledge, because our "these" covers nothing but the instances experienced. It is, in short, an argument from enumeration.

Attention produces effects upon the nervous system. These effects are habits, or nervous associations. A habit arises, when, having had the sensation of performing a certain act, *m*, on several occasions *a*, *b*, *c*, we come to do it upon every occurrence of the general event, *l*, of which *a*, *b*, and *c* are special cases. That is to say, by the cognition that

Every case of *a*, *b*, or *c*, is a case of *m*,

is determined the cognition that

Every case of *l* is a case of *m*.

Thus, the formation of a habit is an induction, and is therefore necessarily connected with attention or abstraction. Voluntary actions result from the sensations produced by habits, as instinctive actions result from our original nature.

This description fits well with the habit mentioned above of picking up the phone when it rings. Even for a lot of people who are accustomed to the mobile phone, they almost instinctively pick up the phone when it rings; we could even say they do this without really making a rational decision. They have a solid habit that allows them to avoid the investment of time or energy in making the decision of whether they want to answer the call or not.

For example—as Colapietro (2016) describes in a Peircean spirit—the skillful driver effectively ignores any number of vibrations and noises in the car, ones often capturing and even arresting the attention of the novice; as a result, this driver can attend to a host of other factors bearing upon the activity of driving. Obliviousness at one level opens the possibility of attention at another level. "As a result of habituation, the consciousness required initially to acquire these distinct skills and, then, to integrate them in variable patterns gives way to what has been called the *cognitive unconscious*. Far from being a locus—in a sense, a source—of repressed desires and fears, the cognitive unconscious is a resource of nuanced abilities and skills" (Colapietro 2016).

From this brief presentation of Charles S. Peirce and some of his ideas related to attention, it is easy to get the feeling that this neglected thinker of the nineteenth century can teach us something useful in order to get a clearer view of the role of attention in education.

19.4 Surprise as the Trigger of Attention: The Role of Abduction

At the very beginning of Western philosophy, Aristotle stated that "wonder" is the starting point of all search of knowledge. In his well-known passage at the beginning of the *Metaphysics,* he asserts that it is "owing to their wonder that men both now

begin and at first began to philosophize; they wondered originally at the obvious difficulties, then advanced little by little and stated difficulties about the greater matters" (982b, 12–17). In this line of thought, it is usually said that no high-tech will replace our ability to wonder at ourselves. This is true, but this assertion should be complemented with Peirce's thesis that the trigger of all genuine research is surprising. It is not only that wonder motivates us to research, but the real point is that wonder surprises us, calls our attention, and demands our understanding (Nubiola 2005).

Surprise arises from the breaking of a habit; it "breaks in upon some habit of expectation" (*CP* 6.469, 1908). Our activity of research begins when we realize that we had some erroneous expectation, which perhaps we ourselves were not even conscious of having. Our beliefs are habits, and as such, tend to force the human being to continue in belief until something surprising occurs, some new internal or external experience breaks that habit, and, in some sense, awakes us. A "surprising" phenomenon demands a regularization that makes the surprise disappear through the creation of a new habit.

Research starts with the acknowledgment of some anomaly, of something surprising. What makes a phenomenon surprising? It is not mere irregularity, for "nobody is surprised that the trees in a forest do not form a regular pattern, or asks for any explanation of such a fact. So, irregularity does not prompt us to ask for an explanation" (*CP* 7.189, 1901). Mere irregularity creates no surprise where no definite regularity is expected, because in our life irregularity is "the overwhelmingly preponderant rule of experience, and regularity only the strange exception" (*CP* 7.189, 1901). An event that can be answered in a habitual form does not cause any surprise. On the contrary, a "surprising" fact requires a change in our rational habit of belief; it demands an explanation requiring our attention. An explanation makes the facts rational, that is, it enables the acquisition of a belief that explains the fact, rendering it reasonable. When the phenomenon is reasonable it is no longer surprising. In Peirce's words:

> What an explanation of a phenomenon does is to supply a proposition which, if it had been known to be true before the phenomenon presented itself, would have rendered that phenomenon predictable, if not with certainty, at least as something very likely to occur. It thus renders that phenomenon rational,—that is, makes it a logical consequence, necessary or probable. (*CP* 7.192, 1901)

The phenomenon of surprise has no relation to Cartesian doubt, which for Peirce is a mere "paper-doubt" (*CP* 5.445, 1905; 5.416, 1905). Genuine doubt always has an external origin, usually from surprise, and cannot be produced by an act of the will (*CP* 5443, 1905). "There is every reason to suppose that belief came first, and the power of doubting long after. Doubt, usually, perhaps always, takes its rise from surprise, which supposes previous belief; and surprises come with novel environment" (*CP* 5.512, 1905). Surprise produces some irritation and demands a hypothesis; it forces us to seek an *abduction*, which transforms the surprising phenomenon into a reasonable one.

Abduction is a kind of inference that can be characterized by probability (Barrena and Nubiola 2019). The conclusion reached by abduction is conjectural, thus only probable, but, to the researcher, the conclusion seems totally plausible. In Peirce's mature thought, this plausibility, this intuitive force of abduction, is where its validity resides. In his later years Peirce coined the terms "retroduction" or reasoning backwards, and "abduction" to refer to the process of adopting a hypothesis. He dedicated a lot of writings—a good amount of them still unpublished—to the study of this operation. The study of abduction was so important for Peirce that he did not hesitate to write that the question of pragmatism "is nothing else than the question of the logic of abduction" (CP 5.196, 1903). Because Peirce's texts that illustrate his notion of abduction could be multiplied almost indefinitely, I have preferred to quote only the following lengthy one:

> *Abduction* is that kind of operation which suggests a statement in no wise contained in the data from which it sets out. There is a more familiar name for it than *abduction*; for it is neither more nor less than guessing. A given object presents an extraordinary combination of characters of which we should like to have an explanation. That there is any explanation of them is a pure assumption; and if there be, it is some one hidden fact which explains them; while there are, perhaps, a million other possible ways of explaining them, if they were not all, unfortunately, false. A man is found in the streets of New York stabbed in the back. The chief of police might open a directory and put his finger on any name and guess that that is the name of the murderer. How much would such a guess be worth? But the number of names in the directory does not approach the multitude of possible laws of attraction which would have accounted for Kepler's laws of planetary motion and in advance of verification by predictions of perturbations etc., would have accounted for them to perfection. (*MS* 692, 1901: 24–25)

We are now in a position in which it is possible to understand the logical structure of abduction. According to Peirce's explanation in the seventh of his "Lectures on Pragmatism," it is the following (*CP* 5.189, 1903):

> The surprising fact, *C*, is observed;
>> But if *A* were true, *C* would be a matter of course,
>> Hence, there is reason to suspect that *A* is true.

This is the logical structure of all abductions. The key to understanding it properly is to realize that the trigger of abduction is the surprising character of the fact referred to in the first premise, and the "motor" is the work of imagination in the second premise. In the second premise, one discovers that if some hypothesis were true it would render the surprising fact to be a matter of course, something normal, reasonable, and thus, something that is not surprising. If this is the case, it is reasonable to think that *A* is true. Not only are detective stories full of abductive reasoning, but our everyday lives contain also many examples of its effective use. Medical diagnoses, for instance, follow this structure: from certain surprising symptoms and a classification of diseases, some particular disease is chosen to make those symptoms reasonable (Eco and Sebeok 1983; Niño 2001).

Creativity lies essentially the way in which the subject relates the elements available in the different realms of his or her experience. This is not only an inferential process, for "the abductive suggestion comes to us like a flash. It is an

act of insight, although of extremely fallible insight. It is true that the different elements of the hypothesis were in our minds before; but it is the idea of putting together what we had never before dreamed of putting together which flashes the new suggestion before our contemplation" (*CP* 5.181, 1903). It is essential to pay attention to that flash, to that act of insight; otherwise, it will be engulfed in the stream of thoughts and soon forgotten.

19.5 Some Key Ideas from Charles S. Peirce for Educating Attention

Scholars on Peirce have started to realize very recently the essential role that attention has in all his conception of the human being, the processes of learning, of intellectual growth, of creativity and education. In this vein Michael Raposa declares with some solemnity: "Peirce's writings, I am convinced, embody a series of brilliant insights, not yet fully appreciated, about the crucial role that attention plays in shaping all of our inferences and interpretations" (Raposa 2017; see also Raposa 2019). In this final section of the chapter, I will deal briefly with five key ideas from Peirce that are relevant not only for educating people's attention, but for most educational processes: (1) Self-control; (2) Fostering the desire to learn; (3) Cultivating *musement*; (4) Love as attention; and (5) Mindfulness.

19.5.1 Self-Control

Education must foster a creative way of living, a way of living based on self-control and on taking the reins of one's life. It is not about controlling, but about teaching and promoting self-control (Barrena 2015). "Self-control seems to be the capacity for rising to an extended view of a practical subject instead of seeing only temporary urgency. This is the only freedom of which man has any reason to be proud" (*CP* 5.339 n., 1868). According to Peirce the ultimate aim of education is self-control:

> The righteous man is the man who controls his passions, and makes them conform to such ends as he is prepared deliberately to adopt as ultimate. If it were in the nature of a man to be perfectly satisfied to make his personal comfort his ultimate aim, no more blame would attach to him for doing so than attaches to a hog for behaving in the same way. A logical reasoner is a reasoner who exercises great self-control in his intellectual operations; and therefore the logically good is simply a particular species of the morally good. (*CP* 5.131, 1903)

In order to understand why self-control is so central in education, it might be useful to realize that, according to Peirce, and particularly to William James, "the essence of volition *is* attention" (Raposa 2016). It may be said that education is ultimately educating attention. Not only does an "educated person" pay attention to details overlooked by an uneducated one, but education also aspires to train the

person to the point in which the very person will be the real master of his or her attention. Education, in essence, may be considered as a matter of *how* one pays attention and to *which* people, actions, or things our attention is addressed. We are truly free only when we become *masters* of our attention. "One chooses to pay attention, or, more accurately, one chooses the amount of effort with which to pay attention to whatever attracts one's interest [...] Moreover, the process of choosing is ongoing, a continuous struggle to decide what matters most and to resist distraction. That is how individuals shape the world they inhabit and the sorts of persons they will become in the future", explains Raposa (2003).

In this sense, it might be also illustrative to quote another passage from Peirce about the conflicts between desires and personal freedom:

> So when certain psychologists write, chiefly in French [...] about "*involuntary attention,*" they can only mean one of two things, either *unpremeditated* attention or attention influenced by conflicting *desires*. Though "desire" implies a tendency to volition, and though it is a natural hypothesis that a man cannot *will* to do that which he has no sort of desire to do, yet we all know conflicting desires but too well, and how treacherous they are apt to be; and a desire may perfectly well be discontented with volition, *i.e.*, with what the man *will* do. The consciousness of that truth seems to me to be the root of our consciousness of free will. "Involuntary attention" involves in correct English a contradiction *in adjecto*. (*CP* 1.331, n.d.)

19.5.2 *The Desire to Learn*

Thirty years ago, I taped a sign on the door of my office (and it is still there) with Peirce's quote "The life of science is in the desire to learn" (*CP* 1.235, c.1902), which I learned from the late professor of logic at MIT, George Boolos. Like him, I put it on my door to invite students to come in to inquire, because their questions are really not only the life of science, but also the sparks that set alight my passion of teaching. The professors and students who desire to learn are the real agents, the main characters, of the whole process of education in secondary school and university. Education cannot be understood as the transmission of old solutions to outdated problems, but rather as *a way of life,* to be devoted to learn the truth wherever it may be found.

Although they are well known, Peirce's words about the first rule of reason deserve to be quoted once again (*CP* 1.136, c.1899):

> Upon this first, and in one sense this sole, rule of reason, that in order to learn you must desire to learn, and in so desiring not be satisfied with what you already incline to think, there follows one corollary which itself deserves to be inscribed upon every wall of the city of philosophy:
> DO NOT BLOCK THE WAY OF INQUIRY

The natural desire to learn of our students should be fostered and fed on a daily basis by educators. On the contrary, this natural desire could unfortunately be blocked by poorly motivated educators. Everything that is learned is ultimately

done so *with pleasure*. On the contrary, as is testified by universal experience across generations, what students have to learn without pleasure is easily forgotten. Along this line, the Deweyan motto of New Education "learning by doing" should be kept as a real guiding principle in all levels of education inspiring students in the scientific spirit of research and discovery. As Barrena has written (2015):

> It is necessary to foster in the students a scientific spirit, that is, that spirit that pursues growth and research, with all the intellectual training and the acquisition of habits that entails, that spirit that pursues knowledge and not the mere practical benefit. Students must be researchers. The institutions of teaching must also be institutions of investigation. Learning is discovering. Teachers, who should not be focused on teaching but on learning, must also be researchers. Students and teachers should share moments of doubt, concerns that will lead them to undertake joint research. You cannot give everything done to the students, but you have to find out things, check them experimentally. Teachers must understand and foster the skills students need to ask good questions, to investigate and even make discoveries.

19.5.3   Musement

There is a very useful tool to defocus attention, introduce new perspectives and develop our imagination, which both Peirce and Dewey recommended. Peirce calls *musement* this peculiar type of attention that helps us develop creative imagination; it may also be called *daydreaming,* or perhaps a mental play. In "The Neglected Argument for the Reality of God" of 1908 (*CP* 6.458, 1908), Peirce wrote:

> There is a certain agreeable occupation of mind which, from its having no distinctive name, I infer is not as commonly practiced as it deserves to be; for indulged in moderately—say through some five to six per cent of one's waking time, perhaps during a stroll—it is refreshing enough more than to repay the expenditure. [. . .] It involves no purpose save that of casting aside all serious purpose. [. . .] In fact, it is Pure Play. Now, Play, we all know, is a lively exercise of one's powers. Pure Play has no rules, except this very law of liberty. It bloweth where it listeth. It has no purpose, unless recreation. The particular occupation I mean [. . .] may take either the form of aesthetic contemplation, or that of distant castle-building (whether in Spain or within one's own moral training), or that of considering some wonder in one of the Universes, or some connection between two of the three, with speculation concerning its cause.

The first of the "three Universes" mentioned above encompasses all "mere Ideas" or pure possibilities, the second embraces the "Brute Actuality of things and facts," and the third comprises "everything which is essentially a Sign" (*CP* 6.455, 1908; Raposa 2012). The interesting point is that musement is a fruitful way of playing with ideas, particular experiences, and signs without a determinated purpose. In musement the mind goes free, loose, from one thing to another, without following predetermined rules. This way of thinking is governed by the law of liberty, but demands particular training. Musement is a mental state of free speculation, without limitation of any kind, in which the mind plays with ideas and can dialogue with what is perceived, in a dialogue made up, not only of words, but also of images; a dialogue in which imagination plays an essential role (*CP* 6.461, 1908):

> Enter your skiff of Musement, push off into the lake of thought, and leave the breath of heaven to swell your sail. With your eyes open, awake to what is about or within you, and open conversation with yourself; for such is all meditation. It is, however, not a conversation in words alone, but is illustrated, like a lecture, with diagrams and with experiments.

Contrary to what it may initially seem, it is through that imaginative wandering (whose paths sometimes might take us very far) where the logical mind reaches its maximum efficiency. For that reason, imagination and mental play are some of the most important areas to be developed in schools. Not surprisingly this activity requires a very peculiar type of attention and education (Dewey *LW* 8, 1933, 347; Barrena 2015). It is a sort of defocusing our attention, of suspending thought, to make it available, empty, and penetrable to the object (Weil 2012).

19.5.4   Love as Attention

Usually, attention is understood as a stressful concentration in our own thoughts or in a more or less painful task. However, it is extremely relevant to understand that most of our attention is usually addressed to what really interests us: people, activities, and so on. In these cases, attention does not demand a particular effort from the agent. On the contrary, full attention is very often the mark of pleasure. In this realm, attention and love may ultimately be identified.

Understanding love as attention makes sense, of course, for our social life, but also according to Peirce it is also possible to realize that knowledge grows through love, that our ideas grow in harmony with other ideas thanks to love: "The Law of Love and the Law of Reason are quite at one" (Peirce 1900). Peirce's words, now from "Evolutionary Love" (1893) provide a good statement regarding this concept (*CP* 6.288–9):

> The movement of love is circular, at one and the same impulse projecting creations into independency and drawing them into harmony. This seems complicated when stated so; but it is fully summed up in the simple formula we call the Golden Rule. [. . .] Love is not directed to abstractions but to persons; not to persons we do not know, nor to numbers of people, but to our own dear ones, our family and neighbors. "Our neighbor," we remember, is one whom we live near, not locally perhaps but in life and feeling.

> Everybody can see that the statement of St. John is the formula of an evolutionary philosophy, which teaches that growth comes only from love, from I will not say self-sacrifice, but from the ardent impulse to fulfill another's highest impulse. Suppose, for example, that I have an idea that interests me. It is my creation. It is my creature; [. . .] it is a little person. I love it; and I will sink myself in perfecting it. It is not by dealing out cold justice to the circle of my ideas that I can make them grow, but by cherishing and tending them as I would the flowers in my garden.

Highlighting the role of love as attention in educational processes puts friendship, conversation, and the central role of dialogue at the center of the notion of community.

19.5.5 Mindfulness: Overcoming Distractions

As Raposa (2016) has written, the "intellectual communities to which we might claim allegiance appear to confront the special challenge in our twenty-first century high-information society of a certain heightened threat of potential distractions. I can give neither love nor loyalty to that which I pay no attention." All the people involved in education are seriously concerned about the impact that new technologies are having in the minds of its users, particularly in the minds of the students of the digital generation. The competition for their attention is fierce: these technological resources have been created to "capture and then channel the attention of those who employ them" (Raposa 2016). For this reason, the educators of our century need to learn not only how to use fruitfully the new technologies in the classroom, but, in particular, they should try to learn and personally develop some type of *digital minimalism* in order to be able to capture the attention and love of their students (Newport 2019).

Charles S. Peirce did not use in his writings the term "mindfulness," but the activity of musement just described above might clearly be identified as a form of mindfulness. As Kathleen Hull (2008) has written, "education brings mindfulness, a quality of attention, along with a deliberate, rather than randomly reactive, manner of dealing with the world around us. Learning, on this model, is essentially active and creative, and it is based on wakeful inquiry." The tradition of American pragmatism is a conception of educational activity that insists upon a real engagement between theory and practice. In particular, Peirce insists upon the personal search for truth and he adds also a communitarian dimension in the learning process: it is the community of inquirers that gives shape to our learning in the long run.

The most important thing that we can teach our students with words and particularly with our personal example, is a *form of life* in which thought and love take the reins of our minds and our activity. This is the only real way for overcoming distractions. "We now live in a world that seems almost *designed* to eradicate the inner life," wrote the American poet Christian Wiman (2007). Teaching our students to overcome the powerful attraction of the screens that surround them makes sense only if we are able to offer them a more attractive style of living. The education of attention is probably the most pressing challenge for educators of the twenty-first century, since attention is the password of moral education.

19.6   Conclusion

In this chapter, some brilliant insights of the American philosopher and scientist Charles S. Peirce on the crucial role that attention plays in human learning, have been presented. In particular it has been highlighted, on one hand, the role of surprise as the trigger of attention and the key for any genuine research. On the other hand, a healthful clarification of the notion of attention and its types opens the way to a better

understanding of the role of desire in education. In this sense, the teachings of Charles S. Peirce (provided here with some textual apparatus) may be extremely useful to educators. "Although today we seem ignorant to it, the formation of the faculty of attention is the true goal and unique interest of all studies" (Weil 2012).

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Chapter 20
Desire in Freud

Joan d'Àvila Juanola

Abstract Freudian psychoanalysis is a therapeutic method that is contextualized within a biological anthropology in which the psyche is considered the result of unresolved needs in the strictly biological field. Despite the evolution of Freud's thinking regarding the analysis of the psychic apparatus, a mechanical-energy model that explains its organization and dynamics is still maintained. Psychic activity, therefore, is understood as a dynamic of forces in conflict with each other, which Freud conceptualizes through his own terminology. Desire, and emotion in general, is also understood as an energy that exerts a certain force within the psychic apparatus. Thus, drive, libido, and Eros are terms which one must become familiar with in order to understand Freudian psychology. Psychic functioning, individual and social human development, and culture are interpreted from a thermodynamic perspective whose aim is the discharge of excess pressure.

20.1 Freud and the Problem of Morals

Sigmund Freud (1856–1939) is a fundamental author in the history of psychology whose approach exerted and continues to exert an enormous influence on contemporary psychological therapy and Western moral culture (Deigh 2017; Forrester and Cameron 2017). Taking elements from medicine and philosophy present in his time, he developed an anthropological model (Groark 2019) that interpreted human psychic development and behavior in a way that may well have scandalized minds educated in Victorian morals (Marcus 2016).

The treatment of hysteria carried out at the Salpetriêre Hospital under the guidance of Charcot formed the backbone of his system (Miller et al. 1969). In the obituary he wrote, Freud (1893) described his admiration for and intellectual debt to

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Charcot. In his second conference on psychoanalysis, Freud (1910) recalls: "At about the same time at which Breuer was carrying on the "talking cure" with his patient, the great Charcot in Paris had begun the researches into hysterical patients at the Salpêtrière which were to lead to a new understanding of the disease." He was inspired by the concepts of the origins of mental illness and its prognosis. However, he dismissed hypnosis as a therapeutic method. Eysenck (2018) explains:

> Following Charcot, Freud used hypnosis on his private patients, but was dissatisfied with it. Instead, he became interested in a new method of treatment which had been introduced by his friend Josef Breuer, who had developed 'talking therapy', a new technique for treating hysteria, one of the major neurotic disorders of the time.

Attracted by the art of the talking cure, through which Breuer applied a cathartic method to his patients, Freud defined his therapeutic method toward the analysis of free spontaneous mental production, which he encouraged in his patients to reveal the cause of their ailment. His conviction of the value of this exercise led Freud to consider the association of ideas that patients spontaneously produced as the preferred therapeutic method to discover the origin of the mental pathology that patients presented. Freud (1910) states:

> As you already see, psychoanalysts are marked by a particularly strict belief in the determination of mental life. For them there is nothing trivial, nothing arbitrary or haphazard. They expect in every case to find sufficient motives where, as a rule, no such expectation is raised.

Freud's conviction regarding the significance of patients' free association of ideas, dreams, slips, and mistakes, was based on the assumption of a mechanical functioning of the psyche whose determinism allowed the intricacies of mental illness to be scientifically analyzed through these elements. Although it seems to be a confusing interpretation (Brown 2017), it is possible to follow Freud's statements and his therapeutic praxis upon which this position is assumed. Freud's interest in the analysis of these phenomena lies in the fact that they are understood as symptoms of mental illness from which the pathogenic core, repressed to the unconscious, can be revealed.

This deterministic approach to psychic life follows Herbart's approach, which can be acknowledged as a precursor to Freud's psychodynamic concept. Herbart explained psychic dynamics as a struggle between ideas that sought to achieve their conscious expression, overcoming the limen that separated them from psychic consciousness (Brennan and Houde 2017). Freud's concept, similar to that proposed by Herbart, is still an interpretation of psychic dynamics from a thermodynamic model (Weckowicz and Liebel-Weckowicz 1990; Zhang et al. 2016) in which psychic elements move through the action of energy-charged forces.

According to Freud, the conflict in psychic dynamics, conceived in terms of movements of energy, which charged representations, was generated by the opposing functions of the different psychic instances. The presumption of the therapist, analogous to that of a machine operator, would be to avoid excessive strain on these movements, which would be detected by the presence of the aforementioned symptoms. The therapist would carry out his work by focusing his intervention on the patient's morals, which metaphorically speaking are the regulating valve of psychic

pressure formed by patient's family and cultural education. In his work *Moses and Monotheism*, Freud (1939) explains:

> The super-ego is the successor and representative of the individual parents (and educators) who had supervised his actions in the first period of life; it carries on their functions almost unchanged. It keeps the ego in a permanent state of dependence and exercises a constant pressure on it. Just as in childhood, the ego is apprehensive about risking the love of its supreme master; it feels his approval as liberation and satisfaction and his reproaches as pangs of conscience.

This way of conceiving morals as a cause of psychic tension is clearly indebted to Nietzsche. The German philosopher clearly blames morals for being a source of man's woes because not only do they make sick those who subordinate to them, but perversely they are also used to subdue those who want to overcome them (Nietzsche 2007). Echavarría (2005), referring to both authors, explains: "for him [Nietzsche], the man as a spiritual subject is the result of the introjection of aggressive drive and cruelty, an idea taken up by Freud in his superego theory. And the main cause of this introjection would be Christianity and in particular the moral-psychological therapy of the ascetic priest."

Analyzing in greater depth Freud's criticism of ascetic morals, which should be recognized as having a Nietzschean influence, historically its origins go back to Luther, who sees this drive as sinful and, therefore, relegates human salvation to the absolute divine will. Echavarren senses this theological influence of the exclusively repressive vision of morality present in these thinkers, he calls "thinkers of suspicion," who nevertheless accept it as a necessary evil. However, Echavarren (1999) states:

> If morals are not the way leading towards a harmonic personal development, but, at its best, a fence that allows a more or less concerted social coexistence, human behaviour will always carry certain falsity, simulation. If man is permanently checked by two opposing forces -impulse and repression-, he will never have a sincere outcome to his intimacy.

Pavesi (2016) also corroborates this relationship, comparing both approaches as follows:

> For Luther, man was dominated by supernatural forces, although in some cases, this influence manifest itself through natural forces. For Freud, the ego is a sort of superstructure, the determinant forces are the life forces and the instinctive forces and, therefore, the human being is dragged by instincts. Over the centuries, there has been a Copernican revolution: no longer are supernatural entities, like the intelligence of the planets of astrology or the God or Satan of Luther, the determinants of human existence. These influences have been progressively conceived as natural forces, like instincts, but the common denominator of the denier of free will remains.

Taking into account these medical, philosophical, and theological influences, Freud's therapeutic approach, which takes up Nietzschean philosophical criticism and reformulates it in terms of the management of psychic energy and its repercussions on the health of the individual, is properly contextualized. Nevertheless, despite Freud's new perspective, the core of the controversy remains that of human passions, widely addressed by classical ethics, and their ordination in view of happiness (Cottingham 1998). When Freud (1910) shares with the reader that "we

are on the point of arriving at a purely psychological theory of hysteria, with affective processes in the front rank," he seems to be confirming that his scope of work is that of morals.

The centrality of morals may not be apparent at first sight, since Freud uses, especially at the beginning, an energy-dynamic model that he proposes as an alternative to models based on consciousness. In contrast, he chooses to start from the unconscious, since he saw the possibility of filling certain gaps and of creating a psychological science. For Freud (1940), "whereas the psychology of consciousness never went beyond the broken sequences which were obviously dependent on something else, the other view, which held that the psychical is unconscious in itself, enabled psychology to take its place as a natural science like any other." In *The Interpretation of Dreams*, Freud (1900) had already said:

> It is essential to abandon the overvaluation of the property of being conscious before it becomes possible to form any correct view of the origin of what is mental. In Lipps's words, the unconscious must be assumed to be the general basis of psychical life. The unconscious is the larger sphere, which includes within it the smaller sphere of the conscious. Everything conscious has an unconscious preliminary stage; whereas what is unconscious may remain at that stage and nevertheless claim to be regarded as having the full value of a psychical process. The unconscious is the true psychical reality; in its innermost nature it is as much unknown to us as the reality of the external world, and it is as incompletely presented by the data of consciousness as is the external world by the communications of our sense organs.

The primacy of the unconscious would be an essential premise of Freud's psychoanalysis from which he would interpret all of psychic life (Freud 1923). In the introduction to his early work Project for a Scientific Psychology, Freud (1895) maintained that the final aim of his project was to "furnish a psychology that shall be a natural science: that is, to represent psychical processes as quantitatively determinate states of specifiable material particles, thus making those processes perspicuous and free from contradiction." For this, establishing the unconscious as a framework allowed him to provide an explanation of the psychic dynamism in physical terms. Thus, his project was structured based on two cardinal ideas, namely:

1. What distinguishes activity from rest is to be regarded as Q, subject to the general laws of motion.
2. The neurones are to be taken as the material particles.

The evolution of his thought from this initial orientation meant abandoning a neurophysiological perspective, which characterizes this work, and subsequently adopting a more psychological discourse without wishing to completely disassociate it from neurophysiology (Freud 1940). One could see the evolution of his approach as a definitive theoretical construct to unmask morals, but not in philosophical terms like Nietzsche but in scientific terms according to the new psychological science. Through it, morals would not be conceived as a guide along the path of human perfection but as an acquired psychic instance, inevitably constitutive of the psychic apparatus, and potentially harmful when they overreach themselves in the exercise of their function.

20.2   The Psychic Apparatus

Freud (1940) conceived the psyche as an apparatus. Moving away from the explanatory models that interpret psychic activity as acts of certain powers that emanate from a vital principle, namely the psyche (Aristotle 2016), Freud conceived it from an energy-mechanical model. It is possible to recognize in this concept the end of the development of psychology without powers, evident in Herbart's psychology (Echavarría 2013) and, as a root, Cartesian psychology. In his *Project for a Scientific Psychology*, a work from his early period, Freud (1895) proposes that:

> According to an advanced mechanistic theory, consciousness is a mere appendage to physiologico-psychical processes and its omission would make no alteration in the psychical passage [of events]. According to another theory, consciousness is the subjective side of all psychical events and is thus inseparable from the physiological mental process. The theory developed here lies between these two. Here consciousness is the subjective side of one part of the physical processes in the nervous system, namely of the Ψ processes; and the omission of consciousness does not leave psychical events unaltered but involves the omission of the contribution from Ψ.

Freud proposed this initial concept of the psyché at a still pre-psychoanalytic time in his thinking, which he would subsequently modify despite retaining some basic aspects of it, such as psychic origin based on the biological organism and the psychic mechanism. Following Echavarría (2013), Freud's writings should be interpreted according to the year in which they were written, as certain modifications in his approaches make it necessary to distinguish stages in Freud's thought.[1] Echavarría (2013) explains:

> 1914 was a very important year for many reasons. On the one hand, it was when Jung separated from Freud and it concluded with a period of important defections for the psychoanalytic movement, including those of Steckel and Adler. On the other, it was the year of publication of Totem and Taboo, a work that begins with the growing cultural considerations that characterized the final period of Freud's works. Moreover, in 1920, Beyond the Pleasure Principle was published, a work that initiated a profound revision of his psychological system that would include a modification of the theory of drives and the development of the second topic[2] explanation of the psyche.

Abandoning the neurophysiological approach of the Project for a Scientific Psychology, Freud puts forward an explanation of the structured psychic apparatus based on the notion of the quality of psychic content. Thus, in what could be called the first topic explanation, Freud (1923) distinguishes certain conscious psychic contents, other preconscious ones and, finally, unconscious ones.

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[1]In order to situate some of Freud's works used here as a primary source, it should be stressed that *Project for a Scientific Psychology*, from 1895, is a pre-psychoanalytic work; *Five Lectures on Psycho-Analysis*, from 1910, is a work from the foundational stage of psychoanalysis; and, finally, *An Outline of Psycho-Analysis*, from 1940, is a work of maturity. For the same purpose, the first year of publication of Freud's other works have to be taken into account.

[2]Echavarría remarks the existence in Freud of two different explanations of the psychic apparatus, not identical but significantly divergent. Their differences will be discussed throughout this chapter.

> In the course of this work the distinctions which we describe as psychical qualities force themselves on our notice. There is no need to characterize what we call 'conscious': it is the same as the consciousness of philosophers and of everyday opinion. Everything else psychical is in our view 'the conscious'. We are soon led to make an important division in this unconscious. Some processes become conscious easily; they may then cease to be conscious but can become conscious once more without any trouble: as people say, they can be reproduced or remembered. This reminds us that consciousness is in general a highly fugitive state. What is conscious is conscious only for a moment. [. . .]. Then, we prefer to call 'susceptible of consciousness' or pre-conscious all which is unconscious that behaves in that way -that is, that can easily change the unconscious state for the conscious state. (Freud 1940)

In the previous explanation, the existence of psychic places is not made explicit, but rather qualities of the psychic apparatus. In this way, the conscious contents would be those representations found on the surface of the ego, the preconscious representations would be those that could easily become conscious but in fact are not, while unconscious representations would be those that can barely reach consciousness or not at all because they have been relegated outside it (Freud 1923).

> We may speak of a preconscious thought being repressed or driven out and then taken over by the unconscious. These images, derived from a set of ideas relating to a struggle for a piece of ground, may tempt us to suppose that it is literally true that a mental grouping in one locality has been brought to an end and replaced by a fresh one in another locality. Let us replace this metaphor by something that seems to correspond better to the real state of affairs, and let us say instead that some particular mental grouping has had a cathexis of energy attached to it or withdrawn from it, so that the structure in question has come under the sway of a particular agency or been withdrawn from it. What we are doing here is once again to replace a topographical way of representing things by a dynamic one. What we regard as mobile is not the psychical structure itself but its innervation. (Freud 1900)

The previous quotation, from *The Interpretation of Dreams*, outlines an aspect that appears in the first foundational moments of psychoanalysis when addressing hysteria (Freud 1910), namely the repressive mechanism the ego exerts on certain contents in order to expel them from consciousness. Without wishing to develop an explanation about this mechanism just yet, two aspects related to its involvement with this first qualitative concept of the psyche will be highlighted, which, in *The Ego and the Id*, Freud (1923) recognizes as insufficient in practice for the psychoanalytic understanding of the psyche.

First, it should be noted that he refers to (what is) unconscious, not the unconscious, which is consistent with the qualification of the contents and not the distinction of psychic places.

Second, and consistent with the first, the analysis of the psyche based on the qualities of the psychic content leads to the conclusion that the unconscious does not preexist but is the result of repression.

This conclusion, however, does not seem to be maintained in Freud's explanations about the id as a first psychic instance from which the others arise. As he says in *The Ego and the Id*: "We shall now look upon an individual as a psychical id, unknown and unconscious, upon whose surface rests the ego" (Freud 1923). This

incompatibility must be taken into account in order to distinguish two different approaches to the psychic life which are not completely compatible.

Therefore, we can distinguish in Freud another way of understanding the psyche based on the distinction of psychic places, which are generated from a first instance. In this distinction in terms of locations, of places, he refers to the existence of three instances: the id, the ego, and the superego.

Freud's psychic apparatus, also in this second way of explaining it, is conceived as a reality parallel to the organism in which its needs are "psychically" reflected. It is irrational in its origins and its drives correlate to the needs that the organism has not satisfied. With this, it is worth noting a conflicting origin of the psyche, because it appears as a result of the loss of organic homeostasis.

First is the id, which is the psychic instance that gives rise to drives and also the one in which the contents expelled from consciousness are found. Despite the agency that this language suggests, it should be taken into account that it is metaphorical because in reality the movement of representations is, strictly speaking, a result of their loss of energy or through the action of an opposing force superior to it. In this regard, Freud's adherence to the idea that "what we call our ego behaves essentially passively in life, and that, as he expresses it, we are 'lived' by unknown and uncontrollable forces," which he attributes to Georg Groddeck, is significant (Freud 1923). In relation to the id, Freud (1940) explains:

> To the oldest of these psychical provinces or agencies we give the name of id. It contains everything that is inherited, that is present at birth, that is laid down in the constitution -above all, therefore, the instincts, which originate from the somatic organization and which find a first psychical expression here [in the id] in forms unknown to us.

It is important to note that, even though the id is the oldest psychic instance, at least its content comes from the body. He maintains, then, also in this second explanation, the biological origin of the psychic life, which manifests itself as drives. "It would be possible to picture the id as under the domination of the mute but powerful death instincts, which desire to be at peace and (prompted by the pleasure principle) to put Eros, the mischief-maker, to rest" (Freud 1923).

Through the impossibility of discharging the driving energy, because the reality the individual finds him/herself in does not allow it, a second psychic instance is formed, namely the ego. This second instance is the place where the representations of reality reside; it is the site of the individual's conscious life that connects with reality and motility.

Freud's perspective would be analogous to understanding the psyche in terms of a volcano, whose lava would correspond to the driving energy that would energize the psychic life. The Earth's crust would be the ego, which Freud conceives as an instance that appears on the surface of the id as a result of reality's inability to resolve the tension generated by the drive. The ego "seeks to bring the influence of the external world to bear upon the id and its tendencies, and endeavours to substitute the reality principle for the pleasure principle which reigns unrestrictedly in the id" (Freud 1923). For Freud (1940):

> Under the influence of the real external world around us, one portion of the id has undergone a special development. From what was originally a cortical layer, equipped with the organs for receiving stimuli and with arrangements for acting as a protective shield against stimuli, a special organization has arisen which henceforward acts as an intermediary between the id and the external world. This region of our mind we have given the name of ego.

Finally, and as a result of the cultural influence and moral education received from parents, the third instance is generated, which is the ego-ideal, or superego. This is the location of the moral standards that the individual acquires and internalizes as his own. Conceiving the superego as an artificial instance would not seem far from Freud's thought, since it is superimposed and not naturally generated from the psyche itself, as the ego can be interpreted. This third instance is therefore mainly understood as a place from which pressure is generated on the system insofar as the moral norms that the individual receives from the culture in which he lives and from his family education are consolidated. In terms that will be clarified later, Freud (1923) defines the ego ideal as "the heir of the Oedipus Complex." The aforementioned volcano metaphor is limited in explaining this third instance, which Freud relates to archaic inheritance:

> The long period of childhood, during which the growing human being lives in dependence on his parents, leaves behind it as a precipitate the formation in his ego of a special agency in which this parental influence is prolonged. It has received the name of super-ego. In so far as this super-ego is differentiated from the ego or is opposed to it, it constitutes a third power which the ego must take into account. (Freud 1940)

In summary, it is possible to say that the origin of the psychic apparatus and the instances generated are considered in terms of a conflict of psychic forces whose origins lie in imbalances of the organism and that seek to discharge their energy. This discharge must be managed from the ego in order to maintain an acceptable level of unresolved psychic tension, which corresponds to its symptomatic expression, which is characteristic of the neurotic patient. For Freud (1923):

> The ego controls the approaches to motility -that is, to the discharge of excitations into the external world; it is the mental agency which supervises all its own constituent processes, and which goes to sleep at night, though even then it exercises the censorship on dreams. From this ego proceed the repressions, too, by means of which it is sought to exclude certain trends in the mind not merely from consciousness but also from other forms of effectiveness and activity.

20.3   Desire in Freud

Jean Laplanche and Jean-Bertrand Pontalis (1976), in their *Vocabulaire de la Psychanalyse*, explain that the notion of desire in Freud does not mean so much a formulated vow as a movement of the concupiscence or greed, which in German is expressed as *Begierde* or even *Lust*; therefore at times it is not entirely comparable to the notion of *Wunsch* or *wish*.

Therefore, Freud's notion of desire lies more properly in a nonvoluntary context of the psyche—more basic, one might say. However, the authors point out, it is not

identified with need, since the latter is satisfied by the action that achieves the appropriate object, while desire is satisfied by "the hallucinatory reproduction of perceptions that have become signs of this satisfaction." Thus, hunger is satisfied upon eating, but desire "makes reference *par excellence* to the unconscious desire, attached to the undestroyable childhood signs" (Laplanche and Pontalis 1976).

Freud's definitions included in the aforementioned *Vocabulaire* reflect a Freudian concept of desire akin to that of energy that is associated with cognitive contents. Freud seems, in effect, to be consistent with this concept when he speaks of the wishful states in his *Project for a Scientific Psychology*, explaining that:

> The residues of the two kinds of experiences [of pain and of satisfaction] which we have been discussing are affects and wishful states. These have in common the fact that they both involve a raising of quantitative tension in Ψ^3—brought about in the case of an affect by sudden release and in that of a wish by summation. Both states are of the greatest importance for the passage [of quantity] in Ψ, for they leave behind them motives for it which are of a compulsive kind. The wishful state results in a positive attraction towards the object wished-for, or, more precisely, towards its mnemic image; the experience of pain leads to a repulsion, a disinclination to keeping the hostile mnemic image cathected. Here we have primary wishful attraction and primary defence [fending off]. (Freud 1895)

Freud's next explanation regarding the mechanism of repression in neurotic patients in 5 Lectures on Psychoanalysis would seem to move under the same scheme:

> The investigation of hysterical patients and of other neurotics leads us to the conclusion that their repression of the idea to which the intolerable wish is attached has been a failure. It is true that they have driven it out of consciousness and out of memory and have apparently saved themselves a large amount of unpleasure. But the repressed wishful impulse continues to exist in the unconscious. It is on the look-out for an opportunity of being activated, and when that happens it succeeds in sending into consciousness a disguised and unrecognizable substitute for what had been repressed, and to this there soon become attached the same feelings of unpleasure which it was hoped had been saved by the repression. (Freud 1910)

Therefore, one could interpret that Freud conceives the movement of desire as energy that, although repressed to the unconscious, continues to exert its influence, even in ways other than the original presentation. The mechanism of psychic repression consists of an effort to expel from consciousness something that, even if achieved, does not free itself of symptomatic manifestations and manages to express itself in consciousness in substitutive forms (Freud 1910).

The first distinction that should be made is, therefore, between the representation and movement of desire, an expression that seems to be understood in terms of energy. The link between them is broken when the repression mechanism acts. Despite the efficiency of this mechanism, the energy contained does not disappear; rather, it increases the tension of the system from the unconscious.

According to Freud's thinking, the resolution of this pressure can be achieved in different ways. One way is the partial or total acceptance of desire, ceasing to repress it and, consequently, satisfying it in relation to the representation associated with

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[3]Freud uses this sign to refer to a neuronal system he idenfities with the gray substance of the brain.

it. Another way is sublimation. In other words, the orientation of desire toward a higher goal by associating it with another representation. A third way is its dominance from consciousness through an adverse judgment over it (Freud 1910).

Regarding these possible ways of resolution, the first would seem the most effective because it resolves the tension. Regarding the second, Freud notes that it does not produce a limited resolution, even recognizing that this management of the movement is what has given rise to the cultural developments achieved by society. Making an analogy with mechanical performance, Freud (1910) explains:

> Just as we do not count on our machines converting more than a certain fraction of the heat consumed into useful mechanical work, we ought not to seek to alienate the whole amount of the energy of the sexual instinct from its proper ends. We cannot succeed in doing so; and if the restriction upon sexuality were to be carried too far it would inevitably bring with it all the evils of soil-exhaustion.

In relation to the third way, one would expect hidden symptoms of this suppression to appear. Dreams, for example, are interpreted as a product of repressed desires that mask latent dream thoughts. Freud (1910) warns: "this distortion in dreams is the same process that you have already come to know in investigating the formation of hysterical symptoms." Thus, a psychopathological situation would be generated that is masked by the lack of a direct relationship of the symptoms with what is repressed. The psychoanalyst's job, therefore, is to reveal dreams as symptoms, i.e., as substitute representations of repressed desires.

The energy interpretation of desire seems to be consistently maintained throughout Freud's writings. Moreover, it should be specified, it would be an energy of a sexual nature, since, according to Freud (1910): "the pathogenic wishful impulses are in the nature of erotic instinctual components; and it forces us to suppose that among the influences leading to the illness the predominant significance must be assigned to erotic disturbances."

The retrospective investigation carried out by psychoanalysis reveals that "the imperishable, repressed wishful impulses of childhood have alone provided the power for the construction of symptoms, [. . .]. But these powerful wishful impulses of childhood may without exception be described as sexual" (Freud 1910). This being the nature of desire, it seems to approach the notion of libido, a term Freud usually uses to talk about sexual energy.

On the one hand, Laplanche and Pontalis (1976) recognize the difficulty presented by the definition of libido in Freud because it would have evolved throughout his writings, although from the outset they define it as a Latin term that means desire or urges. However, Freud (1940) explains:

> During the study of the sexual functions we have been able to gain a first, preliminary conviction, or rather a suspicion, of two discoveries which will later be found to be important over the whole of our field. Firstly, the normal and abnormal manifestations observed by us (that is, the phenomenology of the subject) need to be described from the point of view of their dynamics and economics (in our case, from the point of view of the quantitative distribution of the libido). And secondly, the aetiology of the disorders which we study is to be looked for in the individual's developmental history -that is to say, in his early life.

On the other hand, in discerning a possible synonymy, it would also be vital to consider its relationship with the notion of drive, also key in Freud's explanation, since both desire and libido are understood as elements that generate a force—drive—in the psyche. We will, therefore, try to present Freud's distinctions—the relationship between desire, libido, and drive—in the clearest and most faithful way.

In *An Outline of Psycho-Analysis*, Freud (1940) explains: "The forces which we assume to exist behind the tensions caused by the needs of the id are called instincts. They represent the somatic demands upon the mind." Moreover, he says that there is an undetermined number of drives and that they can replace each other when their energy is transferred. However, he admits:

> After long hesitances and vacillations we have decided to assume the existence of only two basic instincts, Eros and the destructive instinct. [. . .] The aim of the first of these basic instincts is to establish ever greater unities and to preserve them thus [. . .]; the aim of the second is, on the contrary, to undo connections and so to destroy things.

Freud (1940), in developing his explanation about Eros, says that "the total available energy of Eros, which henceforward we shall speak of as libido, is present in the still undifferentiated ego-id and serves to neutralize the destructive tendencies which are simultaneously present." It would seem, then, that the distinction between drive and libido can be formulated in terms of force and energy. Nevertheless, this distinction would not have a clear correlation vis-à-vis the destructive drive, as he himself acknowledges. According to Freud (1910):

> The core of our being, then, is formed by the obscure id, which has no direct communication with the eternal world and is accessible even to our knowledge only through the medium of another agency. Within this id the organic instincts operate, which are themselves compounded of fusions of two primal forces (Eros and destructiveness) in varying proportions and are differentiated from one another by their relation to organs or systems of organs. The one and only urge of these instincts is towards satisfaction, which is expected to arise from certain changes in the organs with the help of objects in the external world.

The fate of the drives is what will mark human development, both cultural and intrapsychic. Thus, on the one hand, Freud (1940) states that "many of the highly valued assets of our civilization were acquired at the cost of sexuality and by the restriction of sexual motive forces" and, on the other:

> At a very early age the little boy develops an object-cathexis for his mother, which originally related to the mother's breast and is the prototype of an object-choice on the anaclitic model; the boy deals with his father by identifying himself with him. For a time these two relationships proceed side by side, until the boy's sexual wishes in regard to his mother become more intense and his father is perceived as an obstacle to them; from this the Oedipus complex originates. His identifications with his father then takes on a hostile colouring and changes into a with to get rid of his father in order to take his place with his mother. Henceforward his relation to his father is ambivalent; it seems as if the ambivalence inherent in the identification from the beginning had become manifest. An ambivalent attitude to his father and an object-relation of a solely affectionate kind to his mother make up the content of the simple positive Oedipus complex in a boy. (Freud 1923)

The cathexis of new objects, having given up the first object-cathexis, the mother, for fear of the father, is what distinguishes the stages of human psychic development.

Freud argues that the individual gives up the desired object and this causes him/her to replace it with another. The cathexis is then transposed and, taking the ego as an object, gives rise to a secondary narcissism. Freud (1923) explains: "At the very beginning, all the libido is accumulated in the id, while the ego is still in process of formation or is still feeble. The id sends part of this libido out into erotic object-cathexes, whereupon the ego, now grown stronger, tries to get hold of this object-libido."

In relation to Freud's explanations regarding libido, we need to consider whether the term *desire* is one that Freud uses when he modifies his more technical explanation in order to make himself more understandable, or whether he uses it in an initial constitutive moment of psychoanalysis to later refer to it more specifically as libido.

Freud understands the change of object that occurs in early childhood as a sublimation, as it implies a de-sexualization of drive. Nevertheless, he also believes that: "whatever the character's later capacity for resisting the influences of abandoned object-cathexes may turn out to be, the effects of the first identifications made in earliest childhood will be general and lasting" (Freud 1923). It is worth stressing once again Freud's conviction regarding the impossibility of completely sublimating the libido.

With respect to this first situation, Freud distinguishes object choice and identification, which refer to the mother—and specifically the mother's breast—and to the father, respectively. In *The Ego and the Id*, he explains:

> At the very beginning, in the individual's primitive oral phase, object-cathexis and identification are no doubt indistinguishable from each other. We can only suppose that later on object-cathexes proceed from the id, which feels erotic trends as needs. The ego, which to begin with is still feeble, becomes aware of the object-cathexes, and either acquiescences in them or tries to fend them off by the process of repression. (Freud 1923)

Through this approach, Freud could naturally explain the way in which the relationship with the parents causes, in the son, a first complex, that is, an experience of the frustration of satisfaction, namely the Oedipus Complex, which, according to Freud, would be the foundation of the development of the son's ego-ideal, or superego. This instance would become the censor of the drives related to the object-cathexes and, together with the process of the son identifying with his father, would exercise its function in a more or less pathological way. Freud (1923) notes in this regard: "In fact it may be precisely this element in the situation, the attitude of the ego ideal, that determines the severity of a neurotic illness." The ego-ideal, or superego, is the moral conscience that brings about the feeling of guilt. On the one hand, the exaggeration of this feeling is what would constitute obsessive neurosis and melancholy, the assumption of guilt. Hysteria, on the other hand, is interpreted as a repression that the ego applies to the superego, thus rendering the feeling of guilt unconscious. Freud (1923) explains:

> A great part of the sense of guilt must normally remain unconscious, because the origin of consciousness is intimately connected with the Oedipus complex, which belongs to the unconscious. If anyone were inclined to put forward the paradoxical proposition that the normal man is not only far more in moral than he believes but also far more moral than he

knows, psycho-analysis, on whose findings the first half of the assertion rests, would have no objection to raise against the second half.

Therefore, it should be noted that moral conscience is at the core of the psychic conflict. The submission of the superego's drives may result in the search for freedom from feelings of guilt in the form of obsessive neurosis, or the acceptance of guilt in the form of melancholy. From the moral exercise of the superego, Freud (1923) considers:

> The more a man controls his aggressiveness, the more intense becomes his ideal's inclination to aggressiveness against his ego. It is like a displacement, a turning round upon his own ego. But even ordinary normal morality has a harshly restraining, cruelly prohibiting quality. It is from this, indeed, that the conception arises of a higher being who deals out punishment inexorably.

And also:

> We can tell what is hidden behind the ego's dread of the super-ego, the fear of conscience. The superior being, which turned into the ego ideal, once threatened castration, and this dread of castration is probably the nucleus round which the subsequent fear of conscience has gathered; it is this dread that persists as the fear of conscience.

Consequently, an introjection of the paternal prohibition of unrestrictedly satisfying the libido invested in the mother can be seen in the superego. This prohibition favors other object-cathexes in which to discharge the libido until it reaches psychosexual maturity. Hatred toward the father is resolved in terms of identification with his figure and, in the exercise of conjugal sexuality, supplanting his figure. Desire, similar to the notion of libido, must progress from giving up the mother as a source of satisfaction to be resolved in sexual activity. In this transition, the Oedipus Complex plays a necessary and, in turn, potentially harmful role when abnormalities occur in the process of identification and transposition of drive discharge objects.

20.4 Conclusion

Freud's psychoanalysis is a therapeutic method that was configured from hypnosis and the *talking cur*e, practices through which analysts aimed to discover the unconscious causes of mental pathology and treat them. Beyond the association of ideas, which is what strictly constitutes Freud's method, psychoanalysis is important because it involves an interpretation of the psyche that explains psychic life in unconscious mechanical terms.

This conceptualization of the psychic apparatus would allow, assuming the determinism of mechanics, that nothing psychic is meaningless; rather, it must be interpreted, since often its cause is unconscious and may not be directly related to that which is identified as a symptom. For Freud, dreams and parapraxes are symptomatic manifestations that something psychic has been repressed, that is, ejected from consciousness. The content of dreams and the same parapraxes

would be interpreted as hidden manifestations of this repressed content, which is not easily recognized by the psychic resistance applied to it by wanting to keep it out of consciousness.

Morals play a key role in Freud's concept because they exercise this content-repressing role, initially extrinsically through family education and later, through the superego, an instance formed by the introjection of the received morals. Consequently, psychoanalysis directs its attention to the way in which the superego may cause mental pathology through repression.

Freud distinguishes qualities in psychic life: consciousness, the preconscious, and the unconscious. These qualities of psychic content are the result of the censorship that morals can apply, which Freud would end up understanding in terms of drive and energy. Thus, he proposes a distinction in psychic instances, namely the id, the ego, and the superego, which would have appeared in a biological organism as a result of its unmet needs. The id, the original, unconscious instance, would be the location of psychic drives, which Freud understands as psychic expressions of organic needs. The fate of these drives can be diverse, ranging between satisfaction, which resolves them, and repression, which keeps them in the unconscious.

There are various types of drives, but Freud summarizes them into two: the life drive, or Eros, and the death drive. Eros strives to generate larger units, while the death drive, as its name implies, strives for disunity ending in death. Individual and social human development is attributed to erotic energy, which Freud calls libido, such that adequate conduction of this energy allows the human being to reach maturity and also allows the development of culture.

The development toward human maturity is a process that Freud considers psycho-sexual, since Eros is a force of a sexual nature, that is, it is satisfied upon obtaining sexual pleasure. Thus, at first, the libido is discharged upon sucking the mother's breast and upon obtaining pleasure from the relationship with the mother. This object-cathexis of the mother, however, is frustrated by the father figure, to whom the mother belongs and, therefore, forces the object-cathexis to be changed. This creates an ambivalence toward the father, with whom the son ends up identifying and, in the end, supplanting by taking his wife in adulthood.

The erotic feelings that the son experiences towards the mother and the hatred toward the father are natural in the son, but repressed. Thus, the core complex of the psyche is formed and made unconscious by the prohibition of incest and parricide, and because of its similarity to mythology is called the Oedipus Complex. From this moment, the ego, subordinated to the drives from the id and the prohibitions of the superego and reality, must manage the fate of the erotic drive in order that the libidinal discharge is sufficient to maintain a balance in the system.

Desire in Freud, then, can be interpreted through this terminology through which the author expresses psychic dynamics precisely in an emergent, thermodynamic psychic energy approach.

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Part III
Education of Desire Applied

Chapter 21
Psychological Key to Educating Desire: Healthy Family Lifestyles

Paloma Alonso-Stuyck

Abstract Goleman's book on *Emotional Intelligence* has brought attention to the relevance of affective education: Can we educate the desire to achieve a healthy lifestyle that is consistent with a person's dignity and happiness? This chapter explores, from a psychological perspective, the integrative dynamic that underlies the education of desire as well as the cognitive, affective, and conative processes involved. This tridimensional analysis refers to the need to harmonize the personal dimensions—conative, cognitive, and affective—in order to direct motivation toward the original project of love and in turn personal excellence. It seems that the key to this pedagogy lies in the personal integrative experience that is conveyed by family lifestyles. Parenting styles shape children's daily life in which they unconsciously consolidate their aspirational tendencies. Therefore, at a family level, to guide attention toward appreciating what is valuable and to be able to direct one's life toward plenitude is a precious achievement that could be expressed as learning to want both personal and community good as a way of creating a common and sustainable home.

Keywords Family lifestyle · Parenting styles · Education of desire · Personal integration · Social sustainability

21.1 Introduction

Goleman's (1996) book *Emotional Intelligence* introduced the topic of affective education, among other issues, into social dialogue. Can one learn to postpone gratification? Is it possible to overcome the tendency toward pleasure in exchange for the greater good? Can one educate desire to achieve a healthy lifestyle? In our environment, numerous authors (Polaino 2006; Polo 2006; Aguiló 2010; Álvarez

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2001; Bisquerra 2011) agree that the essence of this pedagogy lies in integrating emotions into personality, relying on intelligence, and strengthening one's will. To be able to direct one's biographical project toward plenitude is an achievement that could convey the establishment of good relationships with oneself, others, and the cosmos in order to create a common sustainable home, where everyone feels at home (Mesonero 2008; ONU 2019).

The purpose of this study is to address the *integrative dynamic* that underlies the education of desire from a psychological perspective (Rojas 2006) with the intention of understanding the cognitive, emotional, and conative processes involved. How do expectations, beliefs, values, attributions, enjoyments, and satisfactions activate stable motivational tendencies and influence the capability of implementing short-, medium- and long-term plans? This is the function that Prudence undertakes by harmonizing, in the form of an *operating system*, experiences of Temperance, Strength, and Justice toward the original project of love (Hulsey and Hampson 2014). In case of encountering obstacles in the path to integration, psychology offers diverse resources. To benefit from all of them, the proposal is to root them in the teachable dimensions of the person; desire, affection, and intelligence (Arto 1993; Alonso-Stuyck 2006).

In addition to this internal systemic interaction, the Chaos Theory proposes a cosmic interdependence, stating that the flight of a butterfly in New York could cause an earthquake in Japan (Briggs and Peat 2009). To design effective programs that contribute to educate desire, this systemic interaction recommends placing it in existential coordinates and adapting it to its peculiar sensitivity, which is known as the 4E approach for its acronym in English-embodied, embedded, enacted, and extended—(Newen et al. 2018). Any vital learning is operationalized into a temporal trajectory, which includes a similar line for those of the same generation, the *evolutionary tasks*; so that the same result, according to the *motivational quality*, acquires different meanings showcasing the spatial or ideographic coordinate. In this framework of specialized intentionality, cognitive aspects interact with reality by setting desirable goals (Keane 2018).

The natural scenario of this process is family life, due to the enormous weight exerted by the examples set forth by significant people (Musitu et al. 2001; Alvira 2004; Oliva 2006). Family lifestyle shows how to manage the basic provisions: conservation, verification, and improvement, as well as the transcendental, Frankl's logos or meaning (Maslow 1991; Pallares and Muñoz 2017; Pieper 2017). The current challenge of restoring the threatened human ecology requires creative proposals to build healthy contexts (Rietveld and Kiverstein 2014; Chinchilla et al. 2018). A path to sustainability lies in the transformative force of creative minorities (Granados 2019), families with healthy lifestyles, who understand the language of nature and transmit to the rest of society the attractiveness of wishing for personal and community good (Hampson 2019).

The following section explores, on the basis of the teachable human dimensions, the contributions of the different psychological schools to restore motivational deficit—the interactive experience of the classical virtues to educate desire. The most important achievements of the current theories of Psychoanalysis,

Behaviorism, Cognitive Psychology, Logotherapy, the Humanistic and Gestalt Psychology, the Systemic theory, and the so-called Third Wave therapies are highlighted in light of the advances in Neuroscience.

21.2 Internal Dynamics of Desire Education

In the motivational educational process of integrating emotional tendencies with cognitive and conative, Aristotelian virtues provide fulfillment experiences. Setting the example of learning to play a musical instrument, the process would reveal the following progression: By overcoming the tendency to engage in more appealing tasks and persevere in rehearsals, temperate performance will lead to savoring the pleasure of performing a piece well. When the exercises become more complex, strength renewal will sustain the desire. Proceeding fairly will acknowledge those who have contributed to the fulfillment of that goal, while prudent practice will adjust the whole process to the real circumstances. The trajectory of the education of desire begins with emotional restraint, is supported by the strengthening of the will, further improved by fair cognition, and finally enables the person to love, becoming kind (Hulsey and Hampson 2014).

When this integration trajectory is blocked, there is talk of a motivational deficit, for which each psychological school offers some resources. Experience shows that all contributions are effective, even if they involve a partial reading of human complexity. Placing these contributions in the personal dimensions—conative, cognitive, and affective—allows the integration of all of them to benefit from all that they offer. It is worth emphasizing that the analysis or division of the three dimensions is an artificial didactic resource, since in real life they act together.

It might seem that the most important theory dedicated to restoring desire has been Psychoanalysis. However, all psychological schools have addressed the motivational process in depth: the need or desire that stimulates behavior by directing it toward a goal (Martínez et al. 2019). For practical purposes, the terms desire and motivation will be used interchangeably in this text.

With the development of psychotherapy in clinical settings, PSYCHOANALYSIS focused on the latent dissatisfied desires, which are responsible for certain disorders (Carpintero and Grego 2018). As a significant contribution, the need for conscious recognition of emotional blockages and their corrective experience or transference stand out. This theory places the existence of unconscious—not reasoned or emotional—traumas from children's past experiences that must be brought to consciousness in order to be healed. It is known that certain early experiences exist, which are blocked by defense mechanisms. Without being pathological, there could be unrecognized emotions, latent desires, etc., that is used by marketing strategies to promote consumption, and sometimes generate dependence. The path to restoring integrity goes through awareness and corrective emotional experience. Currently, neuroimaging techniques corroborate the existence of synchronized circuits of neural networks that support unconscious conditions; these emotional habits

shape the brain structure reflecting the biography itself, and although it is possible to modify those circuits, *the brain has a memory* (Moratalla 2019).

The birth of the BEHAVIORISM school is usually interpreted as a reaction to Psychoanalysis, an attempt to place psychology in the status of natural sciences. From this approach, all behavior, also motivations or desires, are learned and unlearned if appropriate contingencies occur. It would be enough to accurately design training so that, through repetition, aspirational habits are incorporated or eliminated (Burgos 2017). Especially when learning programs include attractive and close models, desire is strongly activated (Papaglia 2009). Neuroscience suggests that the reward system in young people begins to adjust to emotional memory, so it is common for adolescents to not yet be able to correctly calculate the risk/benefit balance (Moratalla 2019). This data claims the importance of imitable, emotionally attractive models, in the early vital stages (Hampson 2019). This Behaviorism resource to educate desire, based on the emulation of significant models seems sound, reaffirming itself by the verification of what works: If my friend, brother, father, can . . . me too; if he is happy, I will be too; if I have achieved this intermediate step, I will be able to reach the next one and the end, etc.

The COGNITIVE approach emerged in diverse environments given some Behaviorism shortcomings in terms of the human being, such as the influence of mental schemes, prejudices, expectations, inconsistencies, and attributions. Its most relevant contribution to the motivational process focuses on a belief of realistic self-efficacy. If a person does not feel able to achieve a goal, he will hardly wish for it, and on the contrary, if he has false expectations about his ability, he will soon be frustrated to see that he does not achieve his goals (Papaglia 2009). The intermediate point between these two positions is to build a realistic self-concept, to *walk in the truth* about oneself. At the brain level, this successful self-consciousness arises from biography itself, forming the neurobiological self directly embodied in the present, with the indirect self of the temporal structure (Moratalla 2019). Integrating what has been experienced with the potential of what is to come helps to discard both materialist determinisms and radical constructivisms (Keane 2018). For a realistic construction of the self, objective external orientation helps direct desire toward real possibilities; although not every orientation is useful, because only when one looks with love, one is able to see, together with one's current reality, the enormous potential of each person (Polo 2006). This orientation that starts from a realistic self-concept and is aimed at sharpening consciousness toward bold self-motivation is one of someone who has discovered their own meaning in life (Bruzzone 2011; DHi 2013; Chinchilla et al. 2018).

At this point, the connection with the therapy regarding the pursuit of life's meaning, LOGOTHERAPY, is established. This therapy is born precisely to awaken one's love of life. This approach adds importance to the exposed dimensions: the affective dimension in psychoanalysis, the conative dimension in behaviorism, and the cognitive. Deciphering the language of nature, discovering the meaning in life by perceiving the dynamics of love, leads one out of oneself toward others; and there is no greater desire or force that moves freedom (Frankl 2013; Hampson 2019). Although unconscious automatisms are conserved, opening up to love activates

the executive functions (decision making, learning, and habits), overcoming biological or social determinisms. Savoring the joy of loving, perhaps simply by paying a small favor, awakens the taste for good. The classics defined the wise person as one who knows how to savor what is good, *recta sapere*. Among all the psychological contributions on motivational education, this last one could be the simplest and most effective, by connecting to the original vocation to love that all human beings share.

Placing HUMANISM and GESTALT at the center of personal dimensions helps to understand its holistic character. Rogers, one of the founders of the Humanist school, proposes making contact with the self, encouraging the person to overcome social pressures. The therapeutic personal encounter favors the client's encounter with his own self, with his most intimate desires and aspirations; the therapist's ability to reflect the thoughts and feelings he hears helps the person discover new possibilities and recognize significant aspects (Hulsey and Hampson 2014). Sometimes vital circumstances can lead to ignore what is really desired, to the dispersion or commitment to accidental issues. As a result of the lack of personal awareness, it is in those cases that an identity crisis could arise, with the existential analysis being a resource to recover contact with oneself.

Also from a global perspective, although of a perceptual nature, GESTALT teaches to recognize the language of emotions. There are people who have become accustomed to functioning, with all their vital heritage, solely for rational reasons, without tapping into their true hopes and proclivities. This movement promotes awareness of psychosomatic traits in interaction with real contextual situations. This experience places the person again in a landscape rich in possibilities, where he perceives his own richness and that of the world around him, recovering all his motivational strength (Keane 2018).

The recent THIRD WAVE therapies eclectically integrate the achievements of the different schools, combining the Systemic approach with the current social sensitivity. The SYSTEMIC vision broke the individualist prism, placing the person into the socio-historical, spacetime, relational network. Although it was born from the hand of family therapy, it is part of the current, interactive, and dynamic paradigm, which observes the person in their ecological niche. In this sense, in addressing the education of desire, Cortina (2007) underlines the importance of the positive emotional climate as a necessary humus for the habits of the heart to set, the distinctive personal forces (Seligman 2005). In the same way, the *Know How* of Integral Human Development, an expert institution in forging healthy habits, includes the existence of a good atmosphere into its formula, together with cognitive intention, emotional motivation, and conative consistency in the pursuit of small goals (DHi 2013). This favorable context is especially necessary for the early stages of life, when the person is most influential. The environment intervenes guiding between the real possibilities or limiting before the socially permissible options, but never forcing desire (Keane 2018).

Two features present in Third Wave therapies related to CONTEMPORARY SENSITIVITY should be noted. The first is a compassionate attitude toward pain, which leads to understanding and accepting human limitations (Maero 2016). Once imperfection is accepted, it is possible to love oneself and others, and even begin the

path toward forgiveness (Lichtenfeld et al. 2015). Thus, an *appreciative look* that leads to recognizing the positive in each person is educated; so that, in the social imagery, the idealistic desire for perfection no longer stands out, but rather the realistic tendency to build the best possible version of oneself (Darowski 2009). The second feature of the current culture is the slogan *here and now* which is characteristic of *mindfulness*, which drives to get the most out of each small experience, to savor what one has, without tearing into pretensions or illusory desires (Maero 2016).

The two characteristics of the THIRD WAVE come together in the theory of contact, with its motivational retrieval of practical and relational character that respects the possibility theory (Rietveld et al. 2018). Something is desired because it has been experienced, we have come into contact with it, although that experience does not determine the personal decision, which can freely assume or ignore it. Motivational recovery would be achieved by educating the attention to discern, in front of the multitude of possibilities, those that promote human relationships, where personal flourishing is achieved (Lickona 1991; Delors 1996; Claxton and Lucas 2004). This aspect has led to claiming a *neuroscience in the second person* (Schilbach et al. 2013).

The resources proposed by the psychological schools to restore motivation are integrated into the teachable dimensions of the person: Psychoanalysis affects the *emotional dimension* experienced consciously; Behaviorism focuses on the *conative area* with the emulation of attractive models; the Cognitive school underlines the *cognitive sphere* of a perceived realistic self-efficacy; Humanism and Gestalt propose the holistic encounter of the *3 dimensions*, the personal self; The so-called Third Wave Therapies refer to the realistic discernment of the possibilities provided by the context; Finally, Logotherapy adds to all this the importance of love, which enables you to savor what is good. Aristotle already observed that harmonizing this complex network of motivational confluences was not an easy task, but the result of an experiential wisdom capable of overcoming the internal rupture, the emotional stride, Pelagian or Gnostic, that leads to the disproportionate polarization of the affective, conative, or cognitive dimensions.

In exposing the integrative dynamic of the virtues and some psychological resources to restore it, the need to place the process of educating desire in the concrete vital reality—existential coordinates—is highlighted, as set forth in the following section.

21.3   External Dynamics of Desire Education

Psychology, as an instrumental science, strives to understand people's surroundings in order to offer them useful resources to heal their wounds and promote their well-being. This implies an in-depth comprehension of the temporal space coordinates, the ecological niche of existence, given that motivational tendencies depend on the personal meaning co-built by the individual and the environment (Hulsey and

Hampson 2014). The internal personal dynamics have been analyzed in the previous section, while in this section the focus will be on contextual interaction. Western society has been described as presenting technological and emotional features (Flamarique and d'Oliveiras-Martins 2013). These two features, far from reinforcing the density of social fabric, have contributed to generating broad sectors of exclusion and deterioration. The Weavers movement, *weaving relationships*, work on empowering people who want to repair the social fabric in order to reach the cosmic ecology through human ecology (Brooks 2019).

From within this sustainability challenge, the education of desire is exposed, first in its temporal procedural dimension, to then address the contextual specifications related to the spatial coordinate. The importance of the temporal factor was introduced by Goleman (1996), with his emphasis on affective education from the early vital stages of life. Then an outbreak of emotional education programs emerged, included in the reviews of Marina (2005) or Pérez-González and Pena (2015). Among the diversity of proposals, three of them stand out regarding the temporal process; the permanent or vital character, behavioral inhibition as a cognitive requirement for reflection, and persistence. These characteristics act on a common cadence, the life cycle stages, which each individual assumes in an unrepeatable way, achieving their goals with greater success as they navigate toward the aforementioned personal integration.

The first temporal factor shows that the education of desire extends to the trajectories of family, professional, and social networks of each vital stage, the *evolutionary tasks* explained further below. For each given motivation, thought introduces reflection to discern the desirability of tending to immediate desires, usually of a sensory nature, or to more complex ones that usually enrich one's personality. The second factor of the temporal process is thus reached, *cognitive timing,* which neuropsychology indicates as a requirement for successful decision making. To assess the information filtered in the attention process and calculate the cost/benefit of the possible alternatives, a delay time is required (Moratalla 2019). In this sense, ICT, with its procedural agility, can generate a kind of *waiting allergy*, which cancels reflection, and with it many valuable goods that need time, especially significant relationships (Bauman 2008; Martin 2014).

The third prominent temporal factor is persistence, the scope of acquiring a resilient aspirational self, capable of persevering through initiated projects despite frustrations and difficulties (Núñez et al. 2006). Therefore, although desires are usually associated with the social imagery of dreams or illusions, they have to pass the *crucial test* of perseverance. In order to persist, despite obstacles or delayed waiting, prudent memory activation is decisive, which develops situational awareness, synchronizing the asynchronous when projecting the desired goal (Hulsey and Hampson 2014).

The contextual analysis of the educational process of desire leads to the spatial or content dimension of each evolutionary stage of the life cycle. Developmental psychology calls the expected maturational achievement in each life period an *evolutionary task*. Erikson (2000) made a cross-cultural proposal on how to develop the aspirational load, through a common path that each person operates in a peculiar

and unrepeatable way. To obtain the best *motivational quality* at each stage one must harmonize primary, secondary, and transcendent motivations.

To sum up, the epigenetic theory proposes that, in the early vital stages of life, the relationship with the mother will mark the basic tendency toward Confidence: around 18 months of age, with the onset of muscle control, Autonomy will begin; by 3 years of age, interest in interacting with other children will lead to Initiative; at 6 or 7 years of age, the curiosity to undertake new things will display Laboriousness; in adolescence, with the capacity for abstract thinking, the desire will arise to discover one's own Identity; youth will accentuate the desire for Intimacy; at around 40 years of age, the desire will grow for Generativity; while after 60 years the desire will prevail for Integrity (Erikson 2000).

These evolutionary tasks express the *motivational quality*, by which personal maturity is configured. The *primary motivations*, innate or biological, are satisfied with elements that are external to the person: water, food, etc., while *secondary motivations*, of a learned or cultural nature, are usually internal, such as professional competence. Among these motivations, Membership, Power, and Achievement stand out cross-culturally (Garrido 2008; Palmero 2011; Reeve 2017; Sanz et al. 2017; Martínez et al. 2019). Such recurrent motivations in different cultures, leads to infer the existence of *universal secondary motivations*, desires that belong to the human essence rooted in its constitutive dimensions. The desire for Membership refers to the need for Belonging, to feel loved and to love, related to the emotional dimension. The desire for Power refers to the tendency to own something by which one can make voluntary and free decisions: housing, work, etc., articulated by the conative dimension. The desire for Achievement reveals the need for coherence over one's own value, inherent in the cognitive dimension.

In turn, the *transcendent motives*, typical of human relations, are those that go beyond oneself and are directed toward others (López-Jurado and Gratacós 2013). Usually these three types of motivations—extrinsic, intrinsic, and transcendent—are combined in human performance in different proportions, being able to talk about *specificity of intent or motivational quality*, according to the proportion of each of them that moves the person. This motivational composition, when balanced, contributes to personal maturity, but when left unbalanced can lead to personal decline. Neuroscience shows that the fulfillment of desires activates cognitive-affective circuits; that is to say, that the interaction between emotion and knowledge and will is key for the emotional life, as well as for the ethical, intellectual, and aesthetic experience. (Moratalla 2019). This three-dimensional model, *leitmotif* of this proposal, could explain the *abstract social space* of affective character, which adds the third dimension to the spacetime *mapping* of the neural circuits of decision making (Moratalla 2019). Again, it seems that the essence of personal integration that underlies desire education lies in the classic adage *in medio virtus*, the balanced interaction of human dimensions.

This moderation or balance between the three personal dimensions lays the foundation for the serene relationship with oneself, enabling one to establish meaningful relationships with others and with the environment. By contrast, the lack of well-being or internal balance usually results in an insatiable search for external

satisfactions, in excessive desires of Achievement and Power that will widen the magnitude of the social gap. The world's lack of sustainability could be interpreted as not deriving so much from inequality, a permanent historical data, but from the huge gap between the privileged sectors and the disadvantaged segments. Therefore, working on the personal aspirational balance is presented as a path for sustainable human ecology (Araujo 2019). Even more so, when the current global experience incorporates infinite possibilities and learning to discern what is valuable, to select and temper desires becomes essential (Delors 1996; Rojas 2006; Rietveld and Kiverstein 2014). In short, to improve motivational quality becomes crucial.

The education of desire has been exposed from existential coordinates, including both the temporal approach, which highlights the need for waiting and persistence, as well as the contextual approach that calls for insight and balance. All this calls for an experiential pedagogy, the 4E approach: Embodied, which is based on personal feelings, thoughts, and behaviors; Extended or interconnected, which includes resources from Developmental, Neurocognitive, and Social psychology; Embedded, which is located in the contextual matrix of the systemic relationships that makes up the ecological niche, requiring more advanced second-person neuroscience (Schilbach et al. 2013); and finally Enactive, which tends to action, bearing in mind that emotional and cognitive experience can be considered a type of action (Newen et al. 2018).

At this point, it is pertinent to quote how Plato understood education as *teaching how to desire the desirable*, considering the term education as having a double meaning. The first meaning refers to the person's interior *educere*: an internal force that, with the force of desire, extracts the best of human beings, one's *Premium version*, which has been addressed when analyzing the internal dynamics of desire. The second meaning *educare*, refers to the external guide offered by significant inspiring models of one's environment (Hampson 2019). Among those models that activate desire, those coming from the family environment stand out, where, especially in the early vital stages of life, one learns to direct one's personal biographical project. Unconsciously, lifestyles are incorporated which constitute ways of managing the real possibilities offered by the environment (Rietveld and Kiverstein 2014), an aspect that is detailed in the following section.

21.4   Motivational Education Scenario: Healthy Family Lifestyles

This section outlines the scenario of desire education, for which the concept of *creative minority* is applied to the family. Healthy family lifestyles are indicated as a privileged environment where, implicitly, one learns to channel the motivational force toward good. The conceptualization of healthy habits that makes up lifestyles must, therefore, include all motivational tendencies. For this purpose, some educational guidelines are suggested to parents, rather than a specific parenting style, with

the intention of respecting the style of each family. Among them, the importance of giving children the recognition they need stands out.

Education of desire through the family unit does not usually have an explicit character, it is rather an experiential transmission. According to Piagetian theory, from the awakening of knowledge—sensory in nature—the latent intentionality of behaviors is perceived and responded to, not simply in a speculative manner but rather in a reciprocal one, assimilating those same desires (Tomasello 2008). These early family experiences of an intuitive emotional nature are shaping the aspirational tendency itself, which will develop more and more personal initiative; in the same way as a filial identity is unconsciously received, which will later be developed voluntarily through exploration and commitment (Marcia et al. 1993; Zacarés et al. 2009).

Returning to the current lack of social sustainability, historian Arnold Toynbee interprets the development of a culture as a result of the human response to successive challenges. To trace the decadent course of a civilization he suggests the intervention of *creative minorities* that provide a new vision of society. The actions of these minorities resemble that of the yeast capable of transforming the rest of the social mass from within, transmitting their motivation toward the common good: perceiving the future with hope, taking what works from experience and abandoning what does not work; generators in their environment of an authentic culture by being interested in people and their relationships (Donati 2013). These minorities are made up of families who do not step down from their educational mission by abandoning their children to the compulsive immediacy of their impulses but educate desire toward healthy lifestyles (Rietveld and Kiverstein 2014; Granados 2019).

The World Health Organization (WHO 1986) defines Healthy Lifestyle as a general form of existence, which results from the combination of living conditions and individual behavioral patterns. It is a way of life that reflects both individual and sociocultural disposition. This concept has often been reduced to basic physiological biorhythms, such as diet, sleep, and physical activity. However, for an integral education of desire, which promotes a sustainable society (Novo 2006), this ensemble should be extended to all personal dimensions. This approach respects the concept of health proposed by the WHO (1986), which integrates aspects of physical, psychic, and social well-being. It is the broad understanding proposed by the Integral Human Development in its three-dimensional classification of Healthy Habits (DHi 2013).

Its three areas of healthy habits—*Basic Activities of Daily Living (ADL), Proactivity and Time Management*—integrate the basic human tendencies—*Conservation, Verification and Improvement*—proposed by Pieper (2017) to direct the education of desire. Indeed, it is convenient to start with healthy routines of Sleep, Food, Hydration, Hygiene and skincare, and Physical Activity—ADL—if you want to *Conserve* a firm foundation on which to build more complex habits. Likewise, *Proactivity* is required to *Verify* the Emotional, Financial, Environmental, and Home balance. This proactive attitude emerges from a parenting style that progressively stimulates the behavioral autonomy of children as they have the capacity to assume greater areas of decision (Alonso et al. 2018). *Time Management* (Andreu 2014),

dedicating the appropriate timeshare to each activity—Work, Family, and Rest—constitutes a factor of Addiction Prevention, presenting itself as a condition of possibility for personal *Improvement*.

These healthy habits are transmitted primarily through family life. Each family develops its peculiar idiosyncrasy, so it is recommended to reinforce one's own style, provided it is healthy. When harmful habits are found through counseling, the family will be accompanied in the process of improvement. One proposal is to optimize healthy habits through a parental educational style focused on three personal dimensions. This basic model can sometimes generate confusion, it would be easier to follow explicit guidelines; however, this type of recipe would not be able to adapt to the contemporary polycontextual scenario while at the same time respecting its dynamisms (Lee et al. 2006; Alonso-Stuyck 2019). From this approach, educating the desire toward healthy lifestyles translates into: the conative dimension in *Flexibility* to exercise *Control* by setting limits, such as at what time to come back home, room tidiness, and chores; the emotional closeness or *Responsiveness* to welcome the opinions and interests of one's children in the emotional dimension; and a C*ommunication* style that facilitates their cognitive autonomy, using, for example, the Socratic dialogue (Bruzzone 2011). The success in graduating Control, Responsiveness, and Communication arises from parental educational styles which tend toward self-motivation.

Especially in childhood, it will be necessary to accentuate the affective aspect, since children need the recognition of their parents which refines their sense of belonging, one of the universal secondary motivations (Catret 2018). Over time, relying heavily on this recognition would imply having one's center of gravity outside of oneself and with it, the aspirational force. Thus, the education of desire runs into one of many vital paradoxes: to depend, but at the same time to be independent, that is to say, to place oneself in the midpoint of interdependence.

Among these parenting adaptations to specific situations, the difference shown by neuroimaging techniques on female and male neural circuits is thought provoking. The male neural connections are verified as describing a sequential-analytical circuit, while the feminine ones present an interhemispheric, global intuitive layout. It is possible to assume then that the masculine motivation will need greater strength of the reward system, while in female desire it will require less, being the emotional memory more intense (Moratalla 2019).

21.5 Conclusions

Given the initial question, what is the dynamic that underlies the education of desire? The psychological perspective highlights, the need to integrate the emotional tendency with the cognitive and the conative within oneself. This inner balance is learned unconsciously through family life, with the characteristic importance of healthy lifestyles.

This internal harmony from which personal excellence derives is not a spontaneous achievement, but a permanent challenge, a process in which the virtue of Prudence articulates the achievement of the evolutionary task of each stage of the life cycle. The evolutionary development of the integration of desire presents some sensitive periods that lead to the challenge of refining Temperance at the beginning of life, followed by the stellar moment of Strength and later of Justice.

When there is a dysfunction in the healthy lifestyle, the key to benefiting from psychological resources of the different schools is to root them in the three personal dimensions, in order to direct desire toward achieving the best version of oneself by applying the one that is most appropriate: to have a corrective experience to remove an emotional blockage—Psychoanalytic transfer—to emulate attractive models—Behavioral social conditioning—to adapt motivations to one's personal truth—Cognitive realism—to connect with the authentic desires of the *self*—Humanism—and to do it fully—Gestalt—to adapt to the context—Systemic—to appreciate the "here and now"—Mindfulness—to look at human limitations with compassion—third Wave—to discover the meaning of life—Logotherapy.

The scenario of this experiential educational process is a healthy family lifestyle. The natural scope of this pedagogy lies within families with integral healthy habits, which would form creative minorities; able to educate desire for personal and community good, repairing the social fabric, and the friendly relations with oneself, others, and the cosmos.

Therefore, given the current social emergency, when it seems that individualism reduces the aspirations of the will, relativism obscures the truth about oneself and hedonism limits emotional aspirations, the renewing influence of these families becomes more urgent. Minorities that act as *masters of light*, that illuminate nature to let it manifest its beauty, that teach to discern in everyday language the optimal motivational quality, the one that allows us to love.

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Chapter 22
The Education of Desire and the Use of ICT

Oscar Yecid Aparicio Gómez

Abstract This chapter proposes an approach to the education of desire in students who routinely use ICT in their formal, nonformal, and informal educational processes. The use and appropriation of ICT during childhood and adolescence have reconfigured the way they learn in formal or school settings, not formal or semi-school, and informal or non-school. Therefore, learning with ICT, learning for ICT, or learning from ICT determines the purpose of the learning process and involves a prior education of desire in terms of retribution—deprivation, pleasure—pain, memory—forgetfulness, past—future; on the other hand, the education of desire considered from the use of ICT as a cognitive tool to be valued from very well-defined reference horizons may contribute elements of novelty about the accompaniment processes of those who learn through ICT mediation. Finally, the philosophical reflection will be aimed at the enunciation and development of the values that respond to the education of desire as a reference horizon to learn for the beneficial use of ICT.

Keywords Education · Desire · ICT · Philosophy of education · Family · School · Youth · Cognitive tools

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22.1 Introduction

The usual use of ICT in the various fields of human life has opened an intense debate about the importance of defining its mediating function and orienting it toward the educational field. This responsibility has been tacitly in the family and school context; in this way, the use of mobile devices, such as cell phones and the applications that are used there, mainly video games and social networks. The family and the school seek access to a more understandable language to accompany the younger generations in the use of digital technologies. ICT-mediated learning requires clarifying the way in which they are accessed, either as content or objects of study, teaching machines that transmit information, or as an object of critical reflection and analysis of their uses and implications. This last meaning allows us to propose the use of ICT from motivations, purposes, and finally, from desire. Disciplinary studies around the desire and use of ICT from philosophy, pedagogy, and neurology allow an interdisciplinary approach that leads reflection from the role played by school and family, but mainly people who use technology and from it they can establish mediations and direct their attention to the ultimate goals: the person and the community.

22.2 Use of ICT in Mobile Devices

The desire to learn emerges as a permanent attitude throughout the life of the human being; at present, this provision is characterized by the habitual use of ICT in everyday life through the appropriation of various devices. As the vertiginous access to information grows through new technologies, increasing scope is required in its developments. The voracious search for information requires increasingly powerful and sophisticated artifacts to access, process, and share information, so that devices require a permanent state of hardware and software update. In this context, a society is gradually emerging governed by the impact of the smartphone (Caracol et al. 2019). The influence of these devices on people's daily lives goes hand in hand with the rapid evolution of ICT. The market shared between the operators of the electro-magnetic spectrum, the software developers, and the companies that produce smartphones, have generated an almost absolute dependence that can be seen in the time of daily use of these devices as if it were a prosthesis.

However, beyond relevance, courtesy, or good manners when using this type of artifacts in interaction, an even more striking problem emerges: the ways in which smartphones are used. Researchers Davazdahemami, Hammer, and Soror present two perspectives that dominate the literature on mobile phone addiction; on the one hand, addiction to a mobile phone, and on the other, addiction through a mobile phone. The study they require allows them to conclude that smartphone addiction cannot be explained specifically by addiction to its application (Davazdahemami et al. 2016), the feeling of having an artifact that allows and facilitates geolocation,

access Real-time information and immediate responses to any type of requirement are also determinants for the regular and permanent use of smartphones.

Access to information requires the almost prosthetic use of an artifact, which can also be transported anywhere; portability accentuates the presence of the artifact at all times and in all places, and at the same time establishes connections that overflow the physical horizon and connects the user with people around the world. However, this mobile technology is usually considered from the negative impact in the face of human well-being; recent studies on this subject have shown that greater use of the mobile phone reports lower scores of well-being, life satisfaction, and total attention (Volkmer and Lermer 2019). Researchers Coyne, Stockdale, and Summers have argued that depression, anxiety, and self-regulation may constitute risk factors or, in other cases, be the result of excessive smartphone use in terms of excessive cell phone time, social interference, and difficulty to disconnect (Coyne et al. 2019).

Given this panorama of inappropriate use of smartphones, manifested in the inability to regulate their use, related problems emerge that are recognized in sleep disorders, and symptoms of depression. However, digital detoxification programs that promote smartphone abstinence have been advanced, the most significant results highlight that desire levels increased after this exercise, but mood and anxiety were not affected (Wilcockson et al. 2019). The desire, therefore, is presented in the first moments of abstinence and could be regulated through a prior commitment of voluntary self-control, supported by social methods, and those based on effort (So et al. 2016).

While the use of smartphones can represent some type of addiction, it would not be without content and information to process. The applications represent, therefore, the window toward the search of virtual environments for the information process, multimodal interaction, or the enjoyment of leisure time. The use of smartphones, or any other type of consoles, or devices connected to a data network, is usually linked to the access of countless applications, in which video games and social networks can be highlighted. A couple of decades ago video games did not represent an impact that went beyond the geographical boundaries of family environments or close friends, nowadays access to video games allows players to connect with peers beyond their next geography. Remote access in attractive contexts of fun and high popularity generates competition spaces where, according to researchers Liu, Li, and Santhanam, players compete with players of similar skill levels, apply more effort as indicated by more games played and longer duration of the game, but when players compete with players of lower skill levels, they report higher levels of enjoyment and lower levels of excitement after the game (Liu et al. 2015).

The desire to play increases as the levels of competition rise, and the ties that are created no longer respond to affinities of language, culture, or geography, instead respond to challenges. Thus, intangible proximity generates a different idea of a company that has redefined the way leisure is shared; researchers Gong, Zhang, Cheung, Chen, and Lee have conducted a study to examine the role of the desire of online group games in addition to online social games. They themselves affirm in the conclusions of this study that this same desire facilitates the habit and deficiency of self-regulation, which, in turn, encourages addiction to online social games (Gong

et al. 2019). Adequate regulation from childhood requires monitoring and control by the family and the school, as long as this accompaniment results in self-control and self-regulation.

The addiction to online social games, with the participation of multiple and diverse competitors, allows associations with the motivations of pleasure to play massively multiplayer online role-playing games (Hussain et al. 2015); in this way, it has been identified that although these types of games are very popular around the world, potential problems have arisen in relation to gambling addiction in such virtual environments. The effects of these types of situations are related to high levels of competition, but with low levels of cooperation, they manifest themselves in aggressive and antisocial behaviors, such as Hussain, Williams, and Griffiths conclude in their study. The time of use and permanence of schoolchildren and university students in virtual environments manifests a low degree of self-regulation, which results in anomalous and, ultimately, antisocial behaviors, both in interpersonal relationships and in self-perception itself.

The high level of perception of loneliness in children and young people in extracurricular contexts causes them to use online communities through social networks to find peers. These types of relationships that abstract is abstracted exclusively to an imaginary, and evade the other determining elements of any human relationship such as presence and closeness, they become attractive to those who do not feel satisfied with face-to-face relationships. Thus, the link between online video games and social networks finds a powerful synergy that stimulates the daily participation of the online gaming community between compulsive Internet users and people who play too much (Sirola et al. 2019).

Access to online games and social networks through the Smartphone has emerged as references for the leisure of society and especially the younger generations. Social networks have been leading and gradually monopolizing the use of free and productive time; this situation is reflected in two drivers of the use of ICT: habit and addiction (Seo and Ray 2019). The habit is more recognizable at the historical level as a point of arrival for the repetition of acts, and as an exercise prior to the configuration of the character. The repetition of acts generates habits, and the consolidation of habits, character. This repetitive exercise can be perceived in the habitual use of ICT in general and in access to social networks in particular; although the habit promotes and allows a certain social recognition, addiction no longer generates any concern for social acceptance, nor for the processes of character consolidation.

The use of multiple social media platforms generates, as presented in the case of video games, symptoms of depression and anxiety, as can be seen in the existing literature (Primack et al. 2017). The vertiginous increase of the time that people can spend with their smartphone to access social networks, and that is already alerted in mobile phone functionalities, allows to establish this type of symptoms; however, as it appears in the Primack study (2017), the use of several platforms simultaneously for people who already bring a clinical picture of depression and anxiety could be a good input to optimize the clinical picture and medical diagnosis. The simultaneous

use of social networks, in addition to the lack of coordination that it brings, could significantly affect the states of desire in various scenarios of personal life.

These situations described incorporate a structural element in the development of daily activities, in terms of procrastination and procrastination. The desire can be postponed, the responsibilities too; some authors propose procrastination, social interaction (entertainment and inactivity), and procrastination as the three specific uses of the Internet (Doty et al. 2020). Internet use and procrastination tend to be very close; in this scenario, the usual rhythm of fulfilling responsibilities and commitments with themselves and with others offline can be compromised. However, a number of possibilities have been postulated that make a process of restoration of responsibility and the fulfillment of off-line commitments viable. Researchers Li, Guo, and Yu propose that self-control could be the most viable mechanism in this restorative process of people who have to choose between small immediate rewards, and late higher benefits (Li et al. 2019), and that it can be applied both to recurring access to video games and social networks. Self-control is the result of learning, of adequate accompaniment, and follow-up by social institutions, mainly the family and the school.

In addition to self-control, the withdrawal proposal appears, both in response to addictive behaviors that are usually relativized in terms of habits or customs. Social networks and media, also in virtual contexts, highlight the need to belong to a group, or not to belong to it, as a reinforcement of its own image. In the case of abstinence from access to social networks, researchers Burtăverde, Avram, and Vlăsceanu identified that doubt, fear of rejection and addiction, disinterest in exposure, and fear of conflict also function as catalysts of the interest of interacting in social networks (Burtăverde et al. 2019). Self-control and abstinence would stimulate stability and balance in the use of social networks and the practice of video games; however, self-control and abstinence are of little use if the education of desire, accompanied by parents and teachers receives little importance in the social environment.

22.3   Learn with ICT, Learn for ICT, and Learn from ICT

A rather problematic scenario has been raised around the use of ICT in mobile devices, and at first glance it seems that access to virtual recreational platforms could trigger behaviors that deteriorate mental health. In this context, the emergence of educating people's desire to conveniently access digital environments from criteria that consider the importance of self-management of emotions, self-control, and voluntary abstinence from all those behaviors that could degenerate conditions of good living.

The question about learning is also a question about language. It is a question about the conditions that allow the correct and orderly decisions to be made to perfect the person himself, overcoming the limitations of solipsist, obtuse and limited visions, which lack the enrichment of the relationship with other people. In

this order of ideas, it would seem important to position the place of people as the ultimate goal of human initiatives, desires and actions, and in a secondary place any kind of mediations to go toward the consolidation of human projects where Technology takes a secondary place.

The richness of language allows the construction of a particular type of pedagogical universes that contribute to the education of people, especially from the mediating considerations of all those didactic resources that make it possible to access mediations in each and every one of the learning processes. In the relationship between education and the use of ICT, the possibility of referring to digital technology from appropriate use of language can be considered, and in this case through the use of prepositions; in this way, the way in which it can provide important contributions to human learning can be better defined. The relationship between education and ICT, desire education and ICT, or between philosophy and ICT, thought and ICT, can create a large number of connections to reflect on the current human relations increasingly mediated by the use of Information and Communication Technologies.

Learning about ICT, learning about ICT, learning with ICT, and learning about ICT, offer polyhedral views of the same reality. In case of learning about ICT, ICT are conceived as contents or objects of study, and the objective is the learning and development of digital skills, informational competencies, and media competencies; on the other hand, learning about ICT, where ICT is considered as teaching machines that transmit information, where students learn from the computer, the Internet, tutorials, digital books, applications (app), which teach and propose repetitive and exercise tasks. In the case of Learning with ICT, these are used as tools for learning, as cognitive tools, and finally, for ICT as an object of critical reflection and analysis of their uses and implications (Quintana and Aparicio 2017).

The relationship that can be established between education and the use of ICT allows to create a large number of connections focused on positioning educational action with the mediation of digital technologies, and positioning the central place of education in the personal relationship between the learner and its social educational environment. The critical reflection on the use and appropriation of ICT focuses on the approach to digital technology from the current technological devices and the applications available through them, and involves considering the reason for ICT, its implications in everyday life, and the transformations that emerge through them in society. In this context, the Family and the School are the closest and decisive references to recognize the use and appropriation of ICT in the imaginary of children and young people of today, as well as their approach to them as cognitive tools, which must comply with a mediating since its instrumental use.

Currently, most children have their first contact with ICT, as well as their first use, at an earlier age, and this situation could significantly affect their digital literacy, the balanced use of electronic devices, access to information and therefore the moderation of their desires around the use of digital technologies. While in the school activities with the use of ICT are usually controlled and supervised by teachers, and its limited use according to the curriculum of the school, at home children and young people tend to have less control to access ICT and Accompaniment by the family is

also more limited. Therefore, the effectiveness of family support in the educational process of children and young people requires the support provided by schooling; in this sense, the school can use ICT as tools for communication and collaboration with families and the school, to ensure that schoolchildren have a permanent monitoring of their use of digital technologies.

The interest of children and young people in digital devices expresses their desire for the pursuit of entertainment, learning, communication, or stimulating their creativity; however, the influence caused by the family environment in the penetration, acceptance, and use of digital technologies. The interaction with digital technological devices by parents, siblings, and other people in the nearby social circle, make the relationship of children and young people with this type of devices can be shaped by the values, perceptions, and experiences that the social environment attributes to the use of technology (Chaudron et al. 2018). Family references are usually reproduced by the youngest, most of the time imperceptibly and unnoticed; however, the reference horizon of family values and their centrality in the educational process can reinforce the most appropriate behaviors for the use and appropriation of ICT.

Children and young people learn, and manage sui generis the information they find in digital environments, sharpen their abilities to use artifacts and devices, as well as their applications on their own through trial and error, thus reinforcing their autonomy in use and his confidence in the appropriation of ICT. However, the covert and unregulated use of digital technology could have harmful repercussions on children, reducing social interaction, increasing fatigue, and increasing family tensions due to excessive use (Hadlington et al. 2019). The active mediation of the family in the face of technology is decisive for the behaviors of children and young people from self-regulation, self-control, self-control, and self-discipline.

Active mediation allows the permanent accompaniment of the younger generations by parents and adults, in the face of restrictive mediation that can be counterproductive in the processes of self-determination. This type of situation can generate aversion to the accompaniment of parents and teachers, therefore, moderation of language can strengthen confidence and generate spaces for meeting and building common imaginary between adults and young people. To moderate the desire of children and young people to access digital technological environments, parents are required to moderate access and stimulate self-control. Active mediation can be reinforced through simple actions on electronic devices, such as security settings, privacy protection, content filters, and the use of passwords. Another strategy that stimulates closeness and trust is to accompany them in accessing virtual content through communicative strategies so that parents can talk with their children about online risk management to increase security (Chaudron et al. 2018).

The arrival of ICT in the teaching–learning processes has gone through several stages, which in some cases have occurred simultaneously. In the first place, they have been introduced gradually in schools and universities as teaching aids through expressly instrumental devices, which took over from millenary technologies, but which in the background did not generate a different impact on students. In a second moment, and simultaneously, the process of integrating ICT in the formal

educational field is done from a methodological intent, and in general they are relatively more effective in promoting cognitive domain learning and meeting the needs of affective learning. of students, but not so much to promote the development of psychomotor skills (Yasak and Alias 2015).

Finally, it has been possible to recognize in recent years a pedagogical desire to impregnate formal or nonformal educational processes, such as in informal learning (outside the classroom), of the use and appropriation of ICT without noticing just how it is done; this perception allows to amplify the frontiers of knowledge while making unintentional use of ICT as cognitive tools for learning.

The considerations on learning for ICT as an object of critical reflection and analysis of their uses and implications, especially in the family and in school environments, could be enriched by the contributions of learning with ICT, considering their educational and mediating potential instruments that function as cognitive tools. In addition to considering the contributions provided by emerging pedagogies and active methodologies mediated by ICT as very precise approaches to favor the education of desire in terms of self-regulation, some considerations could be suggested in order to enrich the educational process in a comprehensive and up-to-date manner. The codes and languages of our time.

Learning with technology means learning to use technology. Learning with technology refers us to the construction of learning; this theme has been extensively developed in the works of Jean Piaget with constructivism, and updated in the works of David Jonassen on the construction of knowledge mediated by technology, or constructionism, where basically the importance of advancing from the subject to the community develops (Aparicio and Ostos 2018). The person's relationship with the community can include and assimilate all possible mediations, as long as they are considered means, mediations, never ends in themselves, since this central place is occupied by the person and the community of people.

Building with technology, with tools, refers to the use of ICT for learning, that is, as cognitive tools. The assessment of this type of learning in the field of desire education is oriented toward reference horizons focused on the desire to learn with cognitive tools and the appropriate mediation of technology. The collaborative construction of knowledge about real and authentic assumptions discourages competition among students, suppressing the search for prizes or punishments to reach the educational process (Aparicio 2018). The integrity of education in terms of non-coercion, in terms of renouncing rewards, legitimizes the process of autonomy, and self-determination to use pedagogical or didactic mediations, and use technology as a means, never as an end.

22.4   The Education of Desire and the Use of ICT

In the current technological scenario where the world must adjust to our desires, since desires are frequent, of varying intensity and largely unproblematic (Hofmann and Van Dillen 2012), the force of desire, conflict, resistance and the self-regulating

success, allow to recognize the desire as a driving force that needs to be controlled. The studies of W. Hofmann and his team of researchers conclude that control motivation and control capacity interactively determine the potential control effort (Hofmann et al. 2012), therefore desire education emerges as an adequate way to moderate it from self-control and orient it to higher ends.

The regulation of desire requires differentiating between virtuous nonmoral and moral behavior. In the first case, we refer to control of the will, for example, given the impulse to overeat; but when we evaluate virtuous moral behavior, oriented toward higher matters, such as loyalty or fidelity, it transcends willpower and refers to personal conviction (Berman and Small 2018). The use of digital technological mediations is between these two ways of understanding behavior; on the one hand, the daily acts of use of ICT oriented from self-discipline and self-regulation acquire real importance insofar as it is oriented to higher issues, reference horizons, universal values, ends in themselves: the promotion of the human person.

The permanent use of digital technology transports people, especially younger ones, to a virtual perception of reality and involves them in a search to satisfy their desire for recognition. Researchers Ranney and Troop-Gordon study the role of popularity and digital self-control in the cyber behaviors and cybervictimization of adolescents, and among the results of their work, it is highlighted that adolescents can carefully control their digital self-representations, which can affect the associations between popularity and digital social interactions (Ranney and Troop-Gordon 2020).

This situation, which has its virtual platform in social networks, focuses popularity toward greater cyber-prosocial, cyber-aggression, and cyber-victimization behavior. On the other hand, the researchers conclude that, for children, digital self-control predicted lower levels of cyber-prosocial behavior and higher levels of cyber-aggression. At low levels of popularity, greater cybervictimization (Ranney and Troop-Gordon 2020). The habits of self-regulation, self-discipline, self-determination, learned in the family and school, as well as the values that guide them, focus on respect for difference, recognition of difference, and prevent antisocial behaviors.

Given these and other situations described in this contribution, the reflection regarding the education of desire and the use of ICT generates a recurring discussion around values as reference horizons for this necessary link. The education of virtue is not constituted on an abstract and indeterminate structure, it does so from defined referents and precisely determined contexts; currently, the motivation and social stimulus for people to learn throughout their lives continue to make current the centrality of desire for those disciplines and exciting topics from the needs and interests of citizens.

Desire as a trigger for human acts has already been embodied since the cradle of Western thought: "The principle of action (. . .) is choice, and that of choice is desire and end-oriented choice. That is why there is no choice without understanding and reflection, or without moral disposition. That is why the choice is wishful intelligence or intelligent desire, and this kind of principle is man" (Aristotle 2014: 1139). Aristotle emphasizes the importance and centrality of desire and choice as the engine

of human life that focuses on certain ends. The desire is specified in specific acts, its repetition generates habits and these habits result in the consolidation of the character of the person, also of the social character. The desire as the engine of personal acts requires fixing attention so that they can be shared by society, for example, the desire for peace and justice does not respond to abstract realities, but rather to real situations, but they also reflect the wishes of people who inhabit cultural and social structures.

The choice is the beginning of an action. In this way, Aristotle introduces an element that maintains the topicality of philosophical thinking in today's world to reflect on the use of technology. As the election is usually affected by internal and external, personal and social conditions, the triggering action falls precisely on those who condition the elections; in the case of the use of digital technologies, children and young people choose to use the devices and devices associated with ICT from a level of development of moral consciousness that is still emerging, where the search for their own pleasure or the satisfaction of their peers can determine the time and quality of impersonal use of networks or videogames. The educational process in these moments of development people requires family support or responsible adults who can stimulate moderation and autonomy behaviors when starting this type of technological immersion.

While choice is the principle of action, and the principle of choice is desire, moderation stands as an axiological reference horizon for home and school educators, ordered to accompany the youngest. The act of the election, of each election, supposes a previous knowledge of what is chosen, and at the same time an approach of forces, energy, possibilities, and an established scale of values, in order to choose well. The exercise of dialogue, with the fruits provided by consensus with adults, and then, with the exercise of their own criteria, wishes can be directed toward the search for satisfactory and sustainable realities.

The choice as a fundamental goal-oriented option should consider a reference horizon that is proposed as the set of values that can be integrated as referents in the educational process of people, especially the youngest. In the specific case of the use of technology, the concepts of justice, fairness, and moral rectitude influence the ethical judgments of students in the ethical dilemmas related to ICT (Jung 2009). The reasons could be diverse, the most relevant perhaps having to do with moral relativism, where the behaviors associated with the excessive, inappropriate, or improper use of this type of technologies, is perceived by young people as culturally acceptable or not considered morally incorrect.

Finally, to consider the scope of education in autonomy, self-discipline, and self-determination as referents for the education of desire and the use of ICT, it is important to view the studies and advances of neurosciences in the educational field. The activity of the brain and its relationship with learning processes, as well as the neural connections that are generated, are also related to desire and, therefore, to the possibilities of educating it from certain criteria. Despite most aspects related to learning that have a clear genetic background, innate abilities can be improved or decreased through educational processes (Bueno 2019).

In this way, studies by David Bueno and his team conclude that despite the relatively high genetic heritability shown in most brain processes associated with learning, educational practices make an effective contribution to the development of students, which allows to improve or decrease alternatively the genetic abilities. The multiple possibilities of the human person to develop and focus their deepest desires toward the achievement of permanent ends, by identifying the means that can support and reinforce this search, makes society able to choose the mediations best adapted to the environment to educate to the people; and those who are accompanied in this process can decide, according to the evolution of the development of moral conscience, which are the most suitable means, and what is the best way to use them to achieve permanent goals, oriented from clearly recognizable horizons of reference according to the fundamental choice.

From the perspective of neuroeducation, desire is also susceptible to being educated (Schroeder 2004), as well as the habits of manipulating electronic devices or accessing digital programs and applications. The education of desire throughout life in a changing world, coupled with specialization in skills that favor adaptability and versatility, makes it possible to develop the human capacity to regulate emotions; in this sense, several findings allow us to affirm that this regulation improves with age (Martin and Ochsner 2016). The education of desire and its relationship with specific topics from the pedagogical or didactic approach, such as the introduction, integration, or impregnation of ICT as cognitive tools in the educational field, or the use of ICT for learning, requires a solid commitment to the family and the school, and thus generate common languages that allow understanding the language of the younger generations, in order to build and recognize common reference horizons.

Given this panorama, it is urgent to recover from the dialogue between the most valuable family and social values, considering the emerging technologies as means, in order to preserve the central place of the person as the ultimate goal of all human action and construction. The humanistic understanding of the arrival of digital technology can generate an orderly understanding of the relevance of technological means, from the physical board to augmented reality as pedagogical mediations for the understanding of reality that allows an adequate moral disposition that recognizes and promote the person and the community as ends in themselves. Intelligence is always eager for greater understanding to interpret with greater relevance historical and social events, including technology. The responsibility for the use of ICT lies, ultimately, with the person of the user; their education about what is appropriate in social and personal terms requires support and teamwork.

The education of desire constitutes a commitment to the integral formation, from the philosophical roots of the origin of the choice, the action or the ends, through the family, social and cultural conditioning, to the latest findings of neuroeducation. We can conclude that interdisciplinary work is very beneficial to consider current issues in education, such as the use and appropriation of ICT, the updating of school educational action with emerging pedagogies or active methodologies, and so many other reflections that require studies that overcome biased visions, and focus on a transdisciplinary and fruitful vision, where the dialogue of knowledge can use

all educational mediations to promote the person as the ultimate goal of all actions within the framework of a society that recognizes the fundamental value of the deep Human desire to be educated to live in a community.

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Chapter 23
Desire and the Emotion of Shame

Emma Cohen de Lara

Abstract This chapter offers a consideration of shame as an emotion that educates the desires by providing an interpretation of Plato's *Gorgias*. In the dialogue, Socrates uses the emotion of shame in order to awaken the desire for the good at the expense of the desire for power as he questions his interlocutors about their conception of the good life. In doing so he provides the reader with arguments for the moral value of shame. Shame, in the dialogue, is understood both as conventional shame, in terms of the awareness of a discrepancy between one's opinions and the norms of the polity, and as moral shame, in terms of the experience of an internal contradiction between one's desires and the innate desire for the good. Socrates rehabilitates conventional shame in the face of the sophistic argument that it is a disingenuous emotion. He also relies on moral shame as part of the elenchus which is his mode of questioning that is meant to promote self-knowledge and help the interlocutor not to live at odds with himself. The chapter argues that the understanding of shame in Plato's *Gorgias* provides an interesting corrective to liberal theories of shame that can be found in the philosophies of John Rawls and Martha Nussbaum.

Keywords Shame · Socratic · Plato's *Gorgias* · Moral education · Elenchus

23.1 Introduction

The field of virtue ethics is known to provide a coherent theoretical basis for character education (Carr 1991, 2008). One of the important reasons that virtue ethics provides a coherent theoretical basis is the particular attention paid to the role of desires and emotions in the process of moral education. Classical philosophers such as Plato and Aristotle, who provide the foundation for virtue ethics, regard the ordering of desires and emotions as essential to the "morally well-attuned soul" (Carr

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2008). Good character, as they understood it, involves not only a particular intellectual but also a particular emotional condition. This means that the teaching of ethical habits not only includes the cultivation of moral judgment but also the education of the desiring activity. In Socratic terms, the care for the soul involves the attempt at promoting harmony between the reasoning and desiring parts of the soul, so that the entire soul becomes directed towards the good.

In different dialogues, and in particular the *Gorgias*, Plato singles out shame as an emotion that plays a role in the education of desire. In the dialogue, the emotion of shame has the primary function of reordering the desires in line with the desire for the good. Plato's emphasis on the moral value of shame may serve as an interesting corrective to modern literature in which shame is generally regarded as a negative emotion. In his political theory, John Rawls understands shame as undermining self-esteem, leading to anxiety about one's conception of the good and plan of life, and the subsequent lack of confidence in one's ability to carry out one's intentions (Rawls 1999). Shame thus understood is a politically debilitating emotion which, according to Rawls, rational actors seek to avoid. Focusing on its moral value, Martha Nussbaum argues that the emotion of shame is undesirable. She regards shame as an emotion that isolates the individual and destroys his relationship with the world. Shame, according to Nussbaum, causes young children to hide and shut down, which prevents their moral growth because they feel incapacitated and unable to make amends. As such, she argues that shame is detrimental to morality, community, and to a creative inner life (Nussbaum 2004).

Both Rawls and Nussbaum generally position themselves within the liberal framework, which allows little room for a positive evaluation of the emotion of shame. The liberal principle of equality undermines the notion of subjecting one's self to social norms, and the liberal principle of freedom involves the ability to do as one pleases as long as one's actions do not harm others. Liberal freedom is premised on individual autonomy, whereas the emotion of shame presumes the existence of social norms and relationships. In short, shame seems to be an emotion that is out of place in modern times.

Furthermore, and perhaps as a result of the liberal framework, contemporary scholars of philosophy of education tend to neglect the potentially constructive role of shame in the educative process. This the case even for scholars who are otherwise attracted to the Socratic model of education.[1] Shame, as an emotion, is said to interfere with intellectual education. Being regarded as a pernicious emotion, it feels awkward to accept that shame can—and sometimes should—be part of the educative journey of a student. Shaming practices seem to have no place in the modern classroom.

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[1]See, for example, Peter Kreeft's 2004 *Socratic Logic*, which—in some ways understandably so—ignores the role of emotions, in particular shame. The same applies to the abundance of literature on the Socratic method applied to the secondary level of education, such as Fischer (2019), Peeples (2018), Wilberding (2014), Haroutunian-Gordon (2009), Saran and Neisser (2004), Kasachkoff (1998).

The broad argument of this chapter is that Plato's *Gorgias* challenges us to reengage with the moral value of shame. In the *Gorgias*, Plato presents the emotion of shame as an integral part of Socrates' attempt to bring his interlocutors to an awareness of their moral deficiencies. Some go as far as to say that Socrates' method, the elenchus, may be defined as "shaming refutation" (Tarnopolsky 2010). When it comes to *Gorgias*, I argue that this is appropriate. Furthermore, I argue that one of the insights that can be derived from Plato's *Gorgias* is that there are two kinds of shame, each of which has moral value. The first kind of shame is conventional, consisting in failing to meet an established moral standard or ideal (Bensen Cain 2008). The *Gorgias* (Plato 1925) presents the reader with a series of conversations between Socrates and, consecutively, Gorgias, Polus, and Callicles. These conversations take place at the house of Callicles in front of an audience who had initially come to hear Gorgias' display speech.[2] The presence of the audience means that shame, and shaming tactics, gain in significance, and the risk of losing face plays a distinct role in Socrates' dialectical approach at different moments in the dialogue. As Socrates seeks to convert his interlocutors away from a life of material success in terms of wealth and power, and toward a life premised on an understanding of, and desire for, the good, he uses the emotion of shame understood as conventional shame in all three cases.[3]

The second kind of shame is more fully internal. This kind of shame is the result of a confrontation between one's own opinions and desires, on the one hand, and one's innate moral sense, on the other. In his conversation with Polus, Socrates develops the argument that the desire for the good is inherent to human nature (*Gorg.* 468b1-c9; 499e6-10). Of course, the desire for the good is one desire among many, and it is not always—or often not—the main motivating force of human behavior. Other desires may be more powerful, and especially in the case of Callicles the desire for power appears to be particularly strong. Moreover, human beings may make mistakes about what is good, causing them to ignore their desire for the good in their actions. Even so, Socrates relies on the innate desire for the good in the questioning of his interlocutors. Given the natural desire for the good, any desire that departs from the good must necessarily cause internal conflict. Socrates' questioning in the *Gorgias* seeks to bring such internal conflict between the different desires to the surface. This leads to different outcomes—such as shame, perplexity, moral apprehension, or mere confusion—for each character, underscoring the idea that the success of moral education ultimately depends on the character of the person being educated.

In short, Socrates uses both conventional and moral shame as part of the attempt to bring his interlocutors to a higher level of moral awareness about their own

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[2]The audience is noticeably present at different moments in the dialogue, see *Gorg.* 455c6, 458c, 473e5, 487b4, 490b2.

[3]The presentation of Socrates as supportive of specific social expectations departs from the more radical interpretation of Socratic philosophy as inherently critical and undermining of social norms, i.e., Villa (2001).

desires. Of course, when we think about shame in the modern classroom, there can be negative effects. Shaming a student can be pernicious in creating resentment and can occur for mistaken political or ideological purposes. My contribution in this chapter is to show that Plato helps us to understand the emotion of shame in a fundamentally human way, that is, as part of caring for the soul of the student.[4] Shame is an emotion that contributes to the ordering of the soul, that is, to establishing harmony between, on the one hand, the desires and emotions and, on the other hand, one's capacity to reason about the good. In this way, the arousal of shame is a constitutive part of the education of desire.

We will now turn to the dynamics of shame in Plato's dialogue the *Gorgias* to see how Socrates uses this emotion in an attempt to provoke his interlocutors to reorder their desires and pursue the good.

23.2   The Case of Gorgias: Two Kinds of Shame

Socrates' first interlocutor, Gorgias of Leontini, is in some ways the easier case, in that he appears to be more receptive to Socrates' shaming tactic compared to the other two. Gorgias comes across as basically a decent man. Socrates goes relatively easy on him and Gorgias shows himself to be "a good loser" (Dodds 1959). There is shame involved in the dialectical exchange but not to such an extent that Gorgias withdraws from the dialogue altogether. Rather, he continues to intervene at crucial moments in order to advance the discussion in an attempt to learn from the conversation (*Gorg*. 463a, 463d-e, 497b4-5, 506a10-b3) (Tarnopolsky 2010).

At the same time, Gorgias does not come off unscathed. The conversation starts out with Socrates asking him about power of rhetoric. Gorgias claims that his art provides a public speaker with freedom and, above all, with power over others. According to Gorgias, rhetoric provides men with:

> "the ability to persuade with speeches either judges in the law courts or statesmen in the council-chamber or the commons in the Assembly or an audience at any other meeting that may be held on public affairs . . . by virtue of this power you will have the doctor as your slave, and the trainer as your slave; your money-getter will turn out to be making money not for himself, but for another,—in fact for you, who are able to speak and persuade the multitude." (*Gorg*. 452e1-10)

Rhetoric is presented as an amoral technique of persuasion, in particular persuasion of the masses. Socrates mercilessly cuts through the argument. What if one of Gorgias's students uses the ability to speak persuasively for evil purposes? Is Gorgias' art morally neutral, or is the teacher of rhetoric in part responsible for the use and abuse of his art? We may ask the same question ourselves—as teachers—today.[5] Is the

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[4]This aspect, and in particular the second kind of shame, is not always brought out explicitly. Tarnopolsky (2010) and Corey (2018) tend to focus on the first kind of shame. Kahn (1996) offers a helpful discussion the second kind of shame, to which the current chapter is indebted.

[5]See Kiss and Euben (2010) for a helpful attempt at engaging with this question.

modern teacher responsible for the moral development of the student, or does education merely involve passing on skills and information?

Gorgias initially denies any kind of moral responsibility: "if a man becomes a rhetorician and then uses this power and this art unfairly, we ought not to hate his teacher and cast him out of our cities. . . . it is the man who does not use it aright who deserves to be hated and expelled and put to death, and not his teacher" (*Gorg*. 457b5-c4). However, his opinion results in an inconsistency. Gorgias replies to Socrates' question whether a rhetorician needs to know what is "just and unjust, base and noble, good and bad" (*Gorg*. 459d2) that the art of rhetoric does not include this knowledge. Indeed, Gorgias finds this one of the great things about his art, that "there is no need to know the truth of the actual matters, but one merely needs to have discovered some device of persuasion which will make one appear to those who do not know to know better than those who know" (*Gorg*. 459b10-c3). Gorgias considers this to be a wonderful convenience, because as such one can learn just a single art—the art of rhetoric—and forget all the others (*Gorg*. 459c4-6). Out of uneasiness, however, since Socrates had warned him earlier that he would run into difficulty (*Gorg*. 457e3-5), he admits to Socrates that if a pupil does not yet comprehend what is just and unjust, base and noble, good and bad then Gorgias would teach him: "Why, I suppose, Socrates, if he happens not to know these things he will learn them too from me" (*Gorg*. 460a4-5). Accepting the Socratic premise that virtue is knowledge and, hence, that knowing justice means being just (cf. *Gorg*. 460c1-2), Gorgias' view that he would teach a pupil justice and injustice clashes with his earlier admission of the possibility that a pupil would abuse the art of rhetoric.

In anticipation of being refuted, Gorgias has made the "mistake" to acknowledge that he would teach his students what is just and unjust. We know from the *Meno* that Gorgias never claimed to teach virtue (*Meno* 95c) (Kahn 1996). Socrates, or rather Plato as author of the dialogue, tricks Gorgias into admission. His student Polus cries out that Socrates has intentionally provoked the situation: "it was yourself who led him into that set of questions!" and calls it bad taste (*Gorg*. 461c3-7). Although perhaps it is not a really bad taste, Polus is still right. Gorgias has been shamed into professing that he knows what justice is and that he would teach it to others. No one, so argues Polus, would deny this in front of an Athenian audience.

The audience represents conventional Athenian morality and does not want teachers who teach young aspiring politicians the art of rhetoric without developing their understanding of what is good and just. Especially in a democracy, people do not welcome being manipulated. Socrates relies on the morality of his audience which, for all intents and purposes, is a sound morality. The shaming seems particularly effective because as someone from abroad who seeks to get paid for his art Gorgias quickly feels apprehension at saying things that are out of line with the conventions of the host city. Gorgias has developed a kind of moral apprehension about his opinion that rhetoric as an art can be taught separately from the good.

We see, here, the contours of two kinds of shame at work. The first kind of shame is a negative emotion that comes from the experience of a discrepancy between the existing social norms and one's own behavior. We may call this conventional shame,

consisting in failing to meet an established moral standard or ideal. Gorgias feels the conflict between his own understanding of rhetoric and the expectations of his audience, which causes him to rescind the claim that a teacher of rhetoric need not also teach his students about the good.

But there is also a second kind of shame, one that is more fully internal. This kind of shame is the result of a confrontation between one's own opinions and innate moral sense, which Plato describes as the human desire for what is good (Kahn 1996). This second kind of shame acts in the face of the desire for the good that resides in each human soul. Plato's Socrates claims that all human beings wish for what is good (*Gorg*. 468c6, cf. 468b1-c9; 499e6-10). Following the wish for what is good, human beings do things for the sake of the good, not for the sake of the bad. Now, human beings may mistake the bad for the good, but this does not eliminate the desire for the good. Tyrants, for example, may think that they do as they wish in abusing their power but, so Socrates claims, in fact, do not do what they wish because they suppress or ignore their deepest desire for genuinely doing good (*Gorg*. 466d8-e1). Similarly, Gorgias may think that he does good by teaching rhetoric without educating them morally. But is this really wishing for, and doing, good?

The second kind of shame is an emotion that results from the internal contradiction between different desires. Gorgias' desire to teach rhetoric as a technique that helps students acquire power because they are able to persuade and manipulate others necessarily conflicts with his innate desire to do good. All desires that depart from the good cause of internal conflict. Socrates knows this, and relies on the internal conflict in the elenchus. As Kahn puts it: "It is the function of the elenchus to bring our desire for the good to consciousness … the contradictor must end by contradicting himself, and be out of tune his whole life, because his conscious pursuits will never be in harmony with his deepest desire," that is, the desire for the good (Kahn 1996). In the case of Gorgias, it does not take much for him to admit that if a student does not know that is just, good, and noble, then Gorgias would teach him, that is, he would commit to doing the good. As such, Plato portrays Gorgias with a certain level of respect as a gentleman who is easily abashed and sensitive to the moral appeal.

As a consequence, those who understand the elenchus as a formal and logical endeavor misunderstand the reason for its effectiveness and purpose. The Socratic elenchus seeks to question personal commitments and desires, and bring out any kind of inconsistencies. The awareness of such inconsistencies is not merely intellectual but, more often than not, causes an emotional response that may lead, as in the case of Gorgias, to a reordering of desires. In this way, the "psycho-therapeutic" workings of the elenchus become apparent (Kahn 1996). Socrates provokes his interlocutors to think about their strongly held opinions and desires in light of their deepest held desire for the good, which in some characters is more hidden and burdened by competing desires than in others. He invites teachers—even today—to prod the souls of their students in a moral way. Furthermore, he invites teachers to prod their own soul, starting out with the question about whether or not one has a moral responsibility for one's students.

23.3 The Case of Polus: Conventional Shame Rehabilitated

Polus steps in where Gorgias leaves off. Polus is a young man from Sicily who is portrayed with a "coltish" impatience (*Gorg*. 463e3). He comes across as haphazard and shortsighted in his answers and Socrates understands him as someone who is more practiced in rhetoric than in dialectic (*Gorg*. 448e2-3). He is presented as Gorgias' adamant defender and his confused opinions may in part be attributed to the kind of teaching that neglects dialectic in favor of techniques or skills. In this way, the dialogue does not so much condemn Gorgias as a person as it condemns the kind of teaching that he was known for.

The exchange between Socrates and Polus is important for two reasons. Firstly, Socrates uses the conversation, as we have seen already, to introduce the claim that human beings have an innate desire for the good. The premise continues to play a constitutive role in the discussion (cf. *Gorg*. 499e6-9). Secondly, the conversation introduces the theme of the relationship between nature (φύσις) and convention (νόμος). Polus proposes, in line with the sophists at the time, that nature, which as a pre-given order sets the standards for human behavior, and convention, which refers to the norms and customs of a community, are in tension with one another. If convention is artificial and unreflective of the natural order of things, then the emotion of shame as a result of a discrepancy between one's own opinions and the conventions of the polity is artificial as well. The question then becomes whether shame can be an emotion that is somehow genuine in that it contributes to a person becoming good.

Polus disqualifies the moral value of shame as follows. Gorgias, on his account, was too ashamed to admit that a teacher of rhetoric would not teach his students about the good, noble and just. He sought to preserve his reputation in accordance with what other people say and think but, according to Polus, these social norms are not reflective of natural standards. Rather, nature dictates that one should pursue power. Likewise, as the conversation between Socrates and Polus turns toward the question of justice, Polus argues that according to conventional opinion it is more shameful to commit than to suffer injustice but that, in fact, suffering injustice is worse according to nature. In his argument, nature and convention are in opposition to one another and what is shameful according to the convention, namely commit-ting injustice, does not reflect the genuine standards of human behavior, which dictate that suffering injustice is worse.

Moreover, Polus continues, the people themselves fundamentally do not believe in conventional morality. Underneath the veneer of conventional opinion there exists the admiration for those who commit injustice but get away with it, such as tyrants and orators (*Gorg*. 466b5-c3). This is a "truth" that most people are ashamed to admit, and it takes a more bold or authentic person to openly profess it. According to Polus' reasoning, shame is a social phenomenon that restricts people from saying how things really are. He considers it to be an artificial emotion with a tenuous relation to truth and genuine morality. What is conventionally regarded as noble or praiseworthy is not the same as what is good according to nature, and what is

conventionally regarded as shameful is not the same as what is bad according to nature. According to Socrates, Polus apparently holds "that noble and good are not the same, nor evil and shameful" (*Gorg*. 474c10-d1).

Socrates' response is to restore the moral value of shame when premised on the natural order of things. He emphatically connects what is truly shameful with what is bad, harmful, or evil according to nature: "all that is bad [according to nature] I call shameful" (*Gorg*. 463d5). Injustice, being bad, is therefore *naturally* a reason for shame. In support of the claim that injustice is bad, and hence shameful, Socrates develops what we may call an anthropological argument; committing injustice is fundamentally bad for a man given the nature of the human soul. The nature of the soul dictates that certain things are good for it and bring it in a good condition, whereas other things are bad for it. Just as health is the standard for the well-functioning human body, so is virtue—in particular justice—the natural standard for the well-functioning human soul. Committing injustice damages the soul as it feeds into desires that run counter to the desire for the good. The soul is made bad, that is, malfunctioning on account of it. Socrates presents injustice as the worst vice on account of corrupting the entire soul and doing the greatest harm. Doing the greatest harm, it is also the most shameful of vices (*Gorg*. 477c3-9). What is shameful are those things that prevent the soul from flourishing, given its nature. Damaging one's soul by committing injustice is both the greatest evil and the most shameful (*Gorg*. 477e6).

Socrates, in this way, rehabilitates conventional shame on the condition that conventions are rooted in the natural order of things. The conventional opinion of the Athenians that committing an injustice is more shameful than suffering injustice is shown to reflect what is actually shameful given what human nature is meant to be. Returning to the argument about rhetoric, it follows that those who seek to help people who commit injustice by means of teaching them rhetorical skills act against nature as they aggrevate rather than ameliorate the disorder in the soul (*Gorg*. 479b9-c1; cf. 472e7-9). Rhetoric has no use in supporting or promoting injustice. As an art, it serves the good in terms of justice, just as medicine serves the good in terms of health.

While Socrates' argumentation is systematic, his questioning seems relatively unsuccessful in provoking shame and reordering Polus' desires. Polus proves to be quite dull and stubborn of character. He needs to be pushed to sense any kind of apprehension about the inconsistencies in his reasoning (*Gorg*. 466e3) and about the shamelessness of his remarks (*Gorg*. 469a2). Polus is preaching tyranny out of a youthful admiration for power. Power, of course, is seductive, and absolute power of the tyrant the most seductive of all. Socrates, however, juxtapositions the lure of power with the question about the good. Is power really power if one loses sight of the good? According to Socrates, the answer is no, because chasing power at the expense of the good fundamentally causes a chasm in the self. Committing injustice damages the soul, and the desire for power as a means to get away with injustice is in direct opposition to the deepest desire in the human soul that is for doing the good. Committing injustice is by nature something to be ashamed of as it leaves the soul in a worse condition. Contrary to Polus' argument, communal

understandings that define committing injustice as morally worse than suffering injustice are *good* conventions because they benefit the soul.

23.4 The Case of Callicles: Shame and the Reordering of Desires

Socrates' argument about the relationship between nature and convention finds enhanced support in the exchange with Callicles. Callicles is Socrates' most formidable opponent in terms of his intelligence, eloquence, and political ambition. He is described as having recently entered the political arena (*Gorg.* 515a1-2), and he encourages Socrates to do the same. Indeed, at different moments in the dialogue, Callicles displays a care for Socrates, which seems reciprocated. This is one reason why, I would argue, Socrates is not without hope with regard to Callicles' character. Callicles allows Socrates to develop his argument and goes along with it, whether or not disingenuously, allowing the conversation to take up the largest part of the dialogue. Socrates explicitly and repeatedly addresses Callicles during the narration of the myth at the end of the dialogue. Most importantly, Callicles is a man of honor, who might be saved by his desire to excel (*Gorg.* 485c2, 494e7, 511b5), were it not—as Socrates points out—for his desire for power which pulls his soul away from the pursuit of truth (*Gorg.* 513c8). Still, Socrates expresses the hope that repeated conversations may turn Callicles around and that "if haply we come to examine these same questions more than once, and better, you will believe" (*Gorg.* 513c10-d2).

Like Polus, Callicles rejects conventional morality and argues that it is artificial. Conventional morality causes people to refrain from indulging in their desires, which Callicles rejects as he develops a hedonist argument that defines the good exclusively in terms of pleasure. He calls temperate people "simpletons" (*Gorg.* 491d6), and conventions "mere stuff and nonsense" (*Gorg.* 492c10). According to Callicles, the truly virtuous and strong man dares to ignore conventional morality and acts according to nature, which dictates that one's desires be as strong as possible without restraining them (*Gorg.* 491e10-2a1). Genuine virtue and happiness consist in being able to satisfy one's desires to the utmost and indiscriminately. As Callicles spells it out: "luxury and licentiousness and liberty, if they have the support of force, are virtue and happiness" (*Gorg.* 492c5-7).

Socrates, however, shows that Callicles himself is not impervious to conventional opinion, and somehow actually considers the restraint of desire as part of the good life. He shrewdly mentions the life of the catamite, the sexually submissive partner in homosexual relationships (*Gorg.* 494e5). Is not the life of the catamite "awful, shameful, and wretched?" (*Gorg.* 494e5-6). Callicles replies furiously: "Are you not ashamed, Socrates, to lead the discussion into such topics?" (*Gorg.* 494e7). The situation puts Callicles in a bind. Either he admits that some pleasures are better than others, or he concedes that he understands the pleasures of the catamite as good as any other. The experience of shame and indignation prepares Callicles to admit that,

indeed, some pleasures are better than others (*Gorg*. 499b8-9), which logically causes Callicles to retract the hedonist argument.

This opens up the way for Socrates to assert the meaning of the good as a standard over and above the pleasures, which leads the discussion to virtue and, in particular, the virtue of temperance. Socrates reiterates what he had stated in his conversation with Polus, namely, that human beings do a thing for the sake of the good: "Because, you know, Polus and I, if you recollect, decided that everything we do should be for the sake of the good. Do you agree with us in this view—that the good is the end of all our actions, and it is for its sake that all other things should be done, and not for theirs? (*Gorg*. 499e6-9). Callicles agrees. But what is the good that people seek? When it comes to the pleasures, what is good for the soul? Socrates proposes that just as the good of the body is health, so the good of the soul is virtue. The good pleasures are those that produce virtue (*Gorg*. 499d8-10, 507a2 ff.), whereas thoughtless, licentious, unjust, and unholy desires must be rejected (*Gorg*. 505b2-4, 507d1-2). Temperance implies that the emotions are moderate and that there is harmony between the rational and emotional part of the soul.

The temperate soul is ordered and well-proportioned. It presupposes "a certain regularity and order" (*Gorg*. 504b3-4, 506e1-2). Indeed, virtue arrives "by an order or rightness or art that is apportioned to each" (*Gorg*. 506d9-10), and: "it is a certain order proper to each existent thing that by its advent in each makes it good" (*Gorg*. 506e2-4). The argument that temperance involves order and harmony of the soul is supported by what we may call the cosmological argument. Socrates connects the order of the soul with the natural order that pervades the universe and everything in it, and this cosmological order sets the norm for what is good in the world, the community, and the human soul:

> "heaven and earth and gods and men are held together by communion and friendship, by orderliness, temperance, and justice; and that is the reason, my friend, why they call the whole of this world by the name of order (κόσμος), not disorder or dissoluteness." (*Gorg*. 507e10-8a5, cf. 508a)

Human flourishing means a life, and a soul, that subjects itself to the natural and pre-given order, which dictates harmony and proportional equality. It means that the individual is both in harmony with himself and with the whole.

What is morally shameful is what goes against the cosmological order. Callicles' shame about claiming that all pleasures should be pursued indiscriminately, hence including the pleasure of the catamite, is justified as a good emotion not only in terms of what is good for the soul (the anthropological argument) but also what is good for the whole and for the soul in relationship to the whole (the cosmological argument). The unlimited indulgence of desire goes against the principles of order, proportion, and harmony, which set the standard and dictate a restraint of desire. Callicles' experience of the emotion of shame is thus an emotion that helps him reorder his desires in line not only with his desire for the good but also with the good of the whole.

Socrates reiterates to Callicles that the conventions of the polity are sound when they reflect the natural order of things. As he tells Callicles, Gorgias' opinion that a

teacher of rhetoric need not concern himself with justice, and Polus' opinion that it is worse to suffer injustice than to commit injustice were justifiably shameful:

> "what you supposed Polus to be conceding from shame *is after all true*—that to do wrong is worse, in the same degree as it is more shameful, than to suffer it, and that whoever means to be the right sort of rhetorician must *really* be just and well-informed of the ways of justice, which again Polus said that Gorgias was only shamed into admitting." (*Gorg*. 508c1-7)

Likewise, the pleasure of the catamite was seen as morally shameful according to Athenian convention, and the presence of the Athenian audience seems to play a role in Callicles' experience of shame, next to his own internal apprehension about this pleasure. As with Gorgias and Polus, we see the two kinds of shame at work.

In the case of Callicles, there are specific political implications at stake. Whereas Gorgias and Polus influenced the young by offering a particular kind of education, Callicles—as a member of the Athenian polity—influenced the decision-making of the city directly. Socrates' final argument, however, moves all three interlocutors away from involvement in the polis as long as they cannot give consistent answers to questions about justice and the good life (*Gorg*. 427e2). Indeed, he proposes that it is *shameful* to embark on politics, that is, it is shameful to give in to the desire for power without practicing virtue first (*Gorg*. 527d2 ff.).

It is not clear from the dialogue whether Callicles is ashamed enough to abandon his political ambitions for the cultivation of virtue. The education of desire, we may say, is an uncertain endeavor. Assuming that Callicles has developed qualms about pursuing his political career, we may readdress the question raised by Rawls, who argued that shame is a negative emotion because it causes people to withdraw from participating in the public sphere. Interestingly enough, Socrates would agree with Rawls, but argue that it is a good thing if people withdraw from the political arena on account of shame caused by holding divergent and inconsistent opinions and desires. Rawls, Socrates might say, fails to pay attention to the content of people's opinions about the good life and, in particular, to the question of whether people understand the nature of reality well enough to understand justice and the good, and to reorder their desires accordingly. Shame in the *Gorgias* is presented as a valid emotional response of people who are questioned about their conception of the good and about their desires, and whose souls are found to lack harmony. As such, shame, having moral value, also has political value in the sense that it keeps inconsistent views and disordered desires out of politics. Whereas according to Rawls the emotion of shame obstructs rational politics, according to Socrates, the emotion of shame actually promotes rational politics.

Nussbaum's argument about shame comes closer to Socrates' in the sense that she specifically focuses on the relationship between shame and moral development. Whereas she argues that in children the emotion of shame is undesirable because a child is not developed enough to respond to shame in a constructive way, she also contemplates a good kind of shame in adults. Her definition of the good kind of shame has both a cognitive and an emotional component. Cognitively, on Nussbaum's account, shame results from the experience of a discrepancy between one's character and the ideals of the polity, such as equality. The confrontation with

people living in poor conditions may shame others into feeling greedy, materialistic, and out of line with principles of equality. This kind of shame is beneficial, according to Nussbaum, because it makes people less narcissistic. Emotionally, the good kind of shame results on account of empathy that springs from the recognition of a common humanity and vulnerability. Empathy provokes shame in feeling oneself above others such as the poor. Nussbaum argues that this kind of shame is good because it invites people to make amends, i.e., to repair conditions that undermine equality and to reintegrate the poor into society (Nussbaum 2004).

There is much to be said about Nussbaum's understanding of the good kind of shame in comparison with the kind of shame that is provoked in Plato's *Gorgias*. In fact, there is a substantive overlap in that both Nussbaum and Socrates understand the materialistic life of unlimited pursuit of pleasure to be justifiably shameful. The main point to notice is that, as we have seen, Socrates values and uses conventional shame on the condition that the norm applied reflects the natural order of things. He provides an argument from nature, whereas Nussbaum's argument does not question its assumptions such as whether equality is a good political norm and whether shame provoked by empathy is always a proper response. Socrates' argument about the moral value of shame is fundamentally more persuasive because he reasons from an understanding of human flourishing, in terms of virtue, and communal flourishing, in terms of the conception of the universe as an ordered whole.

23.5   Conclusion

In this chapter, I sought to show how Socrates in Plato's *Gorgias* presents shame as a fundamentally human emotion that plays a role in helping individuals to reevaluate their desires. Socrates postulates that all human beings have an innate desire for the good, which means that any kind of opinion or desire that departs from the good causes a contradiction in the soul. Such a contradiction causes a feeling of shame when brought to awareness by means of questioning. Socrates relies on the arousal of shame in his questioning, knowing that emotions play an important role in persuasion (cf. Moss 2005) and in moral education. Living in harmony with one's self is of paramount importance. Socrates claims that he would "rather choose to have my lyre, or some chorus that I might provide for the public, out of tune and discordant, or to have any number of people disagreeing with me and contradicting me, than that I should have internal discord and contradiction in my own single self" (*Gorg*. 481b9-c2). Likewise, he warns Callicles about the stakes of their conversation and suggests that Callicles must either prove that doing wrong and getting away with it is *good*, or live in eternal contradiction with himself; in the latter case "there will be no agreement between you, Callicles, and Callicles, but you will be in discord with him all your life" (*Gorg*. 482b6-7). Internal discord is to be avoided at all costs, which means that the emotion of shame as the result of an awareness of internal discord is an important emotion.

Furthermore, as I have shown in this chapter, Socrates rehabilitates the value of conventional shame in the face of the sophistic argument that convention is disingenuous and in opposition to nature. Nature dictates the standards of human flourishing which, according to Socrates, revolve around virtue. He shows that the virtue of temperance is pivotal to a good life. Living a temperate life means not only being in harmony with one's self as the emotions cooperate with reason, it also means living in harmony with the whole. The natural standards for human development are argued to be in harmony with the standards that provide order and proportion to the cosmos and everything in it.

As such, the dialogue helps us to reevaluate the moral value of shame, also in the classroom. Some have argued that shame plays a beneficial role when students display "antisocial tendencies, lack of respect for others, unrealistic self-appraisal, megalomania, and various types of personality disorders" (Corey 2018). This seems to me valid but perhaps not specifically Socratic. What a teacher may shame a student for by means of questioning is any kind of desire for what is unjust, bad, or ignoble. As we also learn from the *Gorgias*, there is no guarantee that this kind of risk-taking pays off. However, when it comes to the question whether or not shame plays a role in the endeavor of caring for the souls of students, based on the Socratic dialectic depicted in the *Gorgias* one would have to answer in the affirmative.

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Chapter 24
The Emotional Openness of Wonder and Admiration to Educating Our Moral Desires

Sara Martínez Mares

Abstract Emotions comprise cognitive and motivational traits. For the former, one of the most relevant traits is the subjacent *eudaimonistic* belief, while the motivational trait becomes clear in its imperious mood of "passivity" of our actions. The first trait explains emotions in terms of a distinctive rationality: what goods and values we consider we need in order to be happy. The second trait, warns us of significant changes in our environment as a result of our situation of needy beings However, there seems to be an exception: not every emotion is *eudaimonistic*. Admiration and awe help us to recognise that there are *objects* that are not included in our scheme of goods that should be incorporated; therefore, they contribute to the flourishing of our lives through their intrinsic ability to be open to the world. Admiration and awe make us focus maximally on the *object* and minimally on ourselves. This experience happens especially with rationality, love, and beauty, but also with moral models that tend to perform heroic actions. We propose that an integral moral education includes cultivating an attentive way of looking at our world and at human suffering that might be very fostered by awe and admiration, and which at the same time motivates us to wish good for ourselves and for others. Nowadays, however, there are two widespread views about morality that slow down our farming of both emotions: sentimentalism and solipsism. As long as they presuppose challenges for the main objective, they both will be analyzed.

Keywords Wonder · Admiration · Scheler · Girard · Possessive desire

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24.1   Introduction

The main objective of this chapter is visualizing how deeply admiration and wonder contribute to educating the desire in a moral sense. In other words, the phenomenological singularity of admiration and wonder provides a solid base so as any *learner* wishes *to do good*. Its singularity lies in the capacity of openness that takes place in the subject, as it is with *awe* according to Haidt and Seder (2009)[1]:

> Awe stops us dead in our tracks, and sometimes, when intense enough, acts like a reset button on the self. People sometimes emerge from awe experiences with new selves, values, and allegiances. For this reason awe is among the emotions most often implicated in spiritual transformations and religious conversion experiences. (Haidt & Seder 2009)

At the very least and the most usual situation, the structural openness of this kind of emotions involves questioning what we believed it was our immobile belief system. At the very best, some of those experiences, reach "a fall from a horse" and a further conversion, as it happens to Paul in his road to Damascus:[2] "The light and the voice left an impression already then and there on the road that made it impossible for him to continue as he was" (Bloechl 2018). That is why both emotions—but not only these ones—are mediators for a moral change or moral progress.[3]

The phenomenology of admiration, concretely, is represented by positive surprise and interest in other person's virtues. The subject suddenly pays attention to an object or action which was until then unknown and that takes the subject to the apprehension of that which is attractive based on an *improvement* of his end and values' scheme. It is a social emotion for that appealing possibility that remains in actions, virtues, or abilities of others that impact in a positive way in personal growth. There seems to be an agreement in the field of social psychology about the fact that admiration is associated with a tendency to imitate the admired target (Onu et al. 2016). Admiration also encourages people to learn valuable skills. (Ibid.). Wonder is only different from admiration in the fact that the impact of the object does not lead to action but to *contemplation*:

> This emotion responds to the pull of the object, and one might say that in it the subject is maximally aware of the value of the object, and only minimally aware, if at all, of its relationship to her own plans." (Nussbaum 2001)

Admiration for a moral hero, a fair person or for a *moral saint* shares, probably, the same structure as wonder: it engenders contemplation and *only* later it shapes a

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[1] Awe is habitually understood as religious wonder in front of the holiness. Cfr. Ivanhoe (1997), Wettstein (1997). Even though wonder and awe share the same structure only "wonder" will be used in the paper, to avoid confusion.

[2] Saul of Tarsus belonged first to the Pharisaical school and then he changed into a follower of Christ after a radical conversion. His conversion was radical as before doing it he pursued Christians to death, as it happened to the deacon Stephen. (See Act 9, 1–19).

[3] We agree with Nussbaum (2001) when she says that wonder is sometimes an important ingredient in other emotions. Another powerful emotion which mediates moral progress is compassion.

character. Algoe and Haidt (2009) difference this kind of moral admiration from basic admiration for any other competence and they name it "elevation:" Admiration differed from elevation primarily in that admiration seems to arouse and energize people to work harder on their own goals and projects (. . .) while elevation does not energize; it opens." In other words, elevation is a kind of moral awe that explains attraction to transpersonal moral ideals (Kristjánsson 2017). This accurate concept of elevation is included in the concept of wonder to be worked on this chapter. Taking it into account, while awe and wonder are mediators for positive moral change and progress to the extent that one sees her own life in the light of high ideals, admiration embodies those ideals in virtuous persons who carry them out either continuously or intermittently.

Both emotions enable the desire *to do good*. For the time being, it would be quite satisfactory if the desire to do good begins with, following the line of Simone Weil and Iris Murdoch, "The extremely difficult realization that something other than oneself is real." (Hopwood 2017). However, this proposal seems to be too compromising or ambitious after the predominance of the sentimentalist discourse. According to the conception arising from Hume, if there were individuals capable of emitting a description of the world different from a reproduction of mathematical proprieties and containing any kind of nonmeasurable propriety, as for example, a moral or metaphysics evaluation, those individuals would *only* be projecting in the world certain subjective states. His main legacy for the ethical discipline could be summed up in that *vice* and *virtue* are also perceptions of the mind, such as hot and cold, so they are not qualities in the object (Hume 2008). Accordingly, saying that the wonder for beauty and nature quietness contributes in some way to a *desire* for doing good means as Stroud (2015) states, that the existence itself of these properties (beautiful) depends on the receiver reactions. "Beauty is only in the eye of the beholder" (Ibid.). Therefore, holding a subjectivist posture about emotions means that the magnitude of this kind of absolute experiences where the subject is impacted by some kind of perceived "reality,"[4] is either a chimera or a projection of the subject. Admiration and wonder sadly slide to the background and if one continues to defend the possibility of an approximate axiological ontology, one has the burden of proof.[5] Therefore, here lies the first challenge to the proposed objective. But this is not the only one.

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[4]Defending the predominance of the *perceived* over the *real* still causes trouble: how do you explain the possibility of projecting moral beliefs in the world from hypothetically non-moral situations (Corbí 2012), without postulating that our evaluations be absolutely arbitrary?

[5]The consequences of a modern scientist conception lead to a bipartite world, namely the classical division between objective properties—those that are susceptible to mathematic calculation—and subjective properties—those that are response-dependent. We do not need to think further to realize the hierarchical preponderance of the scientifically objective world over the "subjective" in our western system of knowledge. The sentimentalist explanations that touch the subjectivism of values pay honor to the aseptic, objective and neutral world that brings about the scientific revolution, in which there are no moral facts, but what, whatever it is, the "natural facts are."

Recently, admiration has stepped in the field of education through role modeling theory (Sanderse 2013). In moral philosophy, Zagzebsky (2017) makes a relevant point about motivation to do good through her well-reasoned exemplarist moral theory. Suffice to say that our theoretical starting points on admiration are different. So are the philosophical traditions that sustain them. While Zagzebsky's theory is based on Aristotelian virtue ethics, the one presented here is based on continental philosophy, specifically Scheler's vision of moral exemplars and Girard's theory of mimetic desire. Certainly Zagzebsky's points may complement the vision here presented and our proposal can help, in turn, to set the stage to overcome some handicaps of her theory, like setting differences between admiration and envy or why emulation might be also directed towards evil and possession. However, there has been hitherto a clear recession in admiration and wonder research. The reason for its abandonment in moral philosophy is due to the enlightened conception of the person as an isolated and autonomous agent. The individual is now both the subject and object of his own knowledge and does not seem to need, theoretically, any human link for his development. This conception has difficulties to recognize the *moral exemplars* as necessary for admiration—or elevation in Haidt's terms.

With this background, the proposed objective will be addressed explaining, in the first place, the peculiar intentionality of emotions (Sect. 24.2), in order to see that, both admiration and wonder, are the exception to the rule. Secondly, it will be discussed with the two positions posed by the aforementioned challenges: sentimentalism (Sect. 24.3) and the solipsist conception of the individual (Sect. 24.4). The objective of the first debate—sentimentalism—is to explain what can be considered as *openness to moral reality*. Regarding the solipsist conception, the objective is twofold. The first is to demystify the romantic discourse of the absolute abstract autonomy of the subject. This autonomy—individual without prior commitments— is approached not only as the goal of perfect personal development, but also as the basis for personal growth. Secondly, from Girard's theory of mimetic desire, educational keys can be obtained to protect experiences of wonder and admiration. Both sections can be read separately, although the conclusions obtained will be presented together in the last section (Sect. 24.5). The last chapter will provide some clues to moral education that are finally summarized in the fact that we do need moral exemplars and we do need to give in to the demands of possessive desire that monopolizes the attentive look at the world that surrounds us.

24.2   Intentional Singularity of Admiration and Wonder

One of the most complete definitions of "emotion" could be the one proposed by Martha Nussbaum (2001), not because of her cognitivist proposal, which is not exempt from criticism, but because of her surrounding interesting reasoning:

> ... Emotions should be understood as "geological upheavals of thought": as judgments in which people acknowledge the great importance, for their own flourishing, of things that

they do not fully control—and acknowledge thereby their neediness before the world and its events. (Nussbaum 2001)

These *important things* in the definition are the *objects* of emotions. The object is an *intentional* object: "that is, it figures in the emotion as it is seen or interpreted by the person whose emotion it is." (Ibid.). Emotions are not *about* their concrete objects merely or neutral *elicitors* as science likes to name "Their *aboutness* is more internal, and embodies a way of seeing," in other words, the object is seen through one's own window." (Ibid.).

Another important element in the given definition is *flourishing*, since the "way of seeing" is essentially related to the person's *end and values' scheme*. That is the reason why Nussbaum says emotions are *eudaimonistic*.

The part related to *non-control* in the definition leads us to another key. Even though the emotion projects a value, the intentionality is also *independent* from psychological states of the subject as sometimes our emotions do not respond to what we want to voluntarily pursue, acquire, control, or manifest. The absent volitional component of emotions, together with the value of the subject perspective makes the phenomenology of emotions irreducible to any other state (cognitions or conations), but neither is the sum of them: "So, which is it: are such evaluations [coming from emotions] cognitions or conations? The answer [. . .] is both . . . and neither." (Helm 2009).

Now, certainly, it seems that the dominant tone of the adequacy or rationality of emotions is led by the value granted by the subject (See Sect. 24.3) and it seems to be enclosed in the subject psychological field. Likewise, although Helm's effort to talk about double emotional intentionality is valuable, his definition of emotion—"intentional feelings of import"—seems not to yield to the subjective logic of value. Nussbaum, however, raises an exception regarding this dominant logic:

Are all emotions eudaimonistic? Do all, that is, make reference to my important goals and projects? Do all contain the self-referential element that lies at the heart of the eudaimonist structure? The most striking exception would appear to be the emotion of wonder, (. . .). This emotion responds to the pull of the object, and one might say that in it the subject is maximally aware of the value of the object, and only minimally aware, if at all, of its relationship to her own plans. (Nussbaum 2001)

It is possible to add more variables to wonder. Harry Frankfurt complains about the fact that Philosophy has paid little attention to human experiences that involve a high level of satisfaction and glorification. He draws a paradox in order to show this fact: humans *submit to* the rational and potentially lovable, i.e., we *submit* to something which is beyond our voluntary control; but that submission is not suffocating or oppressive.

When we accede to being moved by logic or by love, the feeling with which we do so is not ordinarily one of dispirited impotence. On the contrary, we characteristically experience in both cases—whether we are following reason or following our hearts—a sense of liberation and of enhancement. What accounts for this experience? It appears to have its source in the fact that when a person is responding to a perception of something as rational or as beloved, his relationship tends to it tends towards selflessness. His attention is not merely concentrated upon the object it is somehow fixed or sized by the object. (Frankfurt 2007a)

As Frankfurt claimed, wonder, as it generates liberating feelings, can be categorized into "positive/satisfying emotion" and that also, turning to another issue, has its application in learning:

> Contentment appears to broaden by creating the urge to take time to savor current life circumstances and integrate this circumstances into de new views of self and the world. [. . .] To play, to explore, to envision future achievements, and to savor and integrate . . . represent ways that positive emotions broaden habitual modes of thinking or acting. (Fredrikson 2004)

Likewise, "The emotion of interest is continually present in the normal mind under normal conditions, and it is the central motivation for engagement in creative and constructive endeavors and for the sense of well-being." (Izard 2009, pág. 4). Missing emotions such as gratitude and wonder a child would lack the essential element that introduces the interest for something different from his own self, therefore his learning would be impoverished.

Regarding the level of ethical flourishing, wonder, as non-eudaimonistic as an emotion can be, helps move distant objects within the circle of a person's scheme of ends (Nussbaum 2001). But it does not only move objects but also incorporates moral actions of others through admiration. Algoe and Haidt (2009) asked the subjects of their experiment, among other things, to say if some kind of motivation arose while admirable, pleasant or boring examples were written. They state in one of their conclusions:

> Elevation led to higher reports (compared to joy or amusement) of motivations to do good things for other people, become a better person oneself, and emulate the virtuous role model more generally. Admiration participants consistently wanted to emulate the admirable person and improve themselves." (Algoe and Haidt 2009)

24.3   The Sentimentalist Challenge

As mentioned in the introduction, the predominance of a sentimentalist discourse is one of the reasons why Philosophy and education have abandoned wonder and admiration. In this chapter moral sentimentalism will be briefly analyzed, in order to foresee what is that *reality* that gets open in front of admiration and wonder.

What is specific about emotions, as it is usually stated by sentimentalism supporters, is that they represent things as having certain evaluative properties. Thus, an emotion of admiration with respect to a friend will be correct just in case the friend is really admirable. (Tappolet 2011). Given this approach, and with respect to admiration, several questions arise. The first one is that it would be hard to explain what is admirable unless we did it from the experience of the subject that is admired. The second question arises from the *perceptual model* from which the neo-sentimentalist explanations start. Supporters of the perceptual model claim that emotional experiences enjoy a similar epistemic status than naïve perceptions at its representational level (Brady 2011). This means that if a person feels offended by a joke then the joke is, *for that person*, offensive. The emotion justifies the evaluation of the joke as, according to neo-sentimentalism, evaluative concepts such as admirable, disgusting,

amusing, or insulting are response dependent. The kind of objects and events perceived by emotion is called "values" by some sentimentalists.

The neo-sentimentalist posture polishes up two of the greatest attractions on the recovery of what emotions contribute to moral philosophy. Firstly, "Besides alerting us to moral reasons by registering them in affect [. . .] emotional discomfort reinforces moral reasons with non-moral criticism of failure to act that yields a further reason." (Greenspan 2011). In other words, they are not only evaluative markers, but also sources of moral claims (Stocker & Hegeman 1996). As an example, Améry's (2001) comments after being tortured and sent to a labor camp seem relevant. He makes reference to one of the SS lackeys, called Wajs, who hit him on the head as he considered Améry was not digging fast enough. Améry says he was, and he is the only one who is in possession of the moral truth of the blows that still resonate in his skull and, therefore, he is more legitimated to judge with respect to his executors.

Secondly, sometimes, the overpowering surge of emotion prevents someone from doing something irrational (Frankfurt 2007b). It often happens that there is no need to look for reasons for our emotions because we rely on the same evidence provided by emotional abduction. Learning to assess situations through emotions is part of our natural growth: children live *emotionally*.

However, setting aside these accurate intuitions, there are still two gaps in the argument provided by neo-sentimentalism about emotional suitability: they maintain an epistemologically modern model in the Cartesian sense because the *I* is the basis of certainty about what is experienced. Therefore, the appropriateness of emotions does not allow us to leave the subject that evaluates and then we fall into a kind of circular argument about what is relevant or *really* valuable. As an example on the first argument gap, it could happen that while I *should* feel gratitude toward my friend for the help he has given me, I feel, however, resentment. But it does not imply that the help I have been given is, *in itself*, offensive. Certainly, here the emotion pushes us to look for evaluative reasons and thus, to be able to reflect on whether what we consider important, being attached to an incongruous emotion, is really *that* important. Thus, emotions are not only, in Greenspan's words, *reason-providers* but also *reason-trackers*.

Secondly, following Améry's example, he uses his resentment so that the crime acquires moral reality for the criminal and that he does not abandon himself to oblivion, as it seemed to be suggested in the German postwar political climate, through a "forgiveness" in abstract. His argument is now interesting because, although Améry brings the lived reality of his resentment, he does so to claim that Wajs lackey does not share, at all, that damaged reality:

> If we wonder how it is possible that, despite the victim's suffering, the executioner continues to torture him, Améry's response is that he does so whilst, when he separates himself from the moral reality of his action, he falsifies it to the point of making the victim's damage invisible to him. (Marrades 2005)[6]

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[6]Own translation.

Following Améry's argumentative logic, does the absence of emotion signal the absence of morally relevant value or action? In this case, a sentimentalist may have trouble trying to justify an answer. According to Marrades (2005), Améry finds evident that the victim and the executioner conceptualize what is happening between them in a different way. Améry attributes to his executioner a description of his own acts as "facts within a physical theory," while him, as a victim, can only see those same acts as "acts within a moral system." Somehow, without pretending it, he comes to question the premises of the sentimentalism itself in its Humean version.[7]

So, to defend that there is a reality that claims for justice and attention demands a trained openness structure, which is provided, among other things, by wonder and admiration. Moreover, the opening to the existence of the other requires that just and loving gaze that Weil so demanded. Following this line of reasoning, the realism defended here is similar to the version supported by Murdoch according to Jordan: "Murdoch's hypothetical response-dependent view is existentially mind-independent, but conceptually mind-dependent."[8] (Jordan 2014). Similarly, attention to the other requires preventing the internal dynamics of self-indulgence desires, as it will be shown in Sect. 24.4, and being capable of contemplation.[9]

24.4   The Solipsistic Challenge

Part of the literature on virtues and emotions, following the essay of MacIntyre *After Virtue*, inter alia, appeals to community sense as essential in the development of moral character: ". . .Community has often been a missing desideratum in the discussion of the nature and development of admirable moral character." (Blum 2003). In accordance with this line drawn by Blum, this chapter will attempt to point out the origin of solipsism and its deficiencies, whereas people are in impressionable beings, which is not necessarily something negative, and essentially relational.

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[7]Some versions of neo-sentimentalism—like those who opted for ontological realism, such as Johnston or Tappolet, in a vision similar to the phenomenology of Max Scheler—are certainly conscious of the objection related to the different dimensions that are present in any response-dependent properties. The justification level is not identical in emotional responses towards moral, aesthetic, prudential or moral properties.

[8]The above mentioned is represented by the famous parable of the Good Samaritan: the Jew who has been beaten by bandits and left half dead on the road is still there, regardless of whether the priest who passed by him gave a detour as the Levite did. Not touching the blood might be a priority to practice mercy in the moral scheme of the priest and the Levite. But for Jesus it is very clear that the Samaritan is the neighbor, that foreigner who stops, looks, feels compassion and, as a consequence, acts in his favor until he recovers.

[9]"The poet produces the beautiful by fixing his attention on something real. It is the same with the act of love. To know that this man who is hungry and thirsty really exists as much as I do—that is enough, the rest follows of itself." (Weil 2003).

Through the analysis of interpersonal character, Girard's theory of mimetic desire is reached as a key to understanding the ambivalences to which we are submitted by our desires. However, the most important thing is to observe how admiration becomes envy, or how the desire to acquire a good scheme of ends and values ⁇becomes a possessive desire. The ultimate objective, therefore, is offered at an educational level and lies in discerning how we could avoid the disaster of rivalry and how we could give rise to a healthy admiration and wonder.

What, then, does community imply for moral growth? The moral agent has been conceived by prevailing Western literature as an isolated individual. This individual seems to have the absolute responsibility to be virtuous, as if he could produce a virtue "*de novo*, from individual reason or reflection." (Ibid.). But in order to offer an answer, let's continue to respond to other types of complaints about the dominant conception of contemporary ethics, even in virtue ethics. Moller Okin, for example, demands "*revising* traditional accounts on the virtues." (Moller Okin 2003). What she asks is "to include as human virtues the qualities needed to nurture, to take care of those who cannot take care of themselves, and to raise children to adulthood in which they can both flourish as virtuous citizens and enable others so to flourish." (Ibid.). In an interesting paper, Benhabib (1986) exposes part of the problem about the isolated growth of people as an axiomatic premise of modern moral and political philosophy. Hobbes quote states: "Let us consider man . . . as if but even now sprung out of the earth, and suddenly, come to full maturity, without all kind of engagement to each other." (Benhabib 1986). The philosopher comments hereafter that the denial of being born of a woman releases the male ego from the most natural and basic dependency link. The last criticism is directed to the metaphor of the *state of nature* as the vision of an autonomous *self* under a narcissistic wound, which sees the world in his own image (Ibid.). Many current theories of justice have this modern starting point: the isolated individual. As a consequence, moral education proposals will arise and will be based, therefore, on *instilling* norms or principles to this individual *ego* that does not require prior commitments.

To illustrate this, in the philosophical literature on freedom or on practical rationality, the subject stands alone in front of a set of reasons before which he has to evaluate which ones are better to live well. Although it is perceived that the subject has a background of reasons on which he chooses, it is not known how they come to him. As Carlos Moya detects, there is "a deeply individualistic view of human agents as radically self-made, self-contained entities, whose constitution does not owe anything to factors externals to them." (Moya 2006).

Tipping the scale toward the opposite extreme, constructivist thinkers also see the subject as a passive entity, although initially cultural, it is an individual—structurally isolated—that is mechanically "filled in" by the inputs of the environment.

There are many contemporary moral philosophers who raise their voices in the face of this unreal conception of the person that has implications in education: "Quite generally, we learn emotions—how and when to have them, how to recognize our own and those of others, their significance, and so on—by engaging emotionally

with others (Stocker 2003). This *emotional engagement* has to do with the strong links established from early childhood by those Others that are relevant.[10]

Other philosophers criticize explicitly this kind of individual proposed by romanticism:

> ... A free man, a self-willed and self-reliant *individual* moving about as he likes—an individual making exchanges, drawing up contracts, forming a society with others by way of *deliberate purposes* but without a push from any unified will of life and love, and enjoying himself in forms of international customs."[11] (Scheler 1987)

Scheler comments that the view of romanticism, as well as those coming from the opposite one, depersonalized collectivism, are mechanical views of the world that do not take into account that "What determines at least the basis, and the main direction, of the being, of the kinds, forms and development of groups are solely the ruling minorities of personal exemplars and of leaders." (Ibid.). Scheler gives more value to the former than to the leadership: "Leaders only affect our will. But exemplars determine the moral tenor beneath our will." (Ibid.). Leaders only "demand action, accomplishment and comportment. An exemplar demands our being and the cast [gestalt] of our souls." (Ibid.). In our romantic Western culture based on "be whatever you want to be" there is, paradoxically, an overabundance of influencers who, in turn, follow others, as well as of rarely spontaneous leaders. The leaders who are imitated are there to attract the public to and from economic stimuli: we imitate those who succeed based on their economic status and their flattered social stereotype. This requires, by the way, a great marketing and advertising effort. Notwithstanding, experts know that the product is not sold but to whoever uses it. Therefore, the fight is not to have what is advertised, but to be like the model of the advertisement. It seems to be important here to highlight some academics who remember the mythological character of the illustrated and popular phrase "think for yourself." As Milgram comments after his famous social experiment:

> The force exerted by the moral sense of the individual is less effective than social myth would have us believe. [...] A few changes in newspaper headlines, a call from the draftboard, orders from a man with epaulets, and man are led to kill with little difficulty. [...]Moral factors can be shunted aside with relative ease by calculated restructuring of the informational and social field. (Milgram 1974)

24.4.1 Mimetic Desire and Its Consequences

In line with Scheler, Girard perceives a law that is hidden in our psychology: desire has a mimetic structure. The literary critic argues against what he calls subjectivist dogma, symbolism, and "romantic lie" and, accordingly, the criticism of the

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[10]See Nussbaum (2001, Ch. 4), about the influence of bonds in children moral development.

[11]Scheler comments that customs are now pleasure and what is useful, compared to that pertaining to the tradition of the specific community in which the person lives.

previous section keeps similar to the present. It remains as evidence what the characters in the novels do when they warn, curiously, that what the novelist[12] is trying to say goodbye to, what Stendhal called vanity or pure imitation, is what really ends up happening to the main characters:

> Romantics and symbolists want a transfiguring desire which is completely spontaneous; they do not want to hear any talk about the Other. They turn away from the dark side of desire, claiming it is unrelated to their lovely poetic dream and denying that it is its price. At the end of his dream the novelist shows us the sinister retinue of internal mediation: "envy, jealousy, and impotent hatred." (Girard 1965)

This quote contains, in addition to a critique of the romantic posture, an approach to the second objective proposed in using Girard's theory: the novelty lies in a type of desire that leads to the other side of admiration: envy. The desire to be—to be someone important—Girard calls it "metaphysical desire" and it resembles the desire for Hegelian recognition, that is, the one that imitates the model or desires what his model or hero desires will be someone only if that model recognizes it. With regard to metaphysical desire, the desiring subject does not only want the object (possessions, virtues, loves) of the admired hero (mediator), but wants to be like him; or even beyond: "the desiring subject wants to become his mediator; he wants to steal from the mediator his very being of "perfect knight" or "irresistible seducer." (Ibid.). So far there is no apparent problem if mediation is external, that is, if the hero is an unattainable model, as Don Quixote did with his imaginary model, Amadís de Gaula. However, if the hero who is imitated enters the circle of closeness or familiarity, what Girard calls internal mediation, the one who was a role model becomes a rival: "They will no longer desire the desired thing, but they will focus on one another as their opponents." (Pisk 2012). Reaching this point, the object you are fighting for is not important (possessions, virtues, loves). The fact that one has more of what was desired—whatever it is—than the model becomes now the important thing. This rivalry, according to Girard, normally leads to a violent competition. The violent competition can even lead to death; it would be the worse consequence of mimetic desire in its possessive side elicited, tacitly, for the necessity of recognition.

Girard brings to light very common psychological actions that we wish to keep hidden, as adults are ashamed of knowing we are imitators before the other's eyes for fear of revealing his lack of being, or in order to conceal his own lack of originality (Pisk 2012). It is not the same for children, who blatantly imitate what the other does or wants. However, it seems that Girard holds a thesis opposed to Scheler regarding the fruits of admiration for the model. While he explains the consequences of mimetic desire in his more than likely competitive diversion, Scheler, more positively, says that "What has a forming and grafting effect on our souls is not an abstract, universal moral rule but always, and only, a clear and intuitive grasp of the exemplarity of the person (Scheler 1987). For Scheler, exemplariness means "to cast value." The kinds of exemplariness run parallel to his famous hierarchy of values:

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[12]The authors analyzed by Girard (1965) are Cervantes, Stendhal, Proust, and Dostoievsky. Cervantes is the only one, according to Girard, who is conscious of the mimesis.

"the saint, the genius, the hero, the leading mind of civilization, and the master in the art of living."

Someone could also use the same Girardian line of negative mimesis against the idea of admiration as an emotion that facilitates the education in the desire to do good, since a totalitarian dictator or leaders of political parties can be admired while being aware that they have committed injustices. In this case, returning to Scheler, we see that he does not hold a naive conception about it: "Exemplars also have their counter-exemplars: They are frequent forms into which humans develop because of the hatred they have against someone who should be their exemplar but is not (e.g., *a child's hatred against his father*)." (Scheler 1987) (My emphasis). There might be situations in which children reject, or even hate, their parents. In a similar way, it is possible, as it happens in Proust or Dostoyevsky, that the father—a closest relative— becomes the rival. However, this scenario is not, hopefully, the usual thing. To reach that point in the fictional drama, a son must have been welcomed only to the extent that he has met the expectations of the father until a time comes when the expectations are unified and the father is seen as an equal; or the father has seen the child as an interference in his desire for something else and, therefore, the child was an obstacle; or so many other lacks of love for the children that generate in them a void that must be filled with the praise of what he considers relevant to the paternal circle. Following Weil on this subject: "Every void (not accepted) produces hatred, sourness, bitterness, spite. The evil we wish for that which we hate, and which we imagine, restores the balance (Weil 2003). Restoring the balance includes also revenge desires and hurting others. This might not justify the fact of "admiring" unfairness, but it gives us a reason to understand it. In the sad event in which where there should be welcome and love, there has been rejection, the desire for recognition and imitation will, inter alia, revolve around a love of possession regarding the objects that their referents admire. Possessive desire involves a more than likely absence of wonder and admiration.

The same can happen when admiration is conceptualized incorrectly. To illustrate, Onu et al. (2016) define admiration "as the emotion elicited by those of competence exceeding standards." According to them, admiration is also elicited when the admirer is less competent than the admired or when there is status or prestige in a nondominant hierarchy inside social groups. To comment on these conclusions, the experiments carried out were conducted in schools, among peers who excelled in skills. However, the researchers visualized that sometimes envy or negativity appears and they also attribute it to the fact that the admirer perceives that he cannot attain the competence. If we follow Girard, his theory blocks admiration among peers due to *internal mediation*. Peers will finally become competitors.

After a careful reading about the scheme of mimetic desire, the question arises whether it is impossible to sincerely admire a friend or a partner or, in Girard's words, if there can be a desire without a mediator. But there is only a brief exception and it takes place when the desire does not evoke a possession "but a desire of expression. The aesthetic emotion is not desire but the ending of all desire, a return to calm and joy." (Girard 1965). The Girardian aesthetic emotion is similar to the "selflessness" that Frankfurt described and that, as stated before, does not exclude

satisfactory experiences at all. Furthermore, if we follow the logic of aesthetic emotion, admiration could happen among peers if we give in to the presumption of the possessive desire. But we give into rivalry because we have the sincere conviction that our peer/friend, etc., contribute, complements us, or is someone from whom we can always learn.

24.5 About Education: Necessity of Openness and Nonpossessive Desire

The conclusions of both challenges come together here. It has been said that there is a reality that claims for justice and attention (Sect. 24.3), and, in order to someone to approach it sincerely, the position of the mystic or the child must be adopted, that is, someone who, without possessive desire, lets himself be impressed by what is around him (Sect. 24.4). This proposal is neither stranger to Western thought—nor stranger to the Eastern mystic—since Aristotle (2003) also says that he who feels astonished is one who recognizes that he does not know. And, as it is known, the philosopher has previously considered astonishment as the engine of philosophy.[13]

This position tacitly launches a critique of the opposite one, which is more superb, someone who considers his mind, his beliefs, his desires, as the only source of certainty and according to this "... is willing to rely upon his own inner resources and character without caring whether or not they can be validated by an authority external to themselves." (Frankfurt 1999). According to Frankfurt, the last scheme is the rebel's or Cartesian—as opposed to mystic's or Spinozian scheme.

Might it be those legitimate "external authorities" are the moral exemplars and to a much more subtle extent and perhaps, different, they are the parents and the great masters. When Scheler explains the strength of value that models print on the *moral tenor* of followers, he points out that the purest form of effectiveness is

> ...faith in an exemplar, not in a religious meaning of the term, but in the sense of a well-founded, evidential and true love, and of the full understanding of the knowledge of the exemplar and his value. (Scheler 1987)

Faith—or confidence—and love are essential for personal growth. The model, present or past, in its living, acting, and reflecting gives meaning to our actions without excluding the path of authenticity—otherwise, it would not be a moral exemplar. The exemplar's authority is not an authority that imposes itself unidirectionally, as it has been stated following Scheler, but there is a reciprocity that is lived to the extent that trust and love are shown.

Nevertheless, if the Cartesian scheme rejects any external authority, it shares the premise of the isolated individual who does not need any compromise. If we add to

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[13] As Scheler states: "In the ancient Greek world preferring the sage to the saint, it was Socrates who came closest to holiness." (Scheler 1987). Hebrew culture instead, came closed to holiness: "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge." (Pr. 7, 1).

this scheme several cosmovisions that share in some way the same structure, such as the prevailing version of Francis Bacon about scientific-technical domination and the subjectivist side of sentimentalism, we have many cultural facilities to lock ourselves into a scheme of possessive desire. Contrary to this philosophical and psychological background, in a more concrete way, we can obtain some educational clues in the following quote:

> The most direct and effective way to kill wonder in a child is to give him everything he wants, without even giving him the opportunity to desire it. The lack of limits and frantic consumerism in children destroy the wonder because thus children take everything for granted. They think that things necessarily behave as they do, which is an attitude contrary to wonder. Or even worse, they think that things and people should always behave as they want them to do. (L'Ecuyer 2012)[14]

We must protect children's experiences of wonder. But if instead, we stimulate those of continued desire, generating in the meanwhile opportunities for immediate satisfaction, we will really have problems at an ethical level in the very near future.[15] It is not possible for an egocentric person to be able to look up to see what the others' wishes would be, and find out—dear me!—they are not the same as mine.

However, with regard to wonder evoked by the beauty of nature, either by its greatness or its little things, one realizes that one's capacity for action has not influenced the harmony of what one perceives, that is, what is perceived is not up to us. Therefore, humility as an attitude is closely related to the use of this type of experience:

> ... Everything in humility is received as a gift. [...] However, the gift is not at *as* my disposal. It is the attempt to make the gift as something at my disposal that contributes to its disappearance as gift. (Steinbock 2018)

Steinbock says that it may well be that gift required a sacrifice: "What has been offered up, as it were, is the prideful self, but this has already been done through the acceptance of the other person." (Ibid.) Or through the acceptance of nature, of moral exemplars, or of—maybe limited—love of parents too. A parallel may also be drawn with the thought of Weil who in graphic way explains how the contemplation of beauty works as the aforementioned girardian aesthetic emotion, and it implies a renunciation:

> The beautiful is a carnal attraction which keeps us at a distance and implies a renunciation. This includes the renunciation of that which is most deep-seated, the imagination. We want to eat all the other objects of desire. The beautiful is that which we desire without wishing to eat it. We desire that it should be. (Weil 2003)

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[14]Own translation.

[15]As an example, the reports of international organizations on sex education in Europe to children aged 0–5 years emphasize that sexual pleasure is one of the first objectives of education and therefore introduces, in a noncritical way, the learning in masturbation. Cfr. WHO, 2010. Standards for Sexuality Education in Europe. https://www.bzga-whocc.de/en/publications/standards-in-sexuality-education/

In a pragmatist mood, the listening mode, that of the observer, the contemplative, that of the child or that of the artist, that is, those that stop at what is extraordinary in the ordinary, are necessary to facilitate a greater learning as well as an interior moral transformation, if necessary. In the first case, the one who "knows he does not know" will more easily host any relevant event coming from the outside world, will feel wonder more easily, will let others teach or advise him, etc. And we should remember, he will probably have a happier life, full of positive emotions that foster creativity. In the second case, in order to know how to fight against the narcissism of the demanding self that tries to fill the void and to imitate—empty—lives of others, some variables within our reach are required.[16] For example, to embark on a journey to find someone for whom my own person is a gift and vice versa. That is why family and friends who love well are so important in the development of people. In this regard, love will be "increasingly understood in terms of interchange and reciprocity, rather than in terms of narcissistic fusion and rage for control." (Nussbaum 2004). This encompasses with humility to the extent that the self will be "increasingly understood and accepted as human incomplete and partial, rather than grandiose and demanding completeness." (Ibid.). For we recognize we need each other and that doesn't impoverish us at all but enriches our personal growth.[17]

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[16]The variables that are practically outside our voluntary reach have to do with the source of the negative mimesis: it is about recovering the original love or finding someone for whom one, oneself, is a gift. That is why the family and the friend they love are so important in the development of people.

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Chapter 25
Advertising and Desire

Alfonso Méndiz

Abstract It is often said that cinema is a dream factory. With more reason, we could say that advertising is a wish factory. Perhaps that is why one of the most famous books on advertising, which shows the darker side of the advertising activity, is titled precisely like this: *The want makers* (Clark 1988), which accompanied by a large number of examples, shows that large advertising campaigns base their efficiency in the ability to raise desires. In fact, advertising can be a factory of wishes not always controlled: making us want a product that we don't really need or leading us to replace the one we already had long before it can be considered obsolete. And yet, it could also be the opposite: a school that harmonizes or directs our desires toward what is most appropriate or beneficial for us.

In this triangle formed by advertising, education, and desire, this chapter will first address the relationship between advertising and desire: its intentionality, not always declared, to arouse or awaken purchase wishes. Next, we will see how advertising has been conceptualizing different consumer models based on their wishes and purchase decisions. Third, we will study the relationship between advertising and values, understood as effective guides to our desires. And, finally, we will analyze various initiatives in the professional, deontological, and school fields to train people—specially, children—in the use of advertising and educate their impulsive consumption desires.

Keywords Advertising · Desire · Education · Manipulation · Media literacy

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25.1   Advertising as a Desire Alarm

Advertising activity has many facets. We usually think of it as circumscribed to the economic sphere: an instrument to sell products, through the public promotion of its qualities and advantages. However, this is only one of its many faces, perhaps the most visible, but by no means the only one. Advertising has a communicative sphere, which makes possible the dialogue of brands with their audiences; a social sphere, because it influences the fashions and lifestyles of the population; and also a psychological sphere, because their campaigns seek a certain effect on our habits and our desires. Let us stop at this last point now.

The manipulation of our desires is developed by advertising in many different ways and in many different situations:

– By promoting a new product, advertising tries to turn it into an irresistible desire for the public that, until then, lived happily without knowing it existed: it did not feel attracted to it nor did it experience any frustration due to the lack of that product; and, nevertheless, from an advertising campaign you can wish it to the point of thinking that you will not be happy without acquiring it. In this situation, advertising seeks to awaken a *nonexistent desire*, arouse the desire for something that has never been perceived as necessary (León 1996: 13–27).
– By promoting a product that is already known but has never been acquired before, advertising tries to turn it into a desire based on social consensus: "now everyone uses it, and you must also use it." In this case, trying to activate a *latent desire*, the desire for something that until then did not look attractive or necessary, and that in the campaign is presented as essential, irresistible, or at least fascinating (Hennion et al. 1989).
– By promoting a product that the consumer already knows and uses, but is manufactured by the competitor, advertising tries to raise the desire to improve our user experience. The product is presented as cheaper, safer, more pleasant, or easier to use. In order to achieve this, it relies on the *distinctive advantage* of the novel product, and for this it tries to awaken the desire of a product that, supposedly, offers greater personal satisfaction (Fawcett 2013).
– Finally, when promoting a product that the public already knows and uses by acquiring the advertised brand, advertising can still play with our desires in a double sense: motivating a more repeated or frequent consumption (*increased desire*) or remembering the product and brand so that the public does not prefer the competitor: *loyal desire* (Knox and Walker 2001).

In all cases, advertising manipulates our desires. It awakens them, activates them, guides them, empowers them, or makes us loyal to them over time, but it always seeks to persuade us by pressing the desire for something that was not part of our life: the product, or the brand, or the frequency of consumption.

But advertising, by selling products or services, also triggers other collateral desires. For example, the desire to enjoy wonderful places like the ones shown in the ad: an impressive house, a paradise beach, a beautiful trip, a splendid adventure,

etc. Or also a body as perfect as the one shown by the model who is advertising a cream or a perfume (Sun 2015); or also a lifestyle as glamorous as the one enjoyed by the protagonists.

Many of these wishes have been deliberately activated by a very specific advertising strategy. In fact, empirical research has confirmed the efforts of companies to promote certain desires. For example:

– A content analysis of Nike's campaigns targeting women has revealed "the politics and production of desire within Nike advertising." Specifically, their campaigns try to develop "a particular notion of who or what counts as a female athlete" (Helstein 2003).
– An investigation with consumers between 17 and 35 years of age on advertising images of food products even established the relationship between the distance of the product to the mouth of the model and the desire to consume it: "the consumers' desire to eat a food product and their actual consumption of a food product would be greater when the model in the picture was close to engaging in consumption and that desire and actual consumption would be reduced when the model was shown in the process of finishing consumption" (Palcu et al. 2019).

Sometimes, social media advertising amplifies its effect in combination with user comments. Thus, the images of beer advertising on Facebook, designed to encourage comments from Internet users, reached a two-way influence on a sample of 120 young people: on the one hand, ads increased the desire to write comments; and on the other, "pro-drinking comments may increase the desire to drink and ad engagement, both of which may be predictive of future drinking behavior" (Noel and Babor 2018).

Finally, it should be noted that the relationship between advertising and desire is very different depending on the circumstances of age, training, etc. A study with 296 children showed that knowing the persuasive intent of an advertisement could reduce its impact on children aged 10–12 years, but in children under that age knowing it increased even the desire to own the products (Rozendaal et al. 2009).

In sum, and as González Requena and Ortiz (1999: 7) point out, it is not enough to analyze the data provided by advertisements, because we would be ignoring an important analysis perspective: nowadays "advertising messages are studied as informative messages, and what everyone nevertheless intuits is ignored: that in them the information matters very little, that contemporary advertising does not appeal to our reason but to our desire".

This appeal to desire has had an uneven route over time, because in each era advertising has configured a different model of consumer; above all, when it comes to buying decisions.

25.2 Desires and Consumer Models

When talking about consumer behavior (Szmigin and Piacentini 2018), we tend to think that the buyer makes his decisions after a more or less careful deliberation: studies the pros and cons, assesses the value for money in each of the products and, after a leisurely analysis, chooses what he considers most reasonable. Nothing is further from the reality. There is a fairly high percentage of purchases that we make routinely, relying on the good experience we have had and without inquiring if, meanwhile, new competitors have appeared or they now have better offers (Solomon et al. 2014). Other purchasing decisions are determined by the whim, the aesthetics of the packaging, the lack of stock of our brand, or various emotional factors (Shapiro 2015). Consequently, advertising does not have a unique consumer model, but has developed different models over time that are related to the implicit wishes in the purchase (Méndiz and Domínguez 1996). In a synthetic way we can expose them like this:

1. *Rational model*: It is the one that conceives the consumer as a reflective buyer who evaluates the value for money and makes his decisions based on the advantages that he can perceive. In this model, desire hardly counts in the purchase decision, since every decision is the result of a rational analysis, and the determining factors are always in the available information, not in the emotions or in the desires. That is why in this model advertising is always informative persuasive.

2. *Behavioral model*: It is the one that considers the consumer as a being governed absolutely by his routines and buying habits, and whose only aspiration is to avoid the tension that every purchase raises (Bassat 2001), including the fear of not being right or staying ridiculous for the choice. His purchase decision is the result of reflexes assumed as a pattern of behavior, more or less conditioned by repetitive and ubiquitous advertising. The repetition of the messages ends up conditioning the purchases of the public, similarly to how the sound of the bell conditioned salivation in Pavlov's dog. In this model, desire does play a role in the purchase decision, but its role is very limited because, in reality, it is not a desire of the person but a conditioned desire. Manipulation consists in making the purchase decision ending up being an automatism rather than a free decision.

3. *Social model*: The image that this model projects of the consumer are that of a man who seeks in his purchases, the acceptance or recognition from others. Rather than deciding based on his tastes or aspirations, he decides "externally oriented" (Li and Cai 2011): what others will think. When buying, he thinks about how he will look before his friends, what his classmates will think of that choice or what image he will convey with him. If you buy a luxury car, you do not do it because you are eccentric or a lover of rare vehicles, but because you want to attract attention and let others recognize your status. Therefore, what advertising offers to this consumer model is social approval, the esteem of its own value. Here desire plays a more decisive role than in the previous models, but it is an extrinsic

desire (to be recognized in the group) and very channeled toward ostentation, notoriety, or external acceptance.

4. *Motivational model*: In this model, the consumer is perceived as a man who decides, for hidden reasons, for unconscious motivations that try to be satisfied in the purchase. This model "takes for granted the existence of underlying or unconscious motives that influence consumer behavior" (McPhail-Fanger 2012) and that end up shaping our decisions without us being aware of it. Proponents of this model, clearly indebted to Freud's thinking about instincts and hidden desires, have had an enormous influence on advertising in the second half of the twentieth century, and have based advertising creativity on a previous psychological investigation of the *authentic motivations* and *deep desires* of the consumer. Because of its relevance in the advertising drive of unconfessed and even uncontrolled desires, we will explain this a little more in detail.

25.2.1 *Motivational Studies of Advertising Desire*

The so-called *motivational studies in advertising* appeared in the early 1950s by the hand of Ernest Dichter, a psychologist who started from Freudian presuppositions and who tried to apply the research techniques of clinical psychology to marketing and advertising. Faced with surveys and quantitative studies, Dichter emphasized the importance of personal conversations and in-depth interviews, without prefabricated responses. In addition to revaluing the "face-to-face" interviews, he also invented the focus group and several qualitative research techniques. His books, especially *The Strategy of Desire* (1960) and *The Handbook of Consumer Motivations* (1964), became references for a new generation of publicists.

An emblematic case is how it worked and resolved the first order it received, which consisted of improving the decadent image of Ivory soap in the United States (McPhail-Fanger 2012). The first thing that Dichter did was to review all the advertising of the product since 1898, which extolled its fragrance and its ability to float on water (so as not to lose it in the bathtub, in the river, etc.). The psychologist interviewed dozens of users to unravel the motives and desires that occurred in their minds while soaping their bodies. Influenced by Freud's thought, he interpreted their desires in a sexual key: he observed that the act of bathing was a ritual experience, which provided moments of complacency; and concluded that, unconsciously, there was in that act an important erotic ingredient. The advice he gave to the brand was: emphasize the fact of stroking the body itself and show expressions of extreme pleasure in the ads. The campaign, perhaps because of the novelty, had a remarkable success. And with this cover letter, Freud's thinking took over the advertising strategy in the 1950s and 1960s of the last century (Samuel 2010).

Suddenly, the agencies were filled with psychologists who tried to discover hidden or unconfessed motivations: the motivations they called *real*, those that are *hidden under our layer of social courtesy*, and which, according to them, are

unknown even to their own subject. In this way, almost overnight, the study of desires—especially sexual desires—became the basis of advertising creativity: women had to be used in underwear to advertise anything, whether it came to mind or not.

Motivational research was favored by the appearance of a work by Abraham Maslow that was to have wide notoriety: *A Theory of Human Motivation* (1943). This book reflected his famous hierarchy of human needs, which began with physiological ones (breathing, resting, feeding) and kept increasing in importance for the inner world of the person. In the higher levels, the agencies were going to find ways to appeal to the wishes that every person experiences: motivations of affiliation (friendship, tenderness, affection), recognition (self-esteem, reputation, independence) and, on the cusp, those of self-realization (creativity, moral sense, sense of existence). The application of his theories to the field of advertising was suggested by Maslow himself in his following work: *Motivation and personality* (1954).

An author who, indirectly, contributed to mythologising the line followed by Dichter was Vance Packard. His book *The hidden persuaders* (1957) wanted to be a critique of the sophisticated methods of advertising research, which he presented as techniques for manipulating our desires and our subconscious. Along with an unusual social alarm about the manipulation of our brains, the book was also—without intending—a fantastic promotion of the controversial methods of Ernest Dichter. To sound the alarm about his methods, he put the following phrase in the mouth of this psychologist: "The successful ad agency manipulates human motivations and desires and develops a need for goods with which the public has at one time been unfamiliar—perhaps even undesirous of purchasing" (1957: 48). And yet, this contributed to giving it more notoriety. Companies and governments around the world, without special ethical scruples, went to Dichter's consultancy to satisfy instinctive desires with their products or to modify the perception of citizens on the issues they were going to legislate.

Shortly after, and based on the ideas of Dichter, the director of investigations of the Chicago Tribune, Pierre Martineau, devised a new way to appeal to the consumer that he presented in his book *Motivation in Advertising* (1957). From the data provided by motivational research, he developed the concept of *brand image*: the representation that the consumer builds in his mind on the attributes and benefits of the product and the brand; attributes and benefits that are not always identified with those in reality. The important thing is the image, the dream, or the desire that the consumer builds around them.

This way of manipulating desires has continued until recently. When they prepared to relaunch Nike, motivational researchers already knew that one did not buy their sneakers after a study compared between different models, or because they seemed to us to be the best in value for money (rational motivation). They knew that one bought Nike products because one liked its design (aesthetic motivation) or, more frequently, because it is a popular brand that everyone wears and one didn't want to feel excluded from the group (social motivation). But they went a step further and tried to discover hidden needs to associate with the product. Thus, they discovered that young people felt desires for self-expression and for the liberation of

conventions (what they called authenticity) and decided that Nike's publicity should symbolize for them the expression of the authentic, that acts *freely* and ignores expectations from others: *Don't think about what others will think: Just do it*. His message was: act on impulse, so you will be authentic and therefore free.

25.2.2 Apparent Advantages of the Motivational Model

This line of motivational research has prevailed in advertising because what it postulates presented two great advantages over those of the rational model.

The first is the *prevalence of the image*. The rational model considers that the important thing in advertising is the text: it is assigned both the persuasive capacity and the merit of achieving a change of attitude in the consumer. The strong weight of the advertising strategy (raising the desire and motivating the purchase) is completely entrusted to the textual elements: the headline, which attracts the viewer's attention; the body of text, which provides the reasons for the purchase; and the slogan, which causes adherence to the brand through a catchy phrase. In this model, the image fulfills only two minimum functions: it is in the advertisement as a decorative element and as a resource that attracts attention. In Victoroff's expression (1978: 69), the image is just a "look-catcher."

However, reality shows that the image has a broader capacity of meaning than the text. It is able to connote various meanings and convey many references that seduce more directly than arguments. In addition, it is more suggestive and empathetic for the viewer (Peninou 1976: 45), because the image establishes a stronger emotional bond than any advertising argument.

The second advantage is the *immediacy of communication*. In the rational model, advertising must be especially *informative*, and that means presenting the necessary data, referring to the distinctive advantages and exposing the purchase arguments. This requires some time for the viewer, because the advertising must present all that gradually, sequentially. As Elias St. Elmo Lewis pointed out—quoted by Edward Strong (1925)—the announcement must first call *attention*, then arouse *interest*, then awake *Desire*, and finally move to the Purchase *Action*. It is the A.I.D.A. (Attention, Interest, Desire, Action), very popular in the first half of the twentieth century. In this line of sequential persuasion, other models also appeared, such as that of Daniel Starch (1923), which pointed to the four objectives of an advertisement: to be seen, read, believed and remembered; or Russell H. Colley (1961), who identified four cognitive responses of the viewer: Knowledge (of the product and the brand), Understanding (of the competitive advantage), Conviction (security of having the right choice), and Action (the purchase).

However, most of the public does not have time for this progressive persuasion of the rational model. With few exceptions, the reader does not have time to read the texts of an advertisement; just glance one or two seconds at the print ad, enough time to see the image and read the headline. Nothing else. That's why he usually quits reading the ads before reaching the end. Especially in products that involve images

(cosmetics, jewelry, and expensive watches) advertising offers only photography or an image, and that is enough to achieve seduction. Currently, this phenomenon also expands to products—such as the car, the laptop, or the smart phone—which, due to its technical nature, would seem to require a comprehensive text to inform about its technical characteristics or its advantages over the competition. The reality is that we increasingly buy more for the image and less for the text of the ads. As the driving forces of the motivational model point out: "in relation to the text, the image has an undoubted advantage: it conveys its message instantly" (Victoroff 1978: 70).

For this double advantage, motivational advertising ended up being imposed as a guiding strategy for creativity. As a result, advertising in recent decades has investigated and pulsed our desires to try to sell their products, and has sought behavioral or emotional responses that have exalted those hidden desires—or, rather, have disorganized them—for the benefit of their own interest. That is why the activity of advertising persuasion has frequently raised suspicions of manipulation, and the most critical have published strongly denouncing works that have caused social alarm, such as those of Vance Packard (1957), Richard Pollay (1986), or Naomi Klein (2001).

25.3   Education of Desire: Initiatives in Various Fields

Undoubtedly, motivational advertising has contributed to the manipulation of our desires in consumer decisions. However, this was not the last word. After years of navigating in foreign environments to the innermost being of the person, a new consumer model has been developed lately: that of a being guided by personal principles and values. With this introduction, we begin the second part of this work: the presentation of proposals and initiatives that have been developed to educate the desires in advertising. These proposals have come from three different areas: advertising activity, deontological regulations, and teaching and research activity.

25.3.1   Professional Practice: Advertising with Values

As we pointed out a moment ago, in recent years, a new consumer model has emerged. In it, advertising is no longer trying to drive conditioned desires (behavioral model) or only external recognition desires (social model). Nor does it try to scrutinize hidden and unconfessed desires (motivational model). What it now intends is to put the values as a guide to our wishes and our purchasing decisions.

This proposal of values in advertising campaigns has a rationale. Advertisers have discovered that technology has matched the products to such an extent that it has become difficult to differentiate itself from the competition for strictly functional aspects. On the other hand, the public is no longer able to retain all the information transmitted in each ad (opportunities, discounts, benefits, etc.). Consequently, brands

increasingly resort to communicating their personality (brand image) and their values (philosophy as a company) to establish their own identity; such that, more than products, advertising sells us values and lifestyles.

What does Coca-Cola sell? Happiness. In all sports and in all campaigns. And it has even created a Happiness Institute to support the dissemination of that corporate value with academic and scientific studies. What does Volvo offer? Security. It is not necessary to explain to us the controls that it has nor the demand of quality that it imposes on its suppliers: it is enough to remind us that this is its differential value and its commitment to consumers. What does Adidas tell us? Nothing to do with your shoes or your sportswear. What it proposes is a maxim for our life: "Impossible is nothing." And finally, what does Apple propose? An attitude, a new way of creating, of conceiving relationships and of approaching problems: "Think different." A whole philosophy of work and life projected on the products of that brand.

At present, all brands talk about values. Even in the advertising of technical products, companies give up flooding us with technical data and, instead, offer us a value that connects with our aspirations. They don't sell us a smart phone because of the inches of their screen, processor speed or storage capacity. They sell us values that inspire our life: "Life is Good" (LG), "Designed for" (Samsung), or "For the brave" (Huawei). And they don't sell us a car because of its power, speed, or low consumption; they sell us a car because with it we acquire elegance, prestige, or social distinction; because it represents freedom or the eagerness for adventure, because it suggests the attractiveness of the exotic or, simply, because it sells us the pleasure of travelling. This was BMW's appeal in Spain for 15 years: "Do you like driving?" And in 2016, after the economic crisis and the interest in ecology, it proposed to us: "When you drive, drive." That is, use the car responsibly.

Advertising, therefore, has become a kind of values trading: a more symbolic than real advertising, and more attentive—in the offer of products—to its meaning for the person than to the technical details it provides. However, the proposal of values in advertising has always had two faces: values and counter-values. And that is what, from its origins, has been observed in the empirical studies.

25.3.1.1 The "Distorted Mirror" Theory

Studies on advertising values began in the sixties of the last century with some critical articles regarding cultural imperialism in the United States. However, everyone recognizes Richard W. Pollay as the true initiator of that field. In his early work, Pollay (1983) drew attention to the emerging phenomenon of the use of values, and also designed a methodology to quantify the presence of values in advertising in various countries.

Shortly after, a large longitudinal study over several decades was conducted: it analyzed the values present in more than two thousand print ads—from the early twentieth century until 1980—and in more than 200 television spots of the 1960s and 1970s (Pollay 1984). It was able to demonstrate the persistent prevalence of some values with respect to others in North American advertising. This led to the

formulation of the famous theory of the "distorted mirror" (1986). Synthesizing the conclusions of this research, it was concluded that advertisements do not faithfully reflect the values of the culture in which they are inserted, but that they tend—steadily over time—toward a clear deviation. Advertising is, as many suggest, a mirror of society's desires and values, but a distorted mirror.

Years later, this hypothesis was corroborated in a new article (Pollay and Gallagher 1990) in which it was claimed that advertising "shows high consistency over time and across media. There is, however, a low correlation between this value profile and that of either the population at large or of heavy media users. This seriously challenges the conventional notion that advertising merely mirrors social values" (1990: 359).

Finally, it was confirmed: "the mirror is distorted (…) because advertising reflects only certain attitudes, behaviours and values. It models and reinforces only certain life-styles and philosophies, those that serve seller's interests" (1990: 360).

In Spain, this line of work was developed by several researchers. A study on the image of women in television advertising (Méndiz 1988) concluded that commercials associate happiness with five values of an egocentric nature: success, evasion, technology, beauty, and comfort. Such as they were conceptualized, those values were rather counter-values. In the triple classification of values, the egocentric (pleasure, comfort, ostentation) showed a clear prevalence on the whole (58.2%), well above collective values (future, novelty, fashion: 34.2%) and, above all, of the transitional ones (love, tenderness, friendship: 6.8%).

In the Eastern hemisphere, several authors also applied Pollay's ideas to advertising in their country. Srikandath (1992) analyzed the values that could be verified in the spots of his country, and concluded that "television advertising in India promotes more frequently—if not predominantly—the values of technology and modernization, as well as those of consumerism" (1992: 22). For his part, Wang (1995) developed a broad content analysis in which he concluded that the *pursuit of pleasure* and the *ambition of modernity* were the recurring counter-values in the advertising of the main Chinese newspapers; and Cheng (1997), on the other hand, stated that the values of *modernity*, *technology*, and *youth* predominated in the advertising of their country in the 1990s, while *quality* was being replaced by other counter-values.

More recently (Méndiz 2005), it was concluded that the most forgotten values in advertising are those that imply attention to others (*solidarity*, *friendship*, *altruism*, *attention to the needy*), those associated with tradition or the past (*religiosity*, *patriotism*, *maturity*, *veneration of the elderly*) and those that point to responsibility and commitment (*work*, *competitiveness*, *culture of effort*).

This and other research (Núñez et al. 2008) have corroborated the metaphor of the "distorted mirror" advocated by Pollay. Advertising companies are not interested in reflecting the values of society, but those that benefit them the most; that is, those that encourage consumerism. That is why some have stated that the advertisements, both print and television, correspond to those of a *materialist lifestyle* (Richins and

Dawson 1992; Kasser et al. 2004; Roberts and Clement 2007) that is making a dent, especially, in children (Schor 2005; Buijzen and Valkenburg 2003).

25.3.1.2   Recovery of Values After the Economic Crisis

This whole situation changed with the international economic crisis of 2008. The sudden lack of resources and the alarming increase in unemployment made society cease to be centered on materialistic values (*pleasure*, *comfort*, *distinction*, *social success*) and began to rediscover the most human and transitional values: *family*, *love*, *friendship*, or *solidarity* moved to the forefront. Advertising changed radically: it now became an emotional connection with the public. And in the new paradigm, the values transmitted in the ads ceased to be focused on the product, rather it focused more on the direction of the person: "The bet now is to tell stories that affect the citizen, emphasizing the importance of the commitment-values binomial. In this way, the citizen becomes the main protagonist of the message" (Castelló et al. 2013: 658).

Thus, a new trend begins in the proposal of values. In support of a society that suffers intensely from the consequences of the recession, "communication is based more on emotions and feelings, seeks the emotional link between the brand and the consumer through content aimed at emotions: joy, happiness, desires, dreams. . . The real stories of people gain ground in front of the anodyne messages of products" (Fernández et al. 2011: 135).

From then on, some companies began to be aware of the responsibility they had for the advertising they broadcasted. Do my ads educate? Do they bring hope or disenchantment? Do they contribute to solidarity or individualism? As a result of this reflection, companies assumed the commitment to transmit positive values in their campaigns, implementing or adapting an inspiring message in all their messages. The reaction of the public has always been of clear support for those brands.

Perhaps the clearest example of this new trend is the line undertaken by Coca-Cola from 2008. The multinational soft drink is strong in its call to happiness, and in a short time tells us several stories of high emotional content. In Spain and in 2009, it relates the meeting between the oldest man (102 years) and the youngest baby (newborn) to tell us that life deserves to be lived, even in times of crisis, and ends with a radically optimistic message: "You are here to be happy." In 2010, it launched the international campaign "Reasons to believe in a better world," where—with the music of Oasis—we hear arguments to believe in humanity and happiness: "For every corrupt person, there are 8000 who donate blood. For every wall that rises, 200,000 door mats are placed that say: 'Welcome'. . .". And continues in the same manner in successive years: the video "Let's go crazy" (2012), the street marketing action "The cashier of happiness" (2013), the spot "Love of brothers" (2015), etc.

In Spain we can cite three paradigmatic cases of national companies that have assumed this post-materialistic trend, more human and positive, centered on altruistic values:

1. *Campofrío*.—In 2011, this company initiated a series of campaigns to encourage Spaniards to maintain a positive mood in the face of the crisis. Its slogan was: "*Let nothing and no one take away our way of enjoying life*". In Christmas of that year, it launched the "Comedians" spot, which brought together most of the Spanish comedians to teach us to laugh at ourselves and to see life with joy. In 2012, the campaign "The curriculum of all" came, in which a well-known clown—timid and down at heel—managed to value all our past and all the richness of our tradition, our gastronomy, our languages, and our milestones in the sport. In 2013, this encouraging spirit continued with the "Become a foreigner" spot, in which a naive but sensible Chus Lampreave made us discover that everyone's effort to love what came from outside and *become a foreigner* had made us forget the wonder of our character: open, friendly, given to hugs and signs of affection (Cfr. Mut and Breva 2012).

2. *Danone*—Also in response to the collective discouragement of the crisis, in March 2013 the Danone company surprised the advertising profession with its "Feeding smiles" campaign. With it, it not only faced the adverse economic situation with a new spirit, but also placed it in the field of values. This was pointed out by the creators of the announcement: "We agree with those who think that, below the financial crisis, there is another much more important one: a crisis of established values*" (Bosch and Gutiérrez 2014: 95). That is why the company tried to establish a new communication with its audiences talking about four values closely linked to its brand: Optimism, Children, Family, and Smile. *Feeding smiles* was a very famous spot in which a five-year-old boy approaches the prominent belly of his pregnant mother, and begins a dialogue with his little brother. He put forward everything bad that awaits him: parents worried about the crisis and a rarefied environment; but, at the same time, he offers to share his belongings: the shirts, the dinosaur, ... and Danone. The following year, it launched a new campaign, "Do we start with a smile?*" in which different families faced a new day with hope.

3. *IKEA Ibérica*—In January 2014, the furniture company Iberian IKEA initiated a campaign with a clear message defending the home: "*Nothing like home to furnish our heads*". In this message, it leant toward four values that have been, in the forefront, its identity sign: the Family, as a nucleus that benefits from its entrepreneurial activity (IKEA manufactures furniture, but not office furniture, furniture for family); the home, as intimate space where the family grows, lives, and shares experiences; on a "Day to day" basis, which values tiny details of life; and Exemplarity: the home and the furniture should facilitate order, family coexistence, and ambience where parents educate and exercise their positive influence on the children. In Christmas of this year, it launched two campaigns in the same line. One, to show us "The other Christmas," that which is not lived in gluttony and excess, but in the love of the home; and the second, in which a few children were writing "The other letter": besides The Three Wise Men letter, they were writing another one to parents about the gifts they wanted for Christmas, and the parents who looked on were speechless: "*if you could spend more time with us*," "*if we could eat together more often*," "*if you could read me a story at night*

before bed time," etc. The parents finally understood: "*At times you wish to give them the best, and the best . . . is you yourself!*" (Cfr. Méndiz and Callejón 2015).

As the studies of these campaigns have reflected (Martínez-Rodrigo and Raya-González 2015; Bosch and Gutiérrez 2014), the positive influence of this advertising has been enormous in the Spanish population: with them, the mood of a country dejected by the crisis has been lifted and the wishes of the consumer have been oriented toward values relevant to our lives: solidarity, generosity, education, or the family.

25.3.2 Deontological Regulations in Spain: Codes of Autocontrol

In 1995, the Asociación Autocontrol de la Publicidad was established in Spain, an independent advertising self-regulatory body that ensures the development of trustworthy and honest advertising, which safeguards the principles of truthfulness, authenticity, fair competition, and respect for the person. This deontological body welcomes advertisers, agencies, and the media within it; and although it lacks the fourth element of the advertising system (consumers), it has worked quite effectively. At present, its more than 500 direct members represent 70% of the advertising investment in our country.

As the main activity, Autocontrol de la Publicidad has promulgated 22 codes of advertising conduct that have contributed to educating the public's wishes, especially for younger consumers. Among those codes, there are two that are especially relevant: that of *Publicidad Infantil de Juguetes* (hereinafter called PIJ), written in 2003 and revised in 2015; and *Publicidad de Alimentos y Bebidas dirigida a menores, prevención de la Obesidad y Salud* (hereinafter called PAOS), promulgated in 2005 and updated in 2013.

The first code (PIJ) initially states that minors "constitute an audience with limited capacity to evaluate the information they receive," and therefore urges "parents, educators, media, and consumer associations" to educate Children in the critical understanding of advertising messages (PIJ, Introd). For its part, the code tries to avoid manipulation of desires in three areas:

(a) The excessive idealization of the toy. The code adopts measures so that ads do not generate unfounded desires: either in size, performance, or other characteristics (PIJ, # 3), or because they associate the product with "the acquisition of strength, status, popularity, growth, ability, or intelligence" (PIJ, # 4). It also prohibits false expectations about the mobility of toys (PIJ, # 7) or to imply, in computer-generated images, that the animated toy "has the same characteristics as the toy that is presented" (PIJ, # 6).

(b) Sales pressure. Advertising should not encourage children to ask their parents for the advertised toy, nor should it suggest that the father who buys it for his

children is more intelligent or generous (PIJ, # 16). Nor should he urge children to get the toy here and now (PIJ, art. 17) nor "should it give the impression that acquiring that product will give him greater acceptance among his friends" (# 18).

(c) Promotional support: The advertising of toys will not exploit the desire of the product using characters close to them, such as "presenters of children's programs, characters—real or fictional—of films or fiction series, specially known athletes," etc. (PIJ, # 20). Nor will it use false promotions (affirmations of the type "contains a gift," when it is something that is always included with the toy) or false incorporations to children's Clubs of the brand (PIJ, # 23 and 26).

The second code (PAOS) has a special section on education and nutritional information, and it establishes some elements to prevent the falsification of children's wishes:

(a) Advertising will not promote "unhealthy eating habits, such as eating or drinking immoderately, excessively or compulsively" (PAOS, # 1), will not underestimate "the importance of healthy living habits" (PAOS, # 2) and will not present the product announced, "as a substitute for any of the three main meals: breakfast, lunch and dinner" (PAOS, # 3).

(b) The presentation of the products will not generate false wishes about them or their characteristics (PAOS, # 4) nor suggest that they will be stronger, smarter, or more popular with them (PAOS, # 5). Nor will it use presenters or famous people from children's television programs (PAOS, # 14).

Although the PAOS code had the approval of the health sector, some specialists (Royo-Bordonada et al. 2019) have suggested some points of improvement, such as: the high frequency of advertisements for products high in sugars and saturated fats; the extension of the regulations to other marketing techniques, such as the placement of products in films and television series; the healthy supply in food and beverage vending machines; or the implementation of an "interpretative frontal food labeling, based on color codes, traffic light type" (p. 587) that helps differentiate healthier foods from those that are not.

In any case, 5 years after its implementation, a scientific assessment of the PAOS Code indicated that "it has been relatively effective for the control of food advertising aimed at children," since most of the announcements have fulfilled the regulations and have contributed to the education of consumption and desire in food matters (Martín-Llaguno et al. 2011).

The same could be said of the PIJ Code. The scientific literature has validated the effectiveness of the regulations as well as their formative nature in child consumption behaviors (Martínez-Pastor et al. 2017).

25.3.3 School and University: Teaching and Research

Educommunication (Aparisi 2011) or *media literacy* (Hobbs and Jensen 2009; Gutiérrez and Tyner 2012) refers to the education of minors in media consumption, including the critical reception of their contents. Although the subject is relevant and with a certain tradition (the UN declared it a specific area of knowledge in 1976), its implementation in secondary education has not yet been taken to the curricula. In Spain, a child receives classes for 12 years in Language, Geography, History, Mathematics, etc., but only 1 year—and if the school has planned it—in Media or Audiovisual Culture (Civil and Recoder 2017). The result is that, with few exceptions, the child is very poorly prepared to manage the influence he receives daily from the media.

Given this institutional lack, some professors sensitized with media literacy have incorporated in their programs, various training modules in that field. Specifically, several have developed proposals to use advertising as a teaching tool (Méndiz and Cristófol 2004), as they have realized that advertising offers students more remarkable attractions than a regulated class (Ferrés 1994). As an "educational model," advertising surpasses the classroom at these points:

1. Objectives: The educators present their speeches so that the recipients learn, while the advertisers make theirs to seduce and entertain.
2. Contents: Didactic programs contain a large volume of information, while advertising messages convey simple information, easy to learn, and remember.
3. Staging: The class is sometimes monotonous and excessively structured, while the ads always meet their first norm: to distract, not to bore, and always surprise.
4. Duration: The classes usually last between 45 min and 1 h, but the spots only last 20, 30, or 60 s, so they capture the attention more easily and manage to stay in memory despite their being fleeting.
5. Message orientation: The teacher primarily focuses on the presentation of the subject and the coherence of the lessons; advertising, on the other hand, focuses on the aspirations of the recipient and adapts his message to the age, culture, and personality of the public.

For all this, some suggest the need to integrate advertising in the classroom (Martínez-Sánchez 1994) and others suggest using it in specific subjects: in Language (González-Gil 1995), Mathematics (Muñoz 1995), or Expression (Palmer 1998). More interesting for our study are the proposals to use advertising messages in the subject of Ethics (Pérez and San Juan 1995; Maquinay 1995). This last author explains how in the classroom she has been able to unmask some desires falsely created by advertising, such as eternal youth, being valued only by appearance, and the need to stand out through consumption.

However, specific subjects in media literacy still do not appear in the school curriculum. What has grown, to a large extent, is scientific research.

In the United States, academic proposals on media literacy in advertising have focused on three areas: counteract the growing development of child sexualization in

advertisements (Barker and Duschinsky 2012), develop a critical attitude toward food advertising, especially food garbage (Hindin et al. 2004; Nelson and Kehr 2016) and help identify and reject sexist advertising or that which discriminates against minorities (Cortese 2015).

In Spain, the proposals in this field have been promoted mainly by the *Comunicar group* (University of Huelva), which has been researching on educommunication for 32 years. Led by Professor Ignacio Aguaded, he publishes the first media literacy magazine in the world: *Comunicar* (ISSN 1134-3478, Q1 in WoS). Among the works published there are several related to Advertising and education in values (Pérez and San Juan 1995; Maquinay 1995; Biasutto 1996; Biedma 1997; Moro 2007).

Within this line, in the last 3 years the first works on *education of desire* have appeared in advertising: Pérez and Delgado (2017) point out in their article "The education of desire" that media competitence is the best means "to dismantle the sense of invulnerability caused by the advertising messages with their appeal to the emotional" and indicate as a programmatic objective "to educate so that the communicative competence includes media literacy as a fundamental pillar." In this line, Rodríguez (2017) exposes a didactic experience about the production of radio advertising texts and points out the need to "reflect on the role of advertising as a transmitter of values that constitute identities."

It is clear that, although training in media literacy is still provisional—not integrated into the curriculum of the students—or concentrated in a few teachers and schools, the research has been prolific and well articulated. It is laying the foundations for the formation of a new generation of teachers who, in the future, will implement this education of desire in the regulated training of minors.

25.4   Conclusion

We have seen that advertising has always tried to awaken the wishes of the consumer to promote product sales. This has been done in various ways, according to different consumer models: the rational consumer, who evaluates the value for money and seeks strictly informative advertising; the behaviorist, who buys due to reflex conditioning caused by repetitive advertising; the social one, who decides his purchases based on the image he wishes to transmit to others; and the motivationalist, who makes his decisions based on unconscious desires or hidden motivations.

Recently, a new consumer model has emerged that decides on purchases guided by its principles and to which advertising offers values rather than products. This advertising, which was initially directed toward egocentric values (pleasure, comfort, social success, and ostentation) and that constituted a "distorted mirror" of society, has been directed, after the economic crisis, toward the person rather than the product and is now committed to offering altruistic values: solidarity, friendship, cooperation, and optimism.

In this framework, three great advertising proposals for desire education have emerged. The first comes from the professional field and consists of the commitment to the values in their advertisements. The second comes from the deontological field and has been specified in the codes of Autocontrol de la Publicidad that have guided the consumerist desires of the younger audience. And the third comes from the academic field, which has developed media literacy initiatives to use ads in the classroom as a pedagogical tool and to foster the students' critical sense of advertising and their appeal to our desires.

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Chapter 26
Pedagogical Reflection on Desire and Perspectives for an Education of Identity

Marisa Musaio

Abstract Desire is a human dimension that plays a central role in the formation of personal identity. Studies on desire are increasingly frequent and draw attention to the need to overcome perspectives on desire as a dynamic of satisfaction subjected to the influence of hyperedonism. One of the paths to pursue is to humanize desire by recognizing it as an anthropological and inner dynamic dimension that opens us to the other. The contribution aims to develop a pedagogical reflection on desire in dialogue with the most current perspectives of psychoanalysis, such as the view of the Italian psychoanalyst Massimo Recalcati. He affirms that we tend to identify desire with its enjoyment and to attribute it above all to the drive toward infinite potential, disengaging it from the limits of any law. With desire liberated, we end up degrading it rather than recognizing it in its generative dimension as an openness to a positive horizon of the other and of the elsewhere (2012).

According to the philosopher Francesco Botturi, desire is a "tension", an "invisible center of gravity" which directs the actions of man and which appears in the watermark of all his actions (2009). As an intrinsically anthropological dimension, desire enables us to delineate an experience of new and superior composition capable of "reading" the inner dimensions of the person and to guide the formation of personal identity The aim of a pedagogical reflection is to rediscover the humanistic meaning of desire as a "vector" that moves the search for oneself to help future generations to explore their identity.

Keywords Desire · Other · Relationship · Education to identity

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26.1   For a Pedagogical Reflection on Desire

Desire characterizes us as an indication of ourselves that is formed inside, and even if we do not know precisely where our desires arise, all our experience is interested in desire as a continuous exchange between us and things, the others and the world.

To use a metaphor, desire is like the air hermetically compressed in a bag, which looks for a crack to escape and express itself externally. Nothing and no one can stop it, indeed, faced with difficult experiences, desire does not get out, but is reborn as the quest which the human being undertakes in the direction of beauty, goodness, and happiness (Ciancio 2003). For us, desire is a promise of happiness and personal fulfillment, a dimension that puts us in relation, creates bonds, both in the emotional and affective meaning and also because it opens us to experiences of growth and transformation (Barcellona 2011). Therefore, to deny desires means to deny people the possibility of expression and self-fulfillment.

If the philosophical reflection desire evokes a recurrent problematic, it is still unusual within pedagogical reflections and educational practices. There is no doubt that this is a subject that has wide references to education of emotions, of affections, of love, even if it still creates confusion. In reality, there are reasons to recall the centrality of desire in an education aimed at promoting the ability to exercise *a deep gaze on oneself*, to prevent young people from pursuing inauthentic desires. This risk is particularly felt in an age of complexity in which personal insecurity tends to be amplified, the quest for self-fulfillment is increasingly difficult to achieve.

However, the pedagogical reflection on desire is not simple. The analysis of the links between education and desire is influenced by interpretations that above all validate the analogy between instruction, learning, training, and education as interchangeable terms. As a consequence, education is reduced to processes of acquiring knowledge, skills, and competences useful for the inclusion of the person in a social, cultural, and professional context. Following these interpretations, education might be seen only as a material dimension of life, satisfying needs, and problems of every day, leaving out that people are *beings open to desire*, and through this, to the *relationship with the other* and in search of a meaning for their lives. In this regard, Roland Barthes comes to our aid when he tries to trace logic at the base of the relationship that the person feels toward the other, when he engages the desire as a space that however appears "not designable" because it is a relationship that we have with the uniqueness of the other: "I will never know anything about him; my language will always be confused, the other will fiddle in an attempt to express his desire, but I will never produce anything but an empty word, which is like the zero degree of all the spaces in which the very special desire that I have of the unique other is formed (and not of another)" (Barthes 1971, 2001, p. 18).

If the other is and always will remain for me an enigma, in this sense also the desire we have for the other struggles to say its reality: the other designates to me the specialty of my desire. Hence the very strict implication that is built between desire and personal identity, between desire and relationships, also in an educational direction.

Referring to the educational relationship, Piero Bertolini pointed out the connection between desire, presence of an erotic component and educational relationship. The author affirms that every educational experience has an "erotic dimension", involving two (or more) protagonists (Bertolini 1999, p. 42). As a consequence, in education, desire can give rise to two outcomes: (1) one instrumental toward the other, (2) and another of an opening to the other. For the purpose of a pedagogical rereading of desire, on the one hand, desire can be understood as a powerful tool in the hands of people whose purpose would be to achieve a dominion and a possession toward other people, in this case objectified, possessed, and manipulated; on the other hand, however, the erotic dimension can be understood and pursued as an extraordinary original human power, capable of opening up to the other person as a person to be respected, to be valued, and therefore to be considered as a motive for the non-objectifying desire of the other; in short, as someone who can interact positively with our constitutive incompleteness. Therefore, desire as the foundation of an intersubjective relationship, characterized by reciprocity, vivifies both actors in the relationship, stimulating them to overcome their current personality (p. 41).

Desire arises in us, but manifests itself within an intersubjective and profound relationship. When an educational relationship is established there must be an asymmetry between two people, but also an authentic availability, in terms of interest, sympathy, or love, both parties of the educator and the student: "It is necessary that the educator establishes a kind of desire that the other (the student, whoever he may be) participates in some way in his existential heritage and in his knowledge, accepting only from the beginning that such participation is not merely slavishly repetitive" (p. 43). To establish an educational relationship that sustains the growth of the student by avoiding control and domination by the educator, the relationship will imply a non-alienating, not impersonal attention, but "a choice" of the person, because the educator does not relate to an anonymous individual, but to a person recognized in his/her concreteness, with objective determinations and also conditionings.

In order to interpret desire from a pedagogical standpoint, one must think about the educational relationship as a relationship between two in which we have to be able to recognize and give meaning to the set of personal dimensions. The educator must be aware of the reciprocity through which one can see in the other an individual in his/herself, a person primarily to be respected in his/her characteristics, that is to say in his uniqueness. Unfortunately, the current context of crisis and impasse in education especially in today's school, that is increasingly "empty" in its educational aims, tired of being attracted toward students, does not allow us to glimpse conditions favorable to the promotion of personal uniqueness. In an age of generalized weakening of every symbolic authority, the practice of teaching seems to take the path of reduction to the mere transmission of information and skills. Against this framework of educational crisis, the psychoanalyst Massimo Recalcati, one of the most famous Italian scholars of Lacan's thought, maintains that instead, we need to rekindle a relationship of desire with knowledge and put it at the center of learning. The essential of teaching consists of mobilizing the desire to know, because knowing does not only mean increasing knowledge, but also and above learning to open

oneself to other worlds with respect to those already known through this opening (Recalcati 2014, p. 84).

If education is a fundamental part of every teaching practice, it is impossible to disengage it from the process of humanizing the person. Consequently, in every teaching practice and learning situation, dynamics are involved which mobilize desire around and through knowledge.

Cognitive and emotional and relational contents are intertwined: the lesson and the time of the lesson are intersected by implications related to the body, to the impulses, to the teacher's gesture that transforms knowledge into the object that causes desire, acts in the world of the person, widens his/her horizon, transforms life beyond the already seen: the teacher not only leads along roads that are not known at all, but, above all, as Socrates shows us, the teacher moves the desire to travel. The lesson is an encounter that breaks the reality of the institutional automaton (Recalcati, p. 99). The ability of good teachers is of being able to renew desire in students, going beyond boredom, and repetition. The good teacher is the one who respects knowledge while transmitting it, he also knows how to keep it "suspended," just as desire is by nature suspended.

In an interaction between psychoanalysis and pedagogy, we can see that the connection between desire and the educational relationship is emphasized in order to trace in the desire the conditions of possibility of learning and of a solid relationship. However, desire does not always find recognition, but it records continuous shifts or slips. From being an original dimension that accompanies the human being since his birth and that leads him to the encounter with the other, in particular with the parental and central figures of care, desire runs the risk, in the course of the growth of the person, of losing his transformative potential. When desire is not able to express the individual difference and the diversity of each one, it becomes blurred in the opacity and indistinctness of the generic and of what does not belong to the person. Hence the risk that we run of losing our desire, and to be "dominated by an unimaginative desire" (Lorenzetti and Baldissera 2000, p. 131) that becomes a destructive anxiety and dissatisfaction.

The meaning of desire then becomes central for understanding both education, and the human being and its essential ends, to formulate a path of education that should lead the growing person to meet the dimension of the possible and an intentionality of meaning to exercise one's own existence.

However, it is puzzling to see how this term does not appear frequently in the scholastic and training dynamics, perhaps due to the excess of intellectualization and cognitivization of education that still prevails in the formative dynamics, due to the primacy of the cognitive on the personal dimensions, emotions, and feelings.

Removed from the language and the life of education, desire opens instead a wide space of reflection as regards some fundamental aspects.

A pedagogical interpretation draws attention to at least three problems identifiable as possible directions of research, to promote desire as a focus for the education of future generations:

1. Desire as an inner and not external quest
2. Desire as tension of every human being
3. Desire as a dimension of personal identity

In relation to these articulations of reflection, it is necessary to introduce some clarifications.

26.2 To Recognize the Difficult Traces of Desire in Contemporary Society

Desire is a dimension that sees us as beings oriented to the self-fulfillment and the identification of our unique desire. But to feel desire is not in itself a guarantee of the feasibility of our aspirations. As a demonstration, we find the many difficulties that in everyday life make desire an illusion, a denied happiness, a meeting with frustrations, and anguishes (Ehrenberg 2010).

One of the critical aspects that prevent us from tracking down the authentic meaning that desire plays in self-fulfillment is due to the expanding horizons of possibilities, knowledge, and resources available by the technological society (Musaio 2016). This leads us to believe that desire resides in what we think and do to attain a fuller life.

In an age that records the continuous improvement of the living conditions of people, and that puts the accent on the search for material well-being, desire changes with regard to the meaning, and the ways in which it is experienced. These changes are not always positive if we consider the effects produced on education by a culture based on mass consumption, technology, and global network, reducing education to a link between communication and cognition as only existential imperative. Moreover, desire is increasingly identified in self-fulfillment, success, happiness, lived in an inner emptiness, and isolation. Rather than feeding ourselves with desire, we empty ourselves.

For these reasons it is necessary a rereading of our current existential condition, to understand the risk of seeking the answer to inner questions only externally. Hence the need to return to the authentic meaning of desire in relation to our "inner freedom" (Mari 2013, pp. 7–8) to be free with regard to things, culture of the idolatry of success and power, to not to remain slaves to the exteriority.

Another critical point is the suffocation of desire caused by mass and technological culture, which tends to dismiss both the individual and the process of individuation, and at the same time the process of formation of the person. As the influences of the external on the internal abilities to learn, perceive, and manifest their affective and aesthetic dimensions grow, the possibilities for the individual to be and feel truly autonomous increasingly fade. Technology, for its part, a great ally of our development, gives us a world rich in connections, but not in relationships. Our time seems to enjoy extraordinary abundances, even if it turns out to be lacking in reference points to guide the construction of personal perspectives and life projects. Consequently, a time full of opportunities imposes the priority of working more on people

and relationships and to enable them to trace personal potential and possibility (Musaio 2016). In this direction, the knowledge of one's desire becomes not only a question of learning and knowledge: "Learning is not just an intellectual question, it is an exercise that engages man in the totality of his faculties, it is an aspiration to complete and go beyond yourself. It is the will to build a relationship with the world and with other people" (Lo Storto 2017, p. 46). Hence the central role of desire as a potential and relational dimension to set the conditions for expressing, consequently, a desire for happiness, and lovingly accompanying oneself to others as presences for one's life.

Among the risks of living in a virtual society of the thousand possibilities and in an "achievement society" (Han 2015), there is also one of becoming "busy" subjects (La Porta 2016), engaged in innumerable interests, but not genuinely oriented to understanding what one's desire is. Hence the need to activate ways and styles of education that help, especially the younger generations, to know the desire that moves within themselves, to learn to be authentically themselves. Education plays a crucial role in outlining itself as a set of possibilities to aspire to something good and beautiful for oneself and for others, not only in the sense of reflection but above all in the direction of a concrete action characterized in an ethical sense (Mari 2003).

Another critical point that prevents the identification of the traces of desire is given by an experience that tends to be populated by surrogates of desire and a desire reduced to feeling, emptied of its being and deprived of the strength to pursue what we really desire, as if in the end desire is a shadow that it cannot sustain in our personal and responsible commitment.

The shifting of desire outside the subject does not allow to orient the dynamics of awareness to understand what it is and in what direction to proceed. So it happens that ours is an era characterized by a rampant "desire hysteria," but not by a reflection on the profound meaning of this word and on the relationship it has with our way of living and relating to others. Therefore, it is a matter of orienting oneself in the search for connections that hold together ourselves, the world and our depth. It is a question of recognizing in desire the reference to an uneasiness, a nonstop quest that originates in consciousness as a perception of an original lack to be filled, as the word "de-siderum" reminds us of our coming "from stars," our being constantly turned to something else, to go beyond ourselves.

26.3   Desire as a Tension of the Human Being

Desire seeks the infinite, even if experience shows us continually that nothing succeeds in satisfying our "desire for the infinite" (Bellingreri 2011, p. 46). So as not to risk getting bogged down in the desire experienced as a multiplication of finite, we need to look for "the right measure of the finite and of the infinite." In addition, one needs to look for the connection between the single determined realities and a fullness of meaning that is announced in them, going beyond what

immediately appears, beyond our immediate experience, beyond the surface of the world to seek instead the answers in the depth of our being.

Analyzing desire from a phenomenological analysis of our perceptive consciousness, Antonio Bellingreri points out how the infinite character of our desire poses the specifically ethical task of "choosing those things or those objects that present a connection with the infinite." Phenomenologically our desire is a tendency toward the infinite, but so to avoid the risk of getting lost in a search without hope, "it is necessary to choose to understand every determined reality, thing or person our desire encounters, such as an imprint and fragment that infinite gives us" (p. 48).

From within a phenomenological analysis, desire reflects our consciousness as the form of each person's way of being, the attitude of the intentionality of consciousness able to articulate itself in two ways: in relation to the situation and at the same time in relation to a wider horizon in searching for totality and infinity: "By reason of this intentional duplicity, a person is always a historical text, precisely in the sense understood by hermeneutics, historically situated existence; and together with an ontological sign. To reflect on a person is, on the one hand, always to understand a human existence defined by its belonging to a human community as an original situation that constitutes it and of which it speaks directly, in every word and in every gesture. On the other hand, the person goes beyond the determined conditions. [...] Every reality always offers intuition as a determined presence, but it is constituted by the reference to an absence" (p. 49).

Phenomenologically the dimension of desire is a term that refers to something from the other, in this sense, it is a symbol. Consequently, it involves being able to relate it to a link, not to stop at the surface of things, but to be able to look inside, otherwise, our desire would risk being chained to the dimension of having, forced only to possess things and unable to access the dimension of being. On the contrary, as a "tension" that directs us to seek a totality, desires need things and objects, but by reason of their connection with the dimension of being (p. 51). Unfortunately, this connection of desire as a quest for wholeness is not easy to put into practice. People find themselves living in a condition of "existential somnambulism"—Bellingreri states—because they appear to be conditioned by preferences, choices, feelings, conditioned by a "sacralization of the material and impersonal spheres of reality," situated in a personal existence where there are no actors, much few authors, but only dormant subjects, more or less aware of themselves (p. 67).

A phenomenological analysis guides us toward ourselves, overcoming the narcissistic closure and get closer to the other, to create a bond "I-you" characterized by intentionality and exercise an anticipating consciousness that recognizes desire of every person.

In a pedagogical reflection, desire has to be considered in relation to different expressions in relation to the body, ways of thinking, our relationships to things and with the world, to emotions, to feelings. In fact, desire is like a "woven fabric" of dimensions, events, and situations, within which the profile of the author and his identity emerges, even though different expressions of desire do not always coincide perfectly with who we are. Desire can project different profiles of ourselves, underlining however our desire to be and to be in full awareness (Lorenzetti and

Baldissera 2000, p. 9). This aim is not easy to pursue. And if everything seems to become an object of desire, if our desire moves quickly from one thing to another, we know little about the true meaning of desire and how it comes about also because of the complex implications that it has "Nothing like desire should be lived in the reality of the body, individual and social, and in the concrete reality of the spirit. Nothing like desire should be a stimulus to make the body and spirit dance, so that we do not allow ourselves to be martyred by the myths with which our time suffocates our expressions of desire" (Dumoulié 1999, 2002, p. XII).

We might think that desire is within our reach and we believe we know it deeply, but, in reality, it continues to elude us. For these reasons, every era tries to trace the coordinates in different fields: from philosophy to religion, to art, to psychoanalysis, to literature.

Western philosophy has built most of its elaborations on desire as an intrinsic tendency of being human and his state of lacking. The meaning of the Latin word *de-siderium* indicates a departure from the star, from God, of a fall from the sky and from the stars (*sidera*), consequently, of a desire that is a state of lacking, indeed, we could say that it is the lack from which man draws the strength of personal motivation and conscience. According to C. Dumoulié's point of view, desire can be analyzed by taking into consideration two aspects:

- As "desire of Being," as the unification of the human and the metaphysical plans.
- As man's desire, as the potential and essence of man himself subject to the inhibition and control of the law, as a power that can be freely expressed or morally repressed.

In the interweaving of these points of view, desire "asserts itself as something eternal" (p. 25), which contributes to reaffirming the eternity of the world. Alternating between the logic of the lacking and the expression of the human potential, desire offers the human being a great opportunity for knowledge, to recognize himself in the other as a desirable being, to be able to offer himself to the other in the potential of his own being, in that love which Lacan has defined "love in the face, the narcissistic love of oneself found in the other, the question of being loved" (pp. 224–225).

In the scenario of contemporary reflection, the contribution of Lacan's psychoanalysis recognizes the primacy of desire in every educational process, emphasizing the need to conceive desire, outside and beyond repressive or moralistic implications, as an element that regulates the relationship between adult and child, between educator and pupil (Massa 2010, p. 35).

If the reference to Lacan seems interesting to understand how in desire as a tension there are latent, implicit affective, and cognitive dimensions, beyond the interweaving that the theme of desire maintains with the theme of education of emotions and affections, it is interesting to undertake a reflection about the generative structure in relation to the ways of personal being, especially in its relationship with the other (Mancini 2003). In this sense, we are dealing with a hermeneutical path oriented to develop desire as a way to access the knowledge of each person's inner world.

Beyond the dialectic between need and desire, between desire and structure, between desire and experience, it is necessary to try to explain how desire is involved in the process of forming experiences that must no longer only be hidden, protected, or confined to hiding.

As Riccardo Massa says: "What protects and prohibits generally corresponds to the common and traditional meaning we have of the idea of education, and it is precisely this that condemns desire, to the outskirts of education and it prevents us from thinking about the structure of desire by opposing desire itself" (Massa 2010, p. 40).

From a pedagogical point of view, the problem underlined by this author is the need to humanize desire, to allow this dimension to "inhabit" the experience of the child and adolescent, the experience of young people and adults. It is necessary to put desire in the center of education so as not to risk flattening out it only to the satisfaction of needs and caring of others, considering that in an authentically formative relationship desire constitutes the "fire" that activates the encounter.

For these reasons, we hope that around desire can develop not only psychological experiences and reflections, but also anthropological considerations of the human being. Desire is a field of experience and a shared setting among children, young people, and adults, to encounter the real and the imaginary.

The analysis of contemporary thought recognize in desire, despite the issues, an intrinsically human dimension, central in the life of every person, for intersubjective relationships and for the purposes of identity education. As Massimo Recalcati highlights, our era, living the paradoxes of hyperedonism, tends to identify desire with its enjoyment, and to attribute an infinite potential above all to impulse, ending up by detaching it from the limits of all laws. So it happens that in order to free desire from the bonds of a civil morality, one ends up sanctioning its mortification, while, instead, desire, in order to be generative and nourish another desire, and offer a positive horizon of the Elsewhere, needs the Law. Hence the need not to confuse desire with arbitrariness, with whim, with fickleness, with the absence of any reading (Recalcati 2012). The need to develop appropriate explanations with regard to the dynamics of desire which, as the philosopher Francesco Botturi says, it expresses that "tension" which is the "invisible center of gravitation," as a virtual focal point that attracts and directs the work of man, and that appears through all his acts (Botturi 2009, p. 97). As a dynamic of a projective nature, which goes beyond need, and which is interested in something else, desire presents itself as "an ideal rule of composition of experience," the reference to a new and higher anthropological condition, which involves a transformation of the subject's abilities and his actions. For all these reasons we can understand how desire has close connections with a pedagogical reflection and education. In its humanistic meaning of "desiring vector" that moves a human's ethical quest, desire is "a dynamic position" where a person does not transform reality only to take advantage of it, but more radically to make reality his own, to humanize it, to rediscover himself bringing his rationality to the encounter with that of things and thus take away from them the aspect of opposition they have for the man himself (p. 91).

Because of its complex nature, at the same time ambivalent and elusive, desire must be faced from a pedagogical perspective that recognizes it as a fundamental

dimension in educational processes, considering that the challenge of education does not lie only in preparing the conditions for development, the growth, and acquisition of the full autonomy of the person, but in helping her to listen to herself and her motivations. Unfortunately, this dimension of life of the person is conditioned by the influence exercised by Western culture that has transformed *homo felix* into a subject completely subjected to consumption, to needs, committed to pursuing the individual search for his own happiness, projected to pursue unlimited enjoyment and becoming exasperated. As a consequence, there is a mortification of desire that cannot be identified only in the consumption of the object or of oneself. This is why, as Recalcati highlights, reopening the question about the nature of desire, this doesn't fit here his difference: undoubtedly human beings need air, heat, light, bread, but desire is something more with respect to the satisfaction of needs; desire is "the desire of the Other, a request for recognition, a request for love."

Desire cannot be crushed by the satisfaction of need, it cannot be subjected to the urgency of biological survival (Recalcati 2012, p. 90). In its nature of reference to something else, desire frees the subject from identification with the satisfaction of the object and opens it instead to "exposure" to the other. In this way, desire also opens us to a certain risk of indecipherability, of uncertainty and suspension in the face of the desire of the other. In this regard Recalcati argues: "The human being arises in the background of this question [. . .]. We are all hanging on to the indecipherable will of the other" (p. 74). For these reasons it is more correct to speak of desire in the plural of "portraits of desire," to highlight that there are different ways of representing it, considering that, when we speak of our desire we evoke an experience that in the different meanings consists of making us "feel overcome": "Whenever I experience the desire I feel dispossessed by the government sure of myself, I feel carried by a force that goes beyond me, that goes beyond the power of government and control of the Ego" (pp. 26–27). This current reading of desire directs pedagogical reflection toward a desire that does not only apply as motivation or intentional movement but as an expression of a range of forms and portraits of desire united by an experience that opens the ego beyond itself. When the person desires she/he is not expressing his motivation, but the experience of otherness in him/herself as an experience that involves a loss of identity, a sort of non-identity and non-coincidence. As consequence, desire is an opportunity to break away from the Ego and from his narcissistic illusions, in order to be able to reconquer his own authenticity and in what defines it in its most proper sense (Candiani 2018, p. 63).

26.4   The Role of Desire in the Education Toward Identity

Desire as a quest and as our constant incompleteness, outlines a tension toward the other. For these reasons, it offers us the opportunity to go through our identifications and to open to the question about ourselves and the others: "The unconscious desire, in its impossible dialogue with the sense orients and structures, for each one considered in his singularity, the elements of the experience and the times of his

history. Dires, fixes, so to speak, the particular modes of encounter of each person (virtual desiring subject) [. . .], as well as the concomitant need for a perpetual exile of the subject on the outside of this consideration" (Leclaire 1998, p. 308).

Beyond identification with something, desire is not an object, but an "interior and relational dynamic," a continuous tension that directs us to go beyond ourselves to search for the space of the relationship with the other and to explore the inner motivations of one's own identity, as Recalcati indicates: "the call of the internal transcendence of one's desire" (Recalcati 2017, p. 137). Indeed, desire does not define unlimited and unregulated enjoyment without any law, nor responsibility, but rather the ability and capacity for commitment, project, creativity, invention, openness, exchange, love, generation, which gives rise to a horizon made up of hope, future, and fulfillment. These dimensions, expressions of singularity, connote identity in terms of openness and expectation of something positive, and not as a closure in itself and attachment to the ego that we believe we are.

Attention to desire is intertwined with the promotion of the person and global well-being. As Martha Nussbaum argues, linked to the classic recovery of eudaimonia, or the flowering of the human (Nussbaum 1998, p. 22), desire is a tension rooted in the human being, which directs us to think and build ourselves in relation to the recognition of that lack which constitutes us and which at the same time directs us to the project, in order to exercise the capacity to make what is not there and to realize it on the basis of an image, of a prefiguration at first only mental, but which in any case is the result of a creative possibility (Volli 2002, pp. 17–18).

Always in view of the construction of identity, desire helps to fill life, connecting us to pleasure, the search for happiness and fulfillment, as an experience that we can both express and conceal, living both as children and as adults, in relation to family experiences, and in all our fundamental experiences (Terminio 2011). Desire is the experience that allows us to define ourselves in our own psychic identity, orienting ourselves to establish a correspondence between our inner and other selves, as a result of a work of coincidence with ourselves.

As Lévinas has explained to us, the identity of the individual does not consist in being similar to itself and in being identified from the outside, because "the singularity is born [. . .] starting from the logical sphere exposed to the eye and organised in totality by the overthrow of this sphere in the interior of the ego" (Lévinas 1971, 2016, p. 297). The gaze of the other helps us to understand that relationships do not offer themselves to us only as an empirical matter of contacts, but that the relationship "takes place between Me and the Other face to face" (p. 298). The relationship is a dimension that cannot be reduced to any concept, in consideration of the fact that "the true essence of man appears in his face, in which he is infinitely different" (p. 299).

The logic of the gaze of the other is the presence of the other which commits me to understand his misery, to respond to his difficulty, to be responsible, because "Only by meeting others I am present myself. [. . .]. The face that I welcome makes me pass from the phenomenon to being in another sense: in the speech I expose myself to the question about the Others and this urgency of the answer—a pressing question of the present—generates me to responsibility. [. . .] Being attentive means recognizing

the lordship of the Other. [. . .]. My existence as a "thing in itself" begins with the presence in me of the idea of the Infinite, when I look for myself in my ultimate reality. But this relationship already consists in serving Others" (p. 183).

As Lévinas says, the identity that is created through desire is: "Identity that is constituted through enjoyment, is not a psychological state on a par with others, as one among the different affective shades, but it is a reference to the condition of one's "thirst", as "the very thrill of the ego" (p. 113). "We live [. . .] of air, of light, of shows, of work, of ideas, of sleep, etc. These are not objects of representation. We live by it. [. . .] The things of which we live are not means nor usable, in the Heideggerian sense of the term. Their existence is not exhausted by the utilitarian schematism that sheds light on them, [. . .]. They are always, to a certain extent, [. . .] objects of enjoyment, which offer themselves to the "taste", already adorned, embellished" (p. 110).

We relate to life through enjoyment, in every moment of life, to relate to what is different from this moment itself and from us. The originality of the enjoyment of our desire lies in the fact that it gives us an unreflective and naive conscience: "Enjoyment, as a way in which life relates to its content is not a form of intentionality, but is the way in which the person becomes consciousness and interiority of the things, which are fixed thanks to the word that communicates them. Above enjoyment, desire establishes dwelling, possession, sharing of "a discourse on the world" (p. 140).

If the sociocultural scenario appears to be dominated by the need for education to conform to the logic coming from the outside of the person, imposed from time to time by the labor market, now by rapid changes and the results produced by science and technology, there is a risk that education is reduced to a uniformity of needs and skills dictated by adapting to what comes from outside. On the other hand, the attention for the logic of desire restores identity in search of a balance between interior and exterior, between constraints and opportunities, between one's own and the other's desire. Summing up we can say that desire brings back to the foreground identity as "an inner space and personal elaboration" that directs us to overcome extraneousness among people, things, relationships, to recognize ourselves in our identity, renouncing to assume only a subjective point of view or an only objective and external perspective about our life.

For an inner understanding of ourselves we need to be involved in reality, with people of flesh and blood and to enter into relationships as beings in our living and desiring bodies.

Desire activates our symbolic nature and helps us to overcome the opacity of everyday life and the reciprocal exteriority that makes our experiences neutral, mechanical, and insignificant. On the other hand, desire restores moments of being to the experience, because it allows us to track down and reveal the more we trace beyond ourselves, in reality and in others, that something more emerges from imagining something that originates from within us and goes beyond us. Continuously our world is "theater and witness of a movement towards the beyond and elsewhere" (Muraro 2009, p. 11).

Desire is the experience lived that accompanies us in everyday life, rooted in a subjectivity always missing, incapable of being satisfied. It traces out as a "movement" that leads the person to the test of reality, delineating an alternation between bodies and souls, inside and outside of us. Desire helps us to go beyond the real and to think that the real is unthinkable if we do not also think of the possible, and sometimes, even the impossible towards which desire directs us (p. 22). Desire allows us to make evident that there is the possibility of something other than our life.

To trace an "education to desire," the pedagogical reflection recognizes desire as a fundamental anthropological dimension, as a dynamic for the construction of personal identity, and not only as emotion and feeling. This proposal would make it possible to finalize education as a focus on the person and his/her inner world, as a promotion and recognition of personal potential in the perspective of the possible (Musaio 2010, 2014), as attention to an identity that even in the original lack that constitutes us, is able to rework his constitutive fragility on the personal and interpersonal level in the direction of the other.

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Chapter 27
Contemplation, Learning, and Teaching Through Love

Concepción Naval

Abstract Many concepts and expressions link education with love, the uses of the will or manners of loving. In these pages, we will concentrate on some of the aspects, which come together: teaching and learning are only possible through love. Education may be defined as helping to love, to love learning.

Within this framework, contemplation is an act that may lead to the recovery of the will, thus permitting the reason to act in its full measure by integrating feeling with loving, which is taxing to accomplish, particularly in our times. The joy of learning is a key means of finding the correct pathway; a pathway that follows tracks leading to growth, which implies carrying out formative learning so that human learning can be achieved.

The text follows this outline: firstly, a reflection on the aim of human life and education, which will give rise to key concepts such as desire, contemplation, love, will, and knowledge. Then we give more specific consideration to the relationship between learning and contemplating, the necessary operative concurrence of intelligence and will for learning, which indicates the importance of imagination and memory. It is here that joy appears, associated with hopeful anticipation of promising future prospects. And it concludes by showing how learning is materialized in the formation of good operative habits.

One question remains as a response to the reading of this text: what effect would authentic pedagogical renovation have today?

Keywords Joy of learning · Imagination · Desire · Contemplation · Love

Many concepts and expressions link education with love, the uses of the will, or manners of loving. This is a particularly relevant contemporary issue, as the volume recently published by Miller (2018) shows. In these pages, we will concentrate on

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some of the aspects, which come together: teaching and learning are only possible through love. Education may be defined as helping to love, to love learning.

Within this framework, contemplation is an act that may lead to the recovery of the will, thus permitting the reason to act in its full measure by integrating feeling with loving, which is taxing to accomplish, particularly in our times. The joy of learning is a key means to finding the correct pathway (Altarejos and Naval 2011); a pathway that follows tracks leading to growth, which implies carrying out formative learning so that human learning can be achieved.

The text will use the following outline: firstly, a reflection on the aim of human life and education, which will give rise to key concepts such as desire, contemplation, love, will, and knowledge. Then we shall give more specific consideration to the relationship between learning and contemplating, the necessary operative concurrence of intelligence and will for learning, which indicates the importance of imagination and memory. It is here that joy appears, associated with hopeful anticipation of promising future prospects. And I conclude by showing how learning is materialized in the formation of good operative habits.

One question remains as a response to the reading of this text: what effect would authentic pedagogical renovation have today?

27.1   The Aim of Life and of Education

In the area of educational reflection, over the last three decades in the Western world we have seen the appearance of an extensive bibliography on issues, which demand greater attention on the ethical dimension of education, university level included (cf. Ibáñez-Martín 2017; Biesta 2020).

In the recent bibliography, we find subjects such as:

- Education for personal fulfillment (Damon 2008; Vazenou-Nieuwenhuis et al. 2017; Kristjánsson 2019)
- Preparing students for a meaningful life (Malin 2018; Moran 2017)
- Teaching for critical judgment and assessment (Christensen et al. 1992)
- How to raise ideals and assist vital transformation (Brassai et al. 2011)
- A return to reflection on the liberal arts and their current role (Scott 2014)
- How to reclaim excellence with soul (Lewis 2007)
- Happiness and education (Altarejos 1986; Noddings 2003; Kristjánsson 2016)
- Moral education and character education (Bernal et al. 2015; Berkowitz and Bier 2004; Duckworth 2016)
- Social commitment, civic participation, and education (Naval and Arbués 2017; York et al. 2018)
- The promotion of fulfillment includes a number of issues (Ibáñez-Martín 2017): the central role of freedom, a basic requirement; the practical dimension of education; consideration of the various pathways of knowledge, including the aesthetic dimension.

In short, speaking about education means dealing with what is considered to be beneficial. A coffee shop-type philosophy of education, like a big departmental store where one selects products off the shelves, hides their defects in wrapping paper and sends the customer home happily, thanks to the Student Services professionals, is not good enough.

A prime problem that arises in understanding the aim of human life, or in other words, the understanding of happiness, is that the answer does not lie in speculation on universal concepts, but rather on particular practices or actions.

In fact, human happiness may be understood through its references to concepts such as good, tendency, plenitude, delight, possession, and many others. But from this perspective, it is difficult to conclude which actions promote happiness; that is to say, knowing what happiness means is not enough to understand what could be done to achieve it.

Education refers to this latter point: to understand what human actions may be promoted to foster a happy outcome. Thus, educational knowledge starts and is constituted in a different way from philosophical ethics. Without rejecting this philosophy, without ignoring any of its principles or its norms, it converges with it but only after following a different cognitive pathway.

This route begins with a reflection on common experience. The aim is the object of learning, but also a term of love. This is how it is shown in experience: in a way, firstly it is wanted and later understood, or, at least, the tendency of the subject is recognized before the concept or idea of what is wanted; there is awareness of the dissatisfaction of wanting before knowing what will satisfy this need.

The objective belongs to practical philosophy, which cannot be solved by mere abstract conceptual knowledge but also demands the concurrence of the need and the experience of the action. It breaks the logical chain of the means–end relationship so as to confront the true existence of a final objective, which therefore returns the partial aims into means.

In order to place happiness as the objective of educational action, a different perspective may be adopted. This new perspective is not really so new, as it was suggested by Socrates in his life and in his words: to be happy, what one must do is practice the virtues, which are the riches of the soul, and in this way become virtuous (cf. for example, Plato, *Apology*, 30 a). The nullifying issue for Socrates, coming precisely from his formative intention, is not knowledge of the goods that bring happiness, but rather how the happy human being, with or without certain goods, behaves. But we may see a variety of perspectives on the topic, looking, for example, at the issues of the *Journal of Happiness Studie*s, during the last decade.

The consideration of happiness from the perspective of happy behavior reduces the possibility of understanding happiness as a situation defined by the goods it contains. In this framework, it is advisable to suggest that, will not be resolved in terms of addition of emotions and feelings. This is to point out the appetitive dimension of reason. It is a characteristic note of *contemplation*. When we contemplate, not only do we know, but we also fully desire what is known.

Contemplation is the fusion of knowing and wanting in the same act. Wanting does not mean just desiring. Desire may be defined as an eagerness to possess or enjoy a valuable object, which is thus wanted. It is a tendential act that may be

truncated if the attainment of the object fails. Then, contemplative knowledge is not just logical discourse; it is the particular wanting of contemplation.

This is also called *love*: assent or affirmation, which is the act common to all forms of loving: "loving something or someone means finding him/her or it *probus*, the Latin word for 'good'. It is a way of turning to him/her or it and saying, *it's good that you exist. Good that you are in this world!*" (cf. Pieper 1997, p. 436). In another way, happy is who sees what she/he loves.

All human beings can know and love; therefore, all human beings are capable of contemplation. This is a significant characteristic of contemplation: it is an act that does not require special or exceptional qualities. Contemplation is not a behavior for illustrious minds only; all human being is capable of contemplation.

27.2 Learning and Contemplating

Contemplation as a final objective implies a demand for education, that is, the operative concurrence of intelligence and willpower for learning. In fact, this integration is the proper way for reason to act, and therefore, for human beings; but humans do not always behave in this way. The will is the rational appetite, which suggests that whenever there is a rational act, it is an act of the will. This is true, but the will has many uses, moving from rejection to approval, and, in addition, its actions differ in their intensity, from a vague desire to a firm wanting.

It seems that the will is an almost nonexistent subject in twentieth century empirical psychology, and this, in itself, is reason enough to explain its absence in pedagogical knowledge and practice. However, oversight of the will has deeper historical causes. The idea of reason as an entirely cognitive power would settle definitively in twentieth century scientism.

Science is then the prime objective of education. And as science uses the abstract knowledge of discursive reason. From this perspective, contemplation has no place in educational action.

However, contemplation is an action that may lead to the recovery of the will while simultaneously allowing reason to act at its peak. Since the late twentieth century, there have been various indications that reveal preferential attention to the affective world and, above all, to its integration with intelligence, which have arisen with a pedagogical objective. Books on these matters have broken into the market like authentic bestsellers (cf. Goleman 1995, 1996). One of the dimensions of will is to rule the emotions, to manage emotions through reason. This means the integration of feeling with wanting, an action which is extraordinarily complicated nowadays.

In addition, considering reason as a mere discursive capacity makes it shrink and withdraw from the internal capacities, such as *memory* and *imagination*. Memory has been generally discredited in knowledge and contemporary educational practice, as the result of the inertia of certain pedagogical revolutions. Thus, a new emerging sensitivity in education, together with recent studies and research, has initiated a clear recovery of memory in learning. In fact, the UNESCO report produced by

Delors, a real milestone, unreservedly proclaimed: "Using the memory is a necessary antidote to being swamped by the instant information being put out by the media. . . . All specialists agree that the memory must be trained from childhood and that it is inappropriate to eliminate from schools certain traditional, supposedly boring, exercises" (Delors 1996, p. 98).

Together with *memory*, imagination is the other aspect cast into oblivion by education and for the same reason: oversight or the lack of will. *Imagination* is the necessary intermediate capacity between the senses and the intelligence, transforming the singular data of the senses into generic images, which foster comprehension.

In the analysis carried out by J. Marías on the radical obstacles to happiness, together with the fears that stalk humanity, is the absence of the imagination needed to confront the present and the future. The easily understood complaint in this situation as a direct pedagogical reference: "If there were a different idea of education, we could teach people to imagine. We teach them to multiply, to extract square roots, to swim, to do sport, but we do not teach them to use their imagination; this would be easy and would result in an amazing expansion of life" (Marías 1995, p. 59).

Education in schools demands the complementarity of the scientific disciplines oriented toward formal thinking with the narrative skills, which facilitate contemplation. The educational influence of narrative knowledge cannot be overstated. All peoples, since the very dawn of humanity, have been educated through stories. At present, part of the educational knowledge that teaches us is the cinema. And, in addition, the contents of social networks and media are of great influence.

At least 50 years ago, people began to be aware of the fragility and inadequacy of what was called formal education, institutional academic teaching that was chronologically and hierarchically graded from the first years at school until, in a sense, the final years at university. The superiority given to academic schooling, marginalizing other educational areas and agents, has been the object of criticism in educational research.

A first warning was given at the *International Conference on World Crisis in Education*, held in Williamsburg (Virginia, USA) in 1967. A document was begun and entrusted to the International Institute for Educational Planning, then directed by P. H. Coombs. A year later, the document was published with the addition of contributions from the Conference with the title *The World Educational Crisis*, with Coombs as lead author (Coombs 1968). The central point of the work is crisis in schools and criticism of them as the main educational environment. Unfortunately, its conclusions were fragile in practice and only critical in theory, which explains its lack of a transformative effect in the following years. It did not reflect in-depth on the objective of education, and merely dealt with the analysis of the learning processes. It is strange to see how contemporary pedagogical revolutions tend to be conservative, particularly when carried out by official or government bodies. There is a fear of breaking the established templates, strictly demanded by majorities. If we were to rethink education from another perspective, how would our educational leaders react? Or what attitude would they take?

For example, contemplation as happy behavior and the final end of education undoubtedly implies a major modification of the objectives and partial ends of education, and a revision of certain educational action concepts. "In its original and simplest sense, contemplation is simply seeing and enjoying seeing" (Maritain 1969, p. 133). As the realization of happy behavior, it should guide all teaching, and its final end will be operative at the start, during and at the end of human learning.

Taken thus, there is one element that can be seen as a thermometer to measure the efficacy of education: *joy*. Joy is "the response to happiness" (Pieper 2011, p. 273). We cannot observe the contemplation of others, but we can perceive their external effective effusiveness, which is joy. If education culminates happily, this will be shown in joy (García Hoz 1950, p. 91), naturally, in the *joy of learning*. Joy is what differentiates true virtues from false ones, which only appear to be virtues.

It must not be forgotten that joy is reflected a sentiment, that is, it springs from a specific cause, and is reduplicated in its own self-awareness. For this reason, we can say that there is a stable state or situation of joy in learning, not merely joyful moments or incidents due to specific learnings.

Learning generally appears as a tough, painful process of assimilation, at the end of which is received the pedagogical prize, good grades, a gift from the family or a competition trophy. This idea is not appropriate when it is considered exclusive, ignoring the fact that the effort to learn is compatible with the pleasure of contemplation.

Joy, as the primary effect of contemplation, is seen in attitudes, which consolidate happy behavior. The most proximate attitude, as it leads toward the future, has been highlighted by J. Marías: *hopeful anticipation* (Marías 1984). For this author, "it is a method to promote happiness. In two senses: firstly, to make it more frequent and likely; secondly, to make it more intense. However, this method is precisely the cultivation of hopeful anticipation, which is something that can be cultivated perfectly" (Marías 1995, p. 380). Obviously, J. Marías is referring to "method" in its original broadest sense: as a pathway or route, and not as a tidy protocol for activity; as open guidance and not as a specific routine. If joy is the reflected sentiment of the present, concomitant with happy behavior, hopeful anticipation is its projection into the future, which shapes this latter as an open personal project, not in closed in teaching activity programs. Therefore, "the achievement of the anticipation does not make it melt away (. . .) In the case of hopeful anticipation, it must be said that, once achieved, this continues: far from ending, what is perceived or possessed continues to inspire hope" (Marías 1995, p. 375).

Learning then is produced with the guidance of contemplation, it spills over an immediate joy and reflection of work, and is projected in tension regarding the future in the form of hopeful anticipation. Contemplation may be interwoven with the smallest and most everyday actions, but it demands that the subject find appropriate, balanced objects in order to contemplate.

In education, it is the responsibility of the educator to supply these objects through *teaching*, which has a threefold, transcendent effect (cf. Altarejos and Naval 2011, p. 129).

Firstly, knowing the nature of these objects, which is none other than what is human: the human being, the person, is the primary object for contemplation. But this is not the anthropological, psychological or sociological concept of man or woman; this would again lead to curricular structuring based on formal subjects or disciplines, which promote learning as a terminal activity.

Second, it is necessary to be open to humanism as a configuring element in the curriculum; a formative humanism, which is more than the teaching of humanistic disciplines, although it begins with them. A humanism leading to the communication of narrative knowledge. It does not mean conceptually understanding what a human being is, but to observe her act and to observe how she sees herself acting, which occurs through present and past narratives. And this demands awareness of teaching as an activity promoting human formation which is not a mere explanation of science, but must elicit happy behavior.

The third point is the use of appropriate language, embracing, and making use of rhetorical and poetic resources. "In order to be educational—to open the way to communication, so that it is not to be mere communication of knowledge and even to permit this communication, teaching must use logical resources but also resources of other types: rhetoric and poetry in the proper way. This is demanded by the human condition, a subjectivity after all" (Naval 1992, p. 290). The objectivity of knowledge is eminently important in scientific research; but pedagogically its role is smaller and does not predominate when the objective is to educate complete human beings.

We may then conclude that learning comes into being in the formation of good operative habits, precisely because it is addressed to each individual person.

27.3 Human Learning: A Question of Freedom

Development is a strictly personal matter. "But if development is the responsibility of each individual, in such a way that, for this, no-one can replace another, what is possible and also required, is assistance in developing. Assistance in development is not merely an arrangement or progress, but support for which the learner pays fully: by developing, no less. The most magnificent thing to be found in this world is a developing human being" (Polo 1999, p. 107). Such is the happy everyday opportunity of education: to attend and contemplate human development.

Above all, we must be aware that this attendance to development is a way of defining education. Education is, thus, the integration of the actions of the educator and the pupil. There may be learning without teaching—discovery—and teaching which does not give rise to any learning—due to defective teaching activity or rejection by the student—but this is not strictly speaking either learning or educational teaching. But this integration of teaching and learning is not a simple concurrence of actions; there is an order in teaching to promote learning.

Sustaining this relationship is not at all easy, either in theory or in pedagogical practice. It is common then for both the theory and the practice to frequently

emphasize one of the extremes. In truth, we cannot imagine how education can be carried out by ignoring one of the two poles. Nevertheless, the risk of listing to one side by giving greater importance to the teacher or the pupil is a constant in the comprehension of education. This is the reason, for example, for one of the tendencies of educators—both in theory and in practice—which is most harmful to pedagogical action and greatly reduces its effectiveness: the tendency to take the place of the student when he or she does not reach the objectives of the teaching. This replacement is invalid and risks encouraging the wrong attitude in the learner: neglect of his/her personal responsibility for learning. This attitude is easily adopted in teaching very young children, due to their inability to answer freely, but maybe perpetuated with adolescents if the educator assumes more educational power than they have, that is, if they give too much importance to their role as an assistant in personal development.

The principle of development is rooted in the learner. This is the first point that must be emphasized. The educator's task is dispositive regarding the objects he/she shows and the actions he/she promotes. The learner is not moved directly, obviously; but the educator's teaching does not function either as a univocal stimulus, leading always, or almost always, to the same learning response. This has been the tipping point in many educational approaches, particularly in the twentieth century: considering the relationship between teaching and learning of a certain necessary nature, almost a cause and effect relationship. However, the best lesson—taking "lesson" to mean the product of teaching—for one person is not the same as for another, which is evident in teaching experience.

Generally, two reasons are given for academic or school failure: rejection by the student, a result of his/her freedom, or the inefficacy of the teaching, a result of the impoverishment of didactic techniques or the incompetence of the educator. There is no doubt that these are two possible reasons; but they are not the only ones. The main reason—even in these two cases—is always the personal situation of the learner and also of the teacher.

Teaching does not reach the personal self; it merely reaches the person's powers or abilities. Over and above these abilities—or underneath, depending on the perspective—is the person, the nucleus for their integration and actualization; and the lessons are embraced in accordance with this. As the medieval proverb reminds us, "Whatever is received is received according to the manner of the receiver." Therefore, the tendency to personalize education must be maximized in as far as possible, depending on the material conditions of the teaching. This tendency to personalize—always within a social context—is the touchstone for any didactic methodology or organization and for the planning of teaching.

Education does not reach the personal self because the person is not a completely unformed being, but rather has in himself the beginning of his formation. Strictly speaking, people are not formed, but are helped to form themselves; this happens by means of assistance in actualizing their powers. What is relevant here is confirmation of the thesis of human powers as the recipients of learning, and an increase in these powers as the objective of assisting in the personal development, which defines educational action (Altarejos and Naval 2011, pp. 193–194; Polo 1999).

As educational work is a dispositive task, the first action is to choose what is to be taught. The criteria for this choice will determine whether the teaching will be truly educational, that is, promoting human formation. Among these criteria, the first is an increase in human powers. Teaching is showing something through signs; the choice, then, is twofold: what is shown and how is it shown? This second question, that of educational language, is as full of riches as it is barely addressed. Clearly, what is priority for teaching and offers most human formation is, undoubtedly, the decision about which objects are shown; that is to say, what the contents of the teaching are.

In general, the current reasoning is as follows: as what is taught will be the student's future knowledge, and as it will be her greatest and best lifetime possession, this should be what is most useful in life, both for participation and culture and in social relationships, and for employability. Put this way, the argument seems irrevocable, and the goodwill of its intentions appears to be evident. But this approach may lead to errors and, to a certain extent, to the omission of the personal reference.

Firstly, in this approach the decisive criterion is tacit but clear: practicality. What is taught is what is considered most convenient, meaning most beneficial, of the greatest advantage. But in the norms of instrumental reasoning, what is most useful tends to be conceived as that which can be best used. In other words, as what will permit greater returns, not only in intellectual formation but also character education or social harmony. It implies considering knowledge as power.

This criterion is not completely unacceptable, but its scope must be discussed, because, for example, the value of humanities in human education would be greatly compromised. In this sense, Aristotle emphasized the main value of learning the humanities: they prepare the way for further knowledge (cf. *Politics*, V, 2, 1338 a 36–38). This simple statement goes directly to the core of the matter; and this is not surprising because, although the concept of person is absent from Aristotelian thinking, he does bear in mind the value of knowledge as an immanent act, as an action that is good in itself which must be fostered and practiced by oneself. Simply put, it means learning to know, rather than knowing this or that.

Here, it is worth recalling the revitalization of the immanent action advocated by the Report of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-First Century, sponsored by UNESCO. In short, it is the declaration of what is called "the four pillars of education," which may be seen as a synthesis of the meaning of human learning from a personal perspective. As is well known, these four pillars are (Altarejos and Naval 2011, pp. 195–198):

(a) *Learning to know*. We can learn to know and "this type of learning is concerned less with acquiring structured or factual knowledge than with the mastery of learning tools. It may be regarded as both a means and an end of human existence" (Delors 1996, p. 96). In contrast to the value of usefulness—which has led to specialization of knowledge and the resulting fragmentation of human learning—what is proposed is learning to know, as an end: its justification is the "pleasure in, learning, the ability to learn how to learn, and intellectual curiosity"

(ibid). This appeal to the affective instance is the clear recognition of the unity of the human being—his status as a person—and the abolition of the illustrated rationalism, which has been of such great aspiration for pedagogy over the last few centuries. It connects with the conception of learning as contemplation and emphasizes the importance of the development of imagination and memory. It means developing knowledge for its own sake, so, to a certain extent, it declares the secondary nature of learned objects, which become valuable due to their influence on the development of the cognitive powers.

(b) *Learning to do*. The commission warns that the expression "learning to do" can no longer be given the simple meaning it had when it meant preparing someone for a well-defined material task, for their participation in making something (Delors 1996). The changes in the world of labor, which define our present-day post-industrial or post-capitalist society result in a labor situation where employees are no longer interchangeable and tasks are personalized (Ibid, p. 100). On the other hand, the expanse and growth of the services sector in the economy allow us to speak of a certain level of dematerialization of labor, and then demands the cultivation of those human qualities which traditional training does not always instill and correspond to the ability to establish stable and effective relationships between people (Ibid.).

The learning objective refers to donation of the self. What is decisive in work, and increasingly in the contemporary economy and society, is personal contribution, which includes initiative, innovation, risk-taking, etc. This personal dimension is crucial for human formation, and, therefore, teaching should be structured so as to promote the contribution of the learner.

(c) *Learning to live together, learning to live with others*. Undoubtedly, this learning is one of the principal tasks of contemporary education (Delors 1996). We could add that this is so in past, future and all-time education, although perhaps it is more underlined in the present, due to the specific circumstances of modern society. Suggestions made by the report are twofold: assisting with the "discovery of the other" and the "participation in projects in common."

The reference here is to coexistence between people. Human formation is carried out in a social environment, but this reference is not sufficient. It involves intentionally promoting sociability, and, even more, educating the affective powers, the operative nucleus of interpersonal relationships. Intellectual learnings train as well as character education. Feelings, emotions, and volitions are objects of education, just as much as concepts, opinions, and reasonings. Training in these entails opening to others and their development in interpersonal relationships, beginning with the teacher–student relationship, inter-student relationships, and their projection toward family and school and social relationships.

(d) *Learning to be*. Strangely enough, this comes in fourth place, when it really should come first. Without specifically referring to the concept of person, it alludes to the global development of each person: mind and body, intelligence, sensitivity, aesthetic sense, individual responsibility, spirituality (Delors 1996). Thus, it affirms the consistency of the human being as a unit and,

simultaneously, as a whole; that is to say, as a person. This proposition is implicit in another earlier report: "aim of development is the complete fulfilment of man, in all the richness of his personality, the complexity of his forms of expression and his various commitments" (Faure 1972, 1987, p. 16). This is an appeal to intimacy, particularly as the nucleus of opening to reality. Human training, then, is not conceived as a closed process of assimilating information, but rather is an action, which is open to reality from the personal condition and is assisted by the educator. The priority of educational action is not given to tasks, but to the people who are learning; their fulfillment is a pedagogical challenge.

Human formation, in this way, is assisted personal growth. This assistance may be: (a) formally intentional or (b) indirect and spontaneous, not sought as such assistance, but given as a formative influence. In the former case, properly speaking, it is formative agents; the latter refers to formative environments. In both cases, the protagonist is always the learner, the free human being capable of the greatest nobility and the most profound wretchedness. This leads us to a final reflection on freedom.

27.4 Final Reflection

Freedom is the breeding ground for human excellence, but it is also a burden for those who practice it. The aspiration to absolute freedom and awareness of its fallibility are the most common confusions regarding freedom today. That is to say, the disavowal of its reality, its character as an illusory tale or existential sentence.

The human being experiences freedom as a possibility in the face of action, but this very action reveals a certain impossibility in practice due to the limitations of the circumstances. In these circumstances, the most optimistic response is the attempt to save the human being by attributing to him/her one single fundamental error, which must be corrected: the delusion of freedom, the erroneous belief that we are free when in reality we are the subjects of certain cosmic decisions. A person to clearly express this frustrating optimism is B. Espinosa; later A. Schopenhauer and F. Nietzsche would do so. The conclusion is the negation of the reality of freedom, under the pretense of saving human reality.

To this vision, we must add a currently very widespread consideration of freedom which Rousseau already recognized when he stated that social relationships are harmful to the human being. Social links, taken as restraints on freedom, must be minimized in order to lead character toward moral autonomy, which means, "my being able to will only what is suitable to me, or what I deem to be such, without anything external to me determining me" (Rousseau 1969, p. 586). Operative independence cannot be absolute, but the ego does have an absolute character for Rousseau; therefore, when it is pointed out that nothing external can determine for one, there is absolutely nothing new in this. Rousseau's statement, decontextualized

from his thinking, could be admissible in a moral sense, as the motives and reasons for behaving are, effectively, proper to the subjects, and freedom is their self-determination. But when the absolute character of the ego is affirmed, independence becomes a barrier between the subject and others.

Recently, François-Xavier Bellamy, in his book *Les déshérités ou l'urgence de transmettre* (Bellamy 2014), clearly identified the problem when he refers to the need (for everyone, but particularly for young people) to have in-depth knowledge of the cultural tradition in an age when we have, to some extent, stopped passing it on to them.

This has occurred for several reasons. In his brief essay the author, to my mind, brilliantly explains how, by excluding culture, we are excluding our own humanity. The current radicalization and violence of some groups, including young people, in Western countries may be the result of the vacuum in which they find themselves as the cultural heritage which belonged to them has been excluded. They have not received something which would be of value to them.

We began by asking why education today is failing. We could say that it has abandoned communicating cultural tradition. The roots of this matter, which can be seen in many educational policies, are found by Bellamy in three French authors: R. Descartes (s. XVII), J.J. Rousseau (s. XVIII), and P. Bourdieu (s. XX) (cf. Bellamy 2014).

Descartes regretted—following Bellamy's argument—that the human being was not born as an adult with complete use of our reason. During the dependent childhood years, we are weighed down with the cultural tradition that complicates the development of our reason. Rousseau defends the argument that it would be desirable for the human being to be an eternal child, because the culture we receive corrupts us, by distancing us from nature. Both authors coincide that an education based on the transmission of a cultural tradition threatens the development of the individual.

Finally, Bourdieu claims that the key to social dominance is capital; but not merely economic capital, also a cultural one which is passed on in families, roots, and social media. For this sociologist, with such great influence on the educational policies at the end of the last century, the problem cannot be eased through grants and equality programs but only by eliminating the transmission of culture, because the true cause of the marginalization of the working class is the dominant value system of the political elites who control schooling in any given culture, together with the selection criteria.

We must hark back to the primitive Roman organization of the state to find the factually conducted, lived and exercised distinction; although it later declined in the Empire of Augustus. In the Roman Republic, "the authority informs and advises the powers, and in this effective recognition lies the greatest guarantee of social freedom. The Roman Republic gave a classical example of this recognition, as it distinguished between the power of the magistrates with the *imperium* and *auctoritas* of the advisory bodies, particularly that of the Senate, the *auctoritas patrum*" (D'Ors 1973, p. 95).

Whatever the case, and with no need to hark back to any faraway historical context, it is common knowledge that the wisest person is not necessarily the best governor; that excellent knowledge does not guarantee the success of the executive decisions of the government. In fact, the opposite seems to be true. As a logical consequence, the areas of authority and power should be separate. Above all, because, "if power is to be moderated by the prudence of authority, it is no less true that authority should renounce power. The greatest temptation for a man of authority is precisely the desire to command, the desire for power" (D'Ors 1973, p. 97). This is an invaluable concept to be meditated in the area of education; how this power and authority should be exercised to the advantage of the learner, and to foster his/her freedom: how to educate through love, helping to love, loving to learn.

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Chapter 28
A Way Out of the Dialectics of Love and Desire as the Clue to an Adequate Education of Desire

Eduardo Ortiz

Abstract By means of an example of a conflict of desires, it is highlighted the importance of identifying with some desires and not with others, although that is something which ultimately relies on our loves, which exhibit themselves a certain order. To keep in mind the precedence of love with respect to desire (first part of our hypothesis), discovers that there are different types of desires. Educating our desires in an appropriate way is only possible in the context of the adequate or appropriate order or hierarchy of loves (second part of our hypothesis). The paradigmatic anthropological scenario of the beginning of our existence is a privileged picture of that adequacy. Along the lines suggested in such a scenario (interpersonal union in difference), our desires can be appropriately educated so as to reach, e.g. the identification with the desire that achieves the solution of a conflictive situation. To live according to the adequate order of loves is the upshot of an educative process fuelled by the intervention of prudence and the moral virtues.

Keywords Primacy of love · Desires · Adequate hierarchy of loves · Moral virtues · Prudence

28.1 Desire According to Popular Psychology and Its (Supposed) Reduction

My desire to rest moves me to leave the house to take a walk, because it is something I find pleasant, attractive, convenient, in short, good. Even today it is still accepted that desire includes both a motivational and an evaluative component (Lauria and Deonna 2017).

Aristotle (1993) already described desire in these terms in his *De Anima* (*DA*). Thus, in respect of the motivational aspect: "the soul's power of locomotion is

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desire" (*DA* 433a31-433b1). Desire moves us from one place to another. "The primitive sign of wanting is *trying to get*" (Anscombe 1979) Yes. But what? Well, trying to get something, of course.

Here it is the evaluative side of desire: what moves is "the desirable object" (*DA* 433a27). And such an object is "what is good or what is presented as good. But not any good object, rather good that is doable through action...something that can be different than what it is" (*DA* 433a27-30). Lastly, we should recognise that the object of desire moves "when it is understood or imagined" (*DA* 433b11-12).

Aristotle's sober clarifications recognise the complexity of goodness, that is, its analogous status, so they do not ignore that good is given or learned and also constructed. The good that is a close intimate friendship is as much a gift as something built between friends over time.

However, to delve into the explanation of what desire is, shouldn't we first refer to the pleasure that comes from its satisfaction? And what about the reward that this involves for people's psychology? Should we go beyond that?

Along with the reductionism present in some areas of anthropology or contemporary philosophy of mind, some people have put forward a supposedly simpler concept of desire. It appears that a neurological system is the basis of pleasure, of action and of reward. And of these three "facets" of pleasure, the key is in the last one (Schroeder 2004).

According to this notion, based on certain neuroscientific evidence, that structure is known as the *reward system*, a group of cells that release dopamine. The system plays a central role in producing the action and in stimulating pleasure: in terms of the former, the loss of dopamine is one cause of Parkinson's disease or of severe paralysis and in terms of the latter, drugs like nicotine and cocaine stimulate or imitate the release of dopamine.

Although some have argued that pleasure is equivalent to the release of dopamine in the reward system (Morillo 1990), it seems to be more likely that the activity of this neurological structure is not simply equivalent to the pleasure that comes from satisfying desire. This is just one of its effects or of its facets. It is more the case that what this neurological structure cause is a type of unconscious learning, *reward-based learning*. So, if one of us desires something, and search for it and obtain it, the achievement of the desired thing is the reward that leads us to learn *how to act in order to once again obtain what we desire.* So, in the end, desiring something is seeing it as a reward and portraying it this way leads to the person in question being motivated to get it. As a result, "to desire that P is to use one's capacity to represent that P so as to drive the sort of learning signal that characterizes the reward event" (Schroeder 2006).

28.2   Challenging Reductionism Based on an Example from Robert Kane

However, to liken the reasons we have for obtaining something with the secretion of dopamine in the presence of the representation of that something ignores some of the elements thanks to which the experience of desire usually seems intelligible to us, for example the evaluative component already identified by Aristotle. In fact, without taking that evaluative element into account, how can cases of a conflict of desires be adequately explained?

Let's remember a famous example in the contemporary literature on free will, according to which, on her way to an important work meeting, a businesswoman witnesses someone being assaulted in an alleyway. The executive has to decide whether to stop and help the victim or continue on her way so she isn't late for her meeting (Kane 2002).

Although the philosopher who raises the issue presents it as an example of what he calls *self-forming actions or volitions*, thanks to which the woman in question resolves the uncertainty into which she is plunged by the conflict between reasons or motives for acting, the latter should be described in terms of a conflict of desires.

Let's suppose the woman desires to stop and help the person who has been assaulted. Perhaps she also judges that this is the best thing she can do. If the woman decides to continue on her way against her desire and evaluative judgement in favour of the best option, it can be said that the desire to not compromise her professional career has won. On the contrary, if she chooses to stop and take an interest in the person who has suffered the attack, it can be said that the other desire and corresponding judgement have prevailed. That evaluative judgement is not distanced from her desires. By the way, this component of desire is not something that is merely cognitive, it is also linked to emotion, on which evaluative or value judgement relies.

There is something more against the attempt to reduce our normal discourse on desire to the functioning of the (neurological) system referred to earlier. According to this reductionist variant in the sphere of philosophy of mind, this physical system in the brain enables a "one to one" projection of the types of folk psychology (desires, beliefs, etc.) to the types of neurophysiology.

However, in addition to appealing to emotions, the supposed reduction to physical types in a cerebral system resorts to mental representations and actions! According to the explanatory model in question, when someone desires x, the mental representation of x appears as a reward for that person and in this way reinforces actions that tend to obtain the reward. It can be accepted that this and the pleasure involved in satisfying the desire have been reduced to the neurophysiological sphere. But this reduction is not of the representations or of the actions. So, it has not affected the desire, only the reward (Goldman 2017).

Lastly, to presume that, in the future, the development of experimental science could produce the reduction in question and even the elimination of explanations in terms of desires (and of other central concepts in popular psychology), is to invoke

an *IOU argument*—a manoeuvre that requires trust in the progress of science and once again trust that this process will take place in a particular direction. But, isn't trust one of the concepts in the structural framework of popular psychology? And isn't it the discipline that scientific progress in the area of neuroscience will definitively leave out of the edifice of knowledge?

28.2.1 Abandoning Reductionism

If the idea to reduce desire to a physical system leads to a situation like that one, which openly contradicts the reductionist aspiration, maybe it is worthwhile abandoning this new version of the scientific dream and return to the concept of desire that much-maligned popular psychology has always upheld.

Of course, the descriptive, explanatory and even predictive power of that psychological model is nowadays superior to any reductionist replacement. In accordance with popular psychology, desire is a cluster concept, which actually reflects a rich and complex reality. Our desires go hand in hand with our pleasures and displeasures, with our rewards and our actions, but also with our emotions and our beliefs, our cares and concerns and our loves.

If that is the case, we could imagine that, contrary to certain neuroscientific evidence (Schroeder 2004), desire is implemented not only in a single system, the famous reward system. In fact, functional analysis of desire points to its achievability or its multiple implementations at physical level (Katz 2005).

On the other hand, from a pragmatic point of view, desire and the family of concepts linked to it serve our interpersonal communication in a way that is more than notable. Abandoning this way of communicating with each other, using our ordinary language and thought, in favour of, for example the language of neuroscience, would bring huge complications to our interpersonal relationships.

In fact, it makes sense to ask the following: that world in which we human beings used only neuroscience categories to relate to one another, would it be like one of those scenarios described in science fiction stories, a *Brave New World*? But it isn't easy to answer questions like these, using ordinary language and thought, adapted to our, up to now, human way of living.

28.2.2 The Strategy of Displacement: From Desires to Emotions to Love

Let's take another look at the example of the businesswoman. If it is the portrayal of a real woman, of flesh and blood, it wouldn't be out of place to suppose that the biography of that woman, her past, included a particular form of education of her affectivity and consequently of her desires.

As a result of that education, her affectivity is configured in such a way that it will facilitate, although not determine, the direction of her choice in favour of her fellow human being or in her own favour. And that is because, of the two desires underlying the options she has to choose from, one will presumably carry greater weight than the other: the one that corresponds to the apparently more attractive option.

Let's now apply *the displacement strategy* to a case of conflict of desires like the one we're dealing with now. This consists of redescribing the agent's moral psychology, this time from the point of view of the main emotion linked to each of her desires (Arkonovich 2012). The overlap of desires and emotions (and beliefs) backs up this manoeuvre: "beliefs map the world, desires target the world with things we aim at and emotions colour the world by lightening or darkening it" (Wollheim 1999).

Let's continue speculating based on our example and ask: which of the woman's emotions goes hand-in-hand with the desire to carry on walking and which is connected with the desire to help the person who has suffered an assault in the street? Let's suppose that they are emotions relating to a supposed aggrandizement and diminishing of the businesswoman's ego, depending on the achievement or not of her professional promotion. Hence, the dialogue with herself on which the woman would embark would consist of something like this: "my presence at the meeting is key for my future in the company, as the Director of the head office section will be there and it's my chance to greet him and to have my section boss back my candidacy in front of him". And in relation to the other option: "I'm going to go and see how this person is and I'll have to wait and see how he or she reacts in the minutes following such a huge scare". Of course that will prevent me from making the most of a unique opportunity for promotion. When will I get another opportunity? Will there even be another one?". It's not an easy call. Feeling an emotion, or a set of emotions, linked in this case to the growth of the ego or to its opposite, comes with living and experiencing the world from a particular perspective.

Let's now suppose that the woman decides to hurry on her way so she isn't late for her appointment, as this is how *she identifies with* (Frankfurt 1988) her prima facie strongest desire. This is what she does. However, when the meeting in her office ends, she wonders how the person who suffered the attack a while ago is getting on. "Will he or she have recovered? Has someone helped him or her? But who? There was nobody around. Shouldn't it have been me who stopped? I've not only got a life, I've got a career, but that person. . . is even alive? If he or she is, what quality of life is he or she going to have?"

The woman's conscience won't quieten down. It nags at her. "What I did wasn't right. If we all behaved like that. . .". "What can I do now?" she asks herself. "Let's see. Identifying myself with the strongest *prima facie* desire and acting on it has left me unsatisfied. And it's not the first time this has happened to me. But there's no turning back. When I find myself in a situation like the one I've just experienced, what is in my hands is to not identify myself, at least not necessarily, and act according to the apparently keenest desire. It's clear, then. I have to examine my desires, so that my identification with one or the other desire is correct". The woman resolves to embark on a process of reviewing her desires. But, how can she do this?

Our suggestion for anyone wanting to embark on a process like this consists of taking the displacement strategy mentioned earlier beyond the emotions that accompany desires, to the experience of love, which includes desires as well as emotions and feelings, as far as elements of affectivity are concerned, although it is not reduced to it.

28.3   The Predominance of Love over Desire: A Paradigmatic Anthropological Scenario

> Given the predominance of love in human experience, the correct order or hierarchy of loves supplies the context or the channel in which to educate our desires correctly too.[1]

Let's look at the first part of the hypothesis: the precedence of love over desire in people's experience.[2] If the woman in the example—or any other person—begins a process of introspection that reaches the very beginning of their existence, what can we presume the woman, or, under normal conditions, anyone, is going to find?

The answer is: an interpersonal relationship of love. So, in her first moments of life and in normal conditions, there was a mother, a father and herself, just delivered to the outside world. A relationship of union in difference of each one of these three people, became public knowledge at a particular time and place. The loving care lavished on the newborn by the two adults lasted throughout early childhood, and with varying levels of presence throughout her entire existence.

Acknowledging in a comprehensive way this fact implies a criticism of the suggestion that (intrinsic) desires occupy the centre of people's moral psychology. To carry out that critical review, we'll use one of the examples that illustrate a notable contemporary version of the suggestion, according to which desire is given priority in our moral psychology. This version is "Spare Conativism".

Let's suppose Jason has the intrinsic desire for a small circle of friends and he achieves it. Jason spends time with them, he chats with them. This desire is so significant that it influences Jason's emotions, to the extent that, for example he is enormously affected by the fact that there are still hermits who can live with minimum contact with other people.

However, although Jason enjoys the experience of friendship, he does not adopt "strategies specific to the goal of keeping that number of close friends. . . /so that friendship/ continues to play no motivational role in his life" (Arpaly and Schroeder 2014).

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[1] In this way, we understand better the fact that our desires do not influence in our agency in an isolated way, as "motivational contextualism" does agree (Roth 2005).

[2] Though with differences in respect of the concept of love, its primacy over desire is a thesis found in classic philosophy (Aquinas), in modern philosophy (Descartes) and in contemporary philosophy (Frankfurt).

Well, it's true that the description of the example does not overlook the contemplative aspect of friendship: Jason enjoys the friendship of his friends in a non-instrumental way. But friendship is one of the most important kinds of interpersonal love. And if, in any kind of love, the lover wants to transmit something good to the loved one,[3] the former's motivation is likely to be included in that transmission or communication of good things to the latter. From this point of view, the portrayal of friendship we read into Jason's example does not seem plausible.

Even more, for this example to reflect the experience of friendship, it would have to include the reference to the permanent mutual caring between friends. It is something that needs time, which is behind the famous affirmation that says there is no such thing as love, or genuine love, without a love story. This presupposes that love must be cultivated, otherwise it will wither away.

The preoccupation binding people who love each other does not necessarily smother the lovers' personalities. If it did, we would be looking at one of the many misunderstandings or pathologies of love, such as the paternalistic treatment of the lover who doesn't look after the loved one as a person. In this case, the lover forgets that the loved one is not an extension of himself or herself. The loved one is the other one, with whom the lover must seek interpersonal communication or be united in difference.

To show the primacy of love over desire, we have turned to a paradigmatic anthropological scenario, which in the last instance is the main thread of our biographies and the content—explicit or otherwise—of our project of living a good life as people. Because, isn't it true that, depending on the type of relationship we have with each person, we look to live the experience of harmony we had with our parents in the first moments of our lives and during our childhood years?

To continue with the last example, now we're looking at a type of love, of friendship, that isn't paternal- or maternal-love. All kinds of love have shared features (a lover communicates a good to a loved one) and their own features (according to the good communicated by the lover to the loved one). Friendship love includes benevolence (a trait shared by all kinds of love), experience and the cultivation of intimacy between friends and, lastly, the symmetry between those involved in the friendship (a trait found in this type of love) (*Nicomachean Ethics* Books VIII, IX).

It is clear that the experience of friendship, and of any other type of love, includes desires and the urge to satisfy them. With respect to those who have a concept of love that is independent of desire, it's worth warning them that desires are something more than "independent responses that love merely unleashes" (Velleman 2006). It is rather that "love cannot wash its hands entirely of what it motivates the lover to do" (Kennett 2008). Amongst other things, love feeds many desires in the lover, that

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[3]"Love consists especially in this, that the lover wills the good for his loved one" (*Summa contra Gentiles*, III, ch.90). The source of this characterization goes back to the Aristotelian legacy: "we may describe friendly feeling towards any one as wishing for him what you believe to be good things, not for your own sake but for his" (*Rethoric*, II, 4, 1380b 35-36). Although these words refer to friendship, they have been generalized to other types of love. See Stump (2006).

can be summed up in the desire to communicate various kinds of goodness to the loved one.

28.3.1   Types of Desire

Recognising the predominance of love over desire and the complexity of the former in such a way that prevents its reduction to the latter, expresses the richness of our moral psychology. So, for example in addition to our appetite desires, such as the fleeting desire to cool myself down by bathing or to quench my thirst by drinking a glass of water (Davis 1986), there are others who are more sophisticated. They are volitional, ecstatic and dialectic desires. In them, we experience a progressive "self-augmenting attraction to persons and objects represented under the aspect of the intrinsically good" (Brewer 2009). They are desires of realities whose good is not revealed immediately, but rather as we become involved in achieving them. From a synchronic point of view, they are profound desires and from a diachronic point of view, they are perfectible.

The desire someone has when they love someone and want to start a family, or that another person has to start a friendship with someone they met recently are both examples of dialectic desires. This category also includes the desire to write a book, to delve into the art of painting seascapes or to learn to play the classical guitar.

How has the existence of different types of desires (simpler, more complex) been ignored? Perhaps this is due to the functionalist concept of desire, which accepts that desires have an object (indicating the direction of the desire) and a strength (indicating the weight or pressure of the desire), but ignores something that Aristotelian analysis already took into account: the importance of the location of each of our desires. That is, "the location of the desire's object within the agent's values or ends. . .A desire's place, then, is its place in an organism's good" (Richardson 2004).

Instead of talking about the agent's ends or values so to discover the place of one or another desire, we could likewise talk about loves. They do not only justify that we should have desires, but that we should also identify ourselves with some of them and not with others (Frankfurt 1988, 1999; Miller 2013). That identification allows us to distinguish desires from tics or obsessions (Quinn 1993) and that certain desires are effective in our lives due to our preferences, to our preoccupations and concerns, to our loves.

They are the ones that guarantee the satisfaction of appetitive desires and of volitional, ecstatic or dialectic desires. Our loves include the attitude held in favour of that satisfaction or fulfilment. That attitude supports this identification with particular desires.

28.3.2   *The Order of Loves and the Education of Desires*

It is precisely in the context of the particular ordination of loves of each one of us, that we identify ourselves with a desire and go about satisfying it or that we do not identify ourselves with it and prevent it from being achieved. This is in fact how our desires are educated, either appropriately or inappropriately.

Being in the first or the second case depends on whether that education is done by someone living according to the appropriate or inappropriate hierarchy of loves, or, at least, by someone who lives closer or further away from this hierarchy. How do we distinguish the appropriateness or inappropriateness of the hierarchy of loves according to which someone lives and according to which they educate their desires? The more or less fulfilled nature of people's lives reveals the appropriateness or inappropriateness of the hierarchy of loves that makes up their backbone.

Let's remember that experience of interpersonal love that takes place in normal conditions at the beginning of our lives and during the early years in our biography, which showed the predominance of love over desire in our lives. We'll repeat it again: that paradigmatic anthropological scenario displays the basic lines of the design of the good or fulfilled life[4] for people. Because, and let's ask the question rhetorically, how can we deny that we want to live that harmonious experience again with the various people we encounter with at each time in our lives, but now, clearly, at different levels, that is depending on the relationship we have with each one of them?

If we consider the scenario referred to, it can be argued that the fulfilled life that could be presumed of each person in that story, the one in a child's first years of life accompanied by their parents, is due to the mutual coordination of each other's desires.

In reality, in this episode and in any other with similar features, that connection of desires depends on the ordering of loves of each one of the individuals involved in the situation. The fact of the matter is that, although everyone loves, not everyone loves in the same way. Each person has their own particular hierarchy or ordering of loves.[5] So, staying in the context of interpersonal love, each one of us loves someone in the first place; in the second place, another one and so on.

In situations of conflict, a truth about our everyday lives comes through clearly, namely, that not all our interpersonal loving relationships are on the same level. It's a fact that we devote attention and care (love) to one person, to the detriment of the devotion to others, whom we nevertheless also love.

This is what happens with the woman in our example. She chooses to look after herself, rather than the person assaulted. Taking a look at her loves, it could be said that this time, her love for herself overcame love for the other person, specifically,

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[4]A good life or a fulfilled life is one in which it does accomplish that "meaning arises when subjective attraction meets objective attractiveness" (Wolf 1997).

[5]This label is more accurate than that of "hierarchy of preferences".

the person who suffered an attack in the street. The problem is that this choice didn't make her feel calm, instead it left her feeling anxious.

Shouldn't she has chosen to stop and help the person in need? That would have meant putting love for someone else before the love for herself *on that occasion*. Perhaps the devotion shown to her by her parents for so long would be in favour of this.

Contrary to that last suggestion, it could be objected that both that woman and that man had that daughter, because they wanted to satisfy a deeply rooted desire in human nature, that of being parents. In that case, could it be said that they had put their love for their daughter before their love for themselves?

In any case, wouldn't the care lavished on her for years, the quality of their not momentary attention to her and also the fact that, let's say, those parents opened up the doors for the birth and subsequent care of the siblings that followed her, be sufficient proof that they had gone beyond the deeply rooted desire to have offspring, presumably satisfied by the birth of their first child?

It does not seem inappropriate to continue with our example and add that the lives of such parents are better described as fulfilled rather than pleasant, since, in the midst of ups and downs, they are full of a strong meaning: that of making a life together, a family, in which they were able to continue and celebrate the gift—of life—received from their parents, the much-loved grandparents.

In this case, our hypothesis is backed up like this: the transmission and thoughtful care of the gift of life (the redundancy of the gift) depending on the type of relationship with the person concerned at that time, provides meaning to human existence and therefore to the master plan according to which anyone's loves are ordered.

In terms of this ordering, it has been argued that people with whom we are linked to "naturally",[6] deserve to be loved more. But perhaps there is an added indication in respect of the ordering in question in the (already highlighted) first amorous inter-personal relationship that we human beings experience in normal conditions.

In that experience, isn't it true that the man and woman, the father and the mother, are not dedicated to themselves or to the other spouse but to the newborn and not only when it comes into the world but also in the early years of its development? Looking at it in this way, it seems to follow that the weakest and poorest is the one who deserves our love the most.

Of course, the most needy one might, in fact, be me! There is a sense that, in general and without any further explanation, love for oneself should take priority over love for someone else.[7] We must admit that each one of us is a contingent and needy creature, vulnerable, and not self-sufficient, which constructs its personal

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[6]On the (relative) stability of relationships between blood relatives (*Summa Theologica* II-II, q.26, a.8). Also the article on whether those closest to us should benefit more (*Summa Theologica* II-II, q.31, a.3). See also (Pope 1994).

[7]"There is what we read in Lev 19, 18 and Mt. 22, 39: *Love thy neighbour as thyself.* This seems to imply that man's love for himself is like the model of the love he should have for another. However, the model is always superior to the copy. In consequence, for charity, man should love himself more

identity based on a context of amorous interpersonal relationships. "The virtue of love. . .is specific to creatures that fear separateness. And we fear separateness because we have some sense, at a deep affective level, of what separateness would amount to. From the earliest infancy. . .we fear being separated off. This is perhaps why love is so basic to us. It responds to a need that precedes socialization. . .The fear of separateness. . .is that of dissolution. That is the object of the anxiety that pushes us to seek "communion" with others" (Tabensky 2014).

Without overlooking the relevance of love for oneself, it is true that in our example, given that someone else's life or health was hanging in the balance, the woman should have stopped to give help to the person who had just suffered the terrible incident. In that situation,[8] love for the other person deserved to take preference over love for oneself, since that person's life was seriously compromised.

28.3.3   The Adequate Order of Loves and Prudence

The second part of our hypothesis argues that the context of the appropriate hierarchy of loves, on which people depend in order to flourish, is the framework that should guide the education of our desires. In fact, love properly understood and experienced is the donation of life for the person who loves and the reception of life for the person they love, all depending on the place that corresponds to the respective interpersonal relationships of those involved.

The love that corresponds to each of these relationships will occupy a place in the appropriate hierarchy of love. Of course, our appeal to adequate or appropriate love as the solution to the conflict in our lives includes the architecture of virtues.

And that means: the intervention of *prudence* (*phrónesis*) or right reason.[9] This virtue directs the way people act (*Summa Theologica* I-II, q.56, aa.2–3) and helps them to discover which loving interpersonal relationship should take precedence at a particular time of a conflict of loves.[10]

Aristotle (2009) and Aquinas (1981) warned that there is no universal deductive knowledge relating to particular actions. Getting it right in a particular situation in

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than his neighbour" (*Summa Theologica* II-II, q.26, a.4). On the importance of living oneself, see the chapter entitled "The Dear Self", in Frankfurt (2004).

[8]"If charity is extended to all, beneficence should also be extended to all, always taking into account circumstances of place and time, given that all virtuous acts should be within the limits demanded by circumstances", (*Summa Theologica* II-II, q.31, a.2.) Beneficence is the act of charity, as this question is noted in article 1 of that question 31 (*Summa Theologica* II-II). See also Porter (1989).

[9]Prudence is practical wisdom (*phrónesis*), which requires, amongst other things, time: "the patterns of our practical reasoning on particular occasions are the outcome of a lifelong history of conversations with ourselves and others, devoted to resolving conflicts of desire and to arriving at judgements about what we have reason to desire" (MacIntyre 2008).

[10]Although it should not be forgotten that "love moves the act of prudence" (*Summa Theologica* II-II, q. 47, a.1, ad 1). For the "charity-prudence" relationship (Westberg 1994).

relation to the appropriate action to perform, depends on prudence. This virtue is made up of advice, prudential judgement and the command (*imperium*) relating to acting in a particular way.

Of course, the necessary condition for the exercise of prudence is the rightness of the desire or appetite. That rightness or integrity is guaranteed by the moral virtues, without which there is no prudential exercise (*Summa Theologica* I-II, q.58, a.4; I-II, q.57, a.4).[11] The tendency to do good and avoid evil (*synderesis*, first principle of practical reason) is updated in human action as moral virtues grow. This mutual overlap of prudence and moral virtues (temperance, courage and justice) is reflected in the thesis of the unity of virtues: 'if you have any virtue, you will have some sensitivity for considerations relevant to others-you will have. . .all the virtues "to some degree"' (Watson 1984).[12]

If when we resort to prudence, we move within love, when we pay attention to moral virtues, we do not disconnect ourselves from affectivity. Moral virtues fulfil the integrity or rightness of affectivity. One of the stages in the experience of interpersonal love is the modification of the affectivity of the lover and the loved one.

An appropriately arranged affectivity means, on the one hand, that desires or appetites are directed towards (virtuous) goals or ends. On the other hand, it supposes to have emotions that are appropriate to the situation being experienced. For example, those corresponding to the loving interpersonal relationship chosen on each occasion as the one that deserves the preferential attention of the agent or the lover, due to the place it occupies in the adequate or appropriate hierarchy of loves. This (appropriate) way of having emotions and feelings has been recognised as the result of a *transformation or change of heart* (Burnyeat 1980; Helm 1996; Stark 2004).

Contrary to moral intellectualism, Aristotle accepted that, to act well, it is not enough to know the truth about the good of man (moral truth) in a certain situation. A properly developed affectivity is needed, or at least one that has a certain moral stature.

A fundamental question is that of who judges when someone has achieved an appropriate moral stature. The answer is: the prudent human being, the fulfilled life—up to the present—of the prudent human being, the appeal to which breaks the supposed vicious circle of this reasoning.

This prudent human being is the one who lives according to the appropriate ordering of loves. He or she is the one whom Augustine (1887) spoke about as "the one who estimates things without prejudice (*rerum integer aestimator*). . .so that he neither loves what he ought not to love, nor fails to love what he ought to love, nor loves that more which ought to be loved less, nor loves that equally which ought to

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[11]And without prudence there are no moral virtues, because "prudence is of good counsel about matters regarding man's entire life, and the end of human life" (*Summa Theologica* I-II, q.57, a.4, ad 3).

[12]This is a weak version of the thesis of the unity of virtues. For a strong version see McDowell (1979).

be loved either less or more, nor loves that less or more which ought to be loved equally" (*On Christian Doctrine* I, 27, 28).

To repeat: appealing to someone else beyond the person whose moral stature is being discerned is appealing to the prudent human being or to the one who estimates things without prejudice. This brings to the fore once again the context of our argument, namely, interpersonality, which is present in the already mentioned scenario of the first loving experience that we human beings usually have.

But there is something more. It is not only that the adequate measure of affective maturity is supplied by the prudent human being, as his or her judgement includes the affective balance (integrity of desire, together with appropriate emotions and feelings) that is characteristic of someone with moral virtues. It is that his or her help is necessary for acquiring prudence and the other virtues.[13]

The integrity of reason that directs the actions of man is not something that he can achieve by himself. "No one is altogether self-sufficient in matters of prudence". This means that this virtue presupposes *docility*, the disposition that enables one to receive instruction from others appropriately.[14] The instruction should come not from just anybody, but from the prudent human being, from the moral hero.

Allowing oneself to be taught or instructed with docility by the prudent human being is to allow oneself to be loved by him or her and to love him or her back, inasmuch as the "master–disciple" relationship can be described as a particular type of love.[15] As love produces the *assimilation* of those who love each other, if the parents or guardians are incarnations of prudence, the "master-disciple" relationship can be a decisive help in the latter's virtuous development.

Acting within the parameters of virtue we have just described is equivalent to loving preferentially on each occasion the person who deserves that priority devotion compared to others and even compared to ourselves. In the example of the businesswoman, love for the other person should have gone to the fore, prompted by the virtue of mercy (*misericordia*), "of all the virtues that make reference to one's neighbour /it is/ the most excellent" (*Summa Theologica* II-II, q.30, a.4).

Mercy makes us feel pity for someone else's suffering that we now experience as our own, so we try to remedy it as if it were our own. Someone who practises mercy considerably broadens the circle of their interpersonal relationships. And, to the extent that mercy is linked to love, it can be considered that the desires of the one who acts moved by mercy, have been adequately or appropriately educated in the context of the adequate or appropriate hierarchy of loves.

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[13]Without prudence there are no moral virtues, that is, for a habit to be virtuous, there must be something more than the external adherence of behaviour to the rule of *recta ratio*. The presence of a judgement carried out cum *recta ratione* must be present in the one who acts (*Summa Theologica* I-II, q.58, a.5).

[14](*Summa Theologica* II-II, q.49, a.3) The words placed in inverted commas before are the reply to the third objection, contained in this article and in this question. See Hoffmann (2006).

[15]A variant of the love between parents and children.

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Chapter 29
"Rectification of Appetite" as Education of Desire Within "Moral" Virtue

Michael Pakaluk

Abstract So-called "moral" as opposed to "intellectual" virtue, in the tradition represented by Aquinas and potentially Aristotle, is not simply a disposition to do actions characteristic of the virtue, but a trait making someone reliably such as to act in that way. Such a trait requires education and shaping of desire, which in the tradition was called "rectification of appetite." Such a trait cannot be imparted by instruction alone. The distinction of moral from intellectual virtue in Aquinas is discussed; moderation in eating is proposed as a concrete, available, and non-controversial example; and evidence of a similar viewpoint in Aristotle is considered.

Keywords Education of desire · Moral virtue · Doctrine of the mean · Prudence · Moderation

29.1   Introduction

In this chapter I wish to explore in a practical way a distinction drawn by St. Thomas Aquinas, with reference to some rudimentary observations about our experience, and then raise at the end the question of to what extent a similar distinction is present in Aristotle's Ethics and therefore, implicitly, in the main tradition of virtue ethics.

The distinction is between the intellectual and moral virtues—not simply that there are some virtues which are virtues of the intellect and which make reasoning itself better, such as art and science, whereas there are others which are virtues of character and which make feeling and action better, such as courage and moderation. This distinction is generally granted and is undeniably present in Aristotle. But, rather, that these two types of virtue differ in the way in which they serve to contribute to someone's being counted as good. Moral virtues alone, according to

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Aquinas, "rectify appetite" (Aquinas 1911–1925, I-II, q. 58, a. 3, *corpus*). How they are thought to do so is therefore highly relevant to the question of educating desire.

A simple way of putting the distinction is that an intellectual virtue does not serve to make someone *good*, but only *good at* something. For example, the art or skill which is medicine serves to make someone a good physician, not a good human being. Despicable human beings may, for all that, be tremendous physicians, as some of the Nazi doctors were. Moreover, an intellectual virtue merely makes someone *apt* to act well, but not such as that that person will reliably act well. Of course, we recognize that someone who merely has acquired a skill has not thereby become someone who will invariably or reliably use that skill well. That is why "codes of ethics" are so often joined to technical training. And, again, the Nazi doctors used medical skill to do great harm. On the other hand, a moral virtue is meant to bring along with it its reliable good use. A courageous person, we think, is not simply someone who knows what it would be to act courageously in certain circumstances, but rather someone who can be relied upon to act courageously in those circumstances. A just person is not simply someone who *can* act justly, but rather someone who with a certain characteristic inflexibility *will* act justly. Persons who truly are virtuous in these respects, it is thought, will sometimes even die rather than act otherwise, and they will be praised for that, and we may even rely upon them with our own lives. Being prepared to die for something looks like an extreme of motivation or desire.

The distinction is important for many reasons but most obviously for instruction in ethics. If what can be imparted in class instruction is only an intellectual virtue; and intellectual virtues make someone only good at something (for instance, good at defining different types of ethical theories and finding objections to each), then either instruction in ethics needs to be changed rather markedly, or such instruction cannot answer to what is typically wanted when ethics courses are insisted upon in the first place. If they end up having no more significance for character, as theoretical studies, than any other courses, then perhaps those that require greater self-discipline would always be superior, say, Euclidean Geometry instead of Types of Ethical Theory (Broad 1930).

That the distinction we are looking for is not even recognized in treatments of "virtue ethics," is shown in common formulations of virtue, along the lines of, "a virtue is a trait which enables someone to carry out his distinctive function well." Here, "enables" would be too weak as regards moral virtues. For such virtues, one wants instead a definition along the lines of "makes someone such as reliably to carry out his distinctive function well." Indeed, the now common view, that *aretē* in Greek is better rendered into English as "excellence" rather than "virtue," seems insensitive to the distinction we are looking for. It cannot be that *both* becoming disposed to act well, and becoming such as reliably to act well, are excellences: it seems that, if the latter is, then the former is not.

Moreover, putting aside the comparative sense of the term "excellence"—whereby, literally, excellence is a quality in which one is superior to the rest (as we must put it aside, since nothing keeps an *aretē* from being widely possessed)—the term seems to connote a quality rather than something like a reliable

motive, and thus it seems ill-suited to what we are saying was regarded as the distinctive character of moral virtue. In contrast, in Latin, *virtus* was often taken to be connected with Latin, *vis*, *viris*—that is, it was taken to refer to a good moving power in someone, a kind of well-directed impetus.[1] Yet even the word's connection with *vir*, *viri*, according to the better etymology, has a similar upshot. Manliness is a certain kind of forcefulness and assertiveness, as is courage in battle.

Another way of putting the distinction is as to the possibility of deliberately going wrong. Someone with a skill may deliberately act in a way or bring about a result of the sort that one sees in someone who lacks the skill, without its counting against his having the skill. Indeed, to do so deliberately can itself be an expression of great skill. Sometimes adept exercise of a skill means acting in ways highly uncharacteristic of that skill, such as a "bad" strike of the ball in a sport, intended precisely to have a good competitive effect. But someone with a moral virtue simply will not deliberately act in the manner of a correspondingly vicious person, and, if somehow he did do so, it would be counted as a collapse, capitulation, or failure, not as an additional confirmation of the virtue, and certainly not as a supreme expression of his virtue.

29.2 How Aquinas Draws the Distinction?

As a preliminary, it helps to set out the basic ways in which Aquinas draws the distinction we are looking for. There are perhaps a dozen passages where the distinction is drawn, but they, I think, can be reduced to four headings.

First, the distinction arises in connection with what one might call an ideal of human goodness as being of someone without any internal flaw. One can, of course, concede that a good person may be crushed by bad fortune, paralyzed by terrible necessities, or even as it were neutralized by some kind of extreme external stress— even a courageous person, one admits, can be panicked without blame by fearful things beyond ordinary human experience (Aristotle 1894, book III, Chap. 7). These are cases in which there is no reasonable expectation that a human being can or will act otherwise. In all such cases, the appearance of a deficiency gets attributed to human nature itself, not any shortcoming in an individual. So, he himself cannot be blamed. Nothing attributable to the nature of a thing counts as a flaw in that kind of thing. It is not a flaw in any orange that it can easily be crushed, unlike an apple. But someone's failure to act as one might reasonably expect of him would be a flaw and seems incompatible with the ideal of human goodness and virtue.

This first way of drawing the distinction comes out in the definition of virtue which Aquinas takes from the tradition and endorses, when he introduces virtue in

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[1]Consider, for example Aquinas, "virtue is so called from its being a principle of action, for it is the perfection of a power" (*dicitur ex eo quod est principium alicuius actus, cum sit perfectio potentiae*) (Aquinas 1911–1925, I-II, q. 66, a. 3, *corpus*).

general in the *Summa Theologiae*: "Virtue is a good quality of the mind, by which we live righteously, of which no one can make bad use, which God works in us, without us" (Aquinas 1911–1925, I-II, q. 55, a. 4). The relevant clause here is "of which no one can make bad use" (Latin: *qua nullus male utitur*). In justification of the clause Aquinas says that a virtue is an "operative habit" (*habitus operativus*) which, as its realization is an action, must as a virtue, a good habit, always be realized in a good action (*virtus autem est habitus semper se habens ad bonum*). An operative habit which always is realized in something bad is a vice. Such a habit which sometimes was realized in good and sometimes in bad would be neither a virtue nor a vice.

One might wonder why it is not enough, to count as a virtue, that an operative habit is realized in good most of the time, or that it tends to be so realized. Presumably, Aquinas would say that such a habit would be a weak virtue, or an imperfectly formed virtue, but that the definition of virtue must speak to the best and full instance of that kind of thing, since a virtue is something perfective of our nature. In any case, such a trait would not be one which was used badly, but rather which failed in its realization. He considers the objection, "whoever is proud of a thing, makes bad use of it. But many are proud of virtue, for Augustine says in his Rule, that 'pride lies in wait for good works in order to slay them. 'It is untrue, therefore, 'that no one can make bad use of virtue.'" To which he replies: "One can make bad use of a virtue as though as an object of action, for instance by having evil thoughts about a virtue, e.g., by hating it, or by being proud of it: but one cannot make bad use of virtue as a principle of action, so that an act of virtue be evil" (ibid, ad 5). If one wants to find some basic reason for this rejoinder, it would seem to be a principle of causality: a virtue is something without qualification good in us, and so what comes from a virtue, as such, cannot be other than good. Such a principle seems implicit in the formula which Aquinas takes from Aristotle (Aristotle 1894, book II, Chap. 4) and repeats frequently in his treatment of the virtues: a virtue makes the person who has it good and renders his work good.[2]

The flaw in intellectual virtue, its lack of perfection, is conceived in two ways by Aquinas. On the one hand, he thinks of it as akin to the relation between potential and realization. An intellectual virtue confirms a capability for some great good but does not insure its consistent realization: "Since, then, the habits of the speculative intellect do not perfect the appetitive part, nor affect it in any way, but only the intellective part, they may indeed be called virtues in so far as they confer aptness for a good work, viz. the consideration of truth (since this is the good work of the intellect): yet they are not called virtues in the second way, as though they conferred the right use of a power or habit. For if a man possesses a habit of speculative science, it does not follow that he is inclined to make use of it, but he is made able to

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[2]*Virtus est quae bonum facit habentem et opus eius bonum reddit*, see, for example Aquinas (1911–1925, II-II, q. 47, a. 4 *corpus*).

consider the truth in those matters of which he has scientific knowledge" (Aquinas 1911–1925, I-II, q. 57, a. 1, *corpus*.).[3] In the passage, the words for capability and aptness (*facultas*, *potens*) bear the burden. On the other hand, that an intellectual virtue confers only a capability means that it needs to be supplemented to insure a good result. On its own, it is not enough. And yet, curiously, if supplemented appropriately, the result can be even better than a moral virtue, as the passage just cited continues: "that he make use of the knowledge which he has, is due to the motion of his will. Consequently a virtue which perfects the will, as charity or justice, confers the right use of these speculative habits. And in this way too there can be merit in the acts of these habits, if they be done out of charity: thus Gregory says that the 'contemplative life has greater merit than the active life.'"[4]

We see here too the glimmer of a distinctive resolution of the issue about an inclusive versus exclusive or dominant end conception of a happy life, which perplexes scholars of Aristotle's ethics. How can an "immoral" virtue such as *sophia* be properly constitutive of a good human life, or, if it was, why should Aristotle first devote so much space to discussing other virtues? The answer, on Aquinas' view anyway, is that those other virtues, or one of them, justice, must be in place to insure the good use of *sophia*, but that, when it plays this role, then the activity of *sophia* is better and more choice worthy than that of any moral virtue on its own, or any combination of moral virtues.

Second, Aquinas draws the distinction based on a correction to the account of human nature which he thinks gives plausibility to the view that all virtue is an intellectual virtue: clearly, on this view, no important distinction can be drawn between intellectual and moral virtue. He likes to use Aristotle's language from the *Politics*, that the relationship between the soul and the body is like that of a dictator over subject, or master over slaves. Assuming that the body is healthy, that we are dealing with a minimally mature human being, and that we are not concerned with refined or technical bodily movements, then the soul need only command some natural movement of the head or limbs of the body, and the command is carried out. If this relationship represented the complete reality of action for a human being, as it does according to Platonic dualism, then the most plausible candidate for a virtue, that is, a quality of the soul which guaranteed a good outcome, would be practical knowledge (*technē*) of the sort by which a craftsman operates a tool. We know that Plato was never really happy with this answer. He repeatedly raises in his dialogues

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[3]*Cum igitur habitus intellectuales speculativi non perficiant partem appetitivam, nec aliquo modo ipsam respiciant, sed solam intellectivam; possunt quidem dici virtutes inquantum faciunt facultatem bonae operationis, quae est consideratio veri (hoc enim est bonum opus intellectus), non tamen dicuntur virtutes secundo modo, quasi facientes bene uti potentia seu habitu. Ex hoc enim quod aliquis habet habitum scientiae speculativae, non inclinatur ad utendum, sed fit potens speculari verum in his quorum habet scientiam.*

[4]*... sed quod utatur scientia habita, hoc est movente voluntate. Et ideo virtus quae perficit voluntatem, ut caritas vel iustitia, facit etiam bene uti huiusmodi speculativis habitibus. Et secundum hoc etiam, in actibus horum habituum potest esse meritum, si ex caritate fiant, sicut Gregorius dicit, in VI Moral., quod contemplativa est maioris meriti quam activa.*

the concern, What kind of teaching guarantees that the learner becomes virtuous (Plato 1987)? How is it possible that knowledge be overmastered—that is, not be put to good use (Plato 1992a)? If ordinary crafts can be abused, then perhaps it is a master craft, and yet why should even a master craft not suffer from the same liability (Plato 1992b)? Perhaps, then, if virtue is traced up to unchanging objects, it too will have the requisite irrefragability: hence the hope that Forms provide some ultimate way out (ibid).

However, in Aristotle's language, which, again, St. Thomas freely uses, the soul is not uniformly intellectual, but it has parts which are not of themselves rational but can somehow share in reason, and, on this view, the intellect relates to these other parts not as a dictator but as the chief authority in a constitutional regime. St. Thomas puts it thus: "the appetitive faculty obeys the reason, not blindly, but with a certain power of opposition; wherefore the Philosopher says that 'reason commands the appetitive faculty by a politic power' (Aristotle 1920, book I, Chap. 3,) whereby a man rules over subjects that are free, having a certain right of opposition. Hence Augustine says on Ps. 118 that 'sometimes we understand [what is right] while desire is slow, or follows not at all,' in so far as the habits or passions of the appetitive faculty cause the use of reason to be impeded in some particular action." Thus, if these other parts could be rendered such as to be quickly and completely responsive to reason, then that which they had such that they had become so would be a virtue too—call them "moral" virtues, from the Latin word *mos,* meaning an inclination which may be affected by custom (see Lewis and Short 1879). As intellect is related to these other parts, so is intellectual virtue related to the moral virtues.

Third, sometimes Aquinas draws the distinction with reference to the act of choice. In order to act well, it is necessary consistently, in particular facts and circumstances, to choose something of one sort over something else of another sort. But choice involves (some kind of) appetite, and consistently to choose the one sort plainly implies *preferring* or *wanting* that sort, but this is something which intellectual virtue is incapable of effecting and ensuring. An example of consistently preferring one sort of thing to another would be, for instance, an athlete who always preferred that the contest follow the rules than that he himself win: these are two sorts of goods, in the sense that the former is objective and impartial, but the latter is interested. Or suppose someone sets out a daily exercise routine and always chooses to complete it fully, no matter the ups and downs of his life, or the state of his body, that is, no matter what pleasures and conveniences, or pains and inconveniences, were implied by his following the program: his conformity to the program seems one sort of thing, and his feeling pleasures or pains seems like something else. Presumably, an intellectual virtue could pick out or serve to pick out the sorts of goods that were in play—certainly in the practice of a craft or skill, one sometimes attributes the identification of the sorts of things that are in play to the skill. Perhaps too it could arrive consistently at the judgment that the one sort of thing *was to be* preferred. But that it be chosen withal seems beyond the scope of intellectual virtue. "Every act of virtue can be done from choice: but no virtue makes us choose aright, save that which is in the appetitive part of the soul: for it has been stated above that choice is

an act of the appetitive faculty (I-II, 13, 1). Wherefore a habit of choosing, i.e. a habit which is the principle whereby we choose, is that habit alone which perfects the appetitive faculty: although the acts of other habits also may be a matter of choice," (Aquinas 1911–1925, I-II, q. 58, a. 1, ad 2). Presumably, the last sentence in the quotation is offered in view of facts such as, for example, if someone has the virtue of wisdom, he has to choose what fundamental realities he is going to contemplate, and he has to choose to affirm true over false propositions about those realities. But the virtue is only incidentally a matter of choosing one sort of thing over another: it is not as if doing geometry were a matter of consistently picking out the true from the false in pairs consisting of a statement and its negation. Moreover, frequently in doing demonstrations the next step is chosen although not preferred over some competitor alternative: it is not as though every step of *modus ponens* is taken in view of some fallacy which one rejects.

Fourth, in one passage Aquinas distinguishes intellectual from moral virtue by the character of the object:

> Virtue is that which makes its possessor good, and his work good likewise." Now good may be understood in a twofold sense: first, materially (*materialiter*), for the thing that is good (*pro eo quod est bonum*), secondly, formally (*formaliter*), under the aspect of good (*secundum rationem boni*). Good, under the aspect of good, is the object of the appetitive power. Hence if any habits rectify the consideration of reason, without regarding the rectitude of the appetite, they have less of the nature of a virtue since they direct man to good materially, that is to say, to the thing which is good, but without considering it under the aspect of good. On the other hand those virtues which regard the rectitude of the appetite, have more of the nature of virtue, because they consider the good not only materially, but also formally, in other words, they consider that which is good under the aspect of good. (Aquinas 1911–1925, II-II, q. 47, a. 4)

Here one wants to know why *materialiter* and *formaliter* are appropriate for the distinction, and what work *pro eo quod* and *secundum rationem boni* (or, later, *sub ratione boni*) are playing. The reasoning seems to be this. A good is a goal; it has the nature of an end. So, for an agent to seek something as good, he properly must tend toward it somehow. It cannot simply be something which he understands to be good. In the latter case, for him, it merely "happens" to be good (that is why the term *materialiter* is appropriate), but in the former case he treats it as good, because while affirming it as good, he seeks it. Formally, what you tend toward is what you regard as good for you; materially, what you recognize as good, prescinding from whether you tend towards it or not, you regard as for you. One might, for instance, see a dieting person spoon out 1000 calories of dinner for himself while he is saying, "as it so happens, on my diet I'm not supposed to have more than 800 calories here." In sum, as there is a distinction between affirming that something is one's good, and seeking that as one's good, so there are traits that can be assigned to each: prudence in the case of the former; and prudence together with some moral virtue in the case of the latter.

So, we see that the distinction between moral and intellectual virtue depends upon very broad philosophical ideas involving one's understanding of what virtue is supposed to be; a distinctive philosophical anthropology; the role that choice plays

in virtuous action; and the difference between an objective and subjective point of view in treating something as good.

29.3   Moderation as an Example

In this section, I want to fix ideas by offering some observations about the virtue of moderation (Greek, *sōphrosunē*, Latin, *temperantia*), with respect to pleasures mainly of touch in connection with eating, not sex. The observations both look backward, and help fill out how a moral virtue might be though to rectify appetite and render choice reliable, and look forward, to prepare for the discussion of *synderesis* and natural virtue which follows. I choose pleasures and pains associated with eating because they are not very controversial, they are typically not very important, and all of us have experience with them, in contexts that we do not mind talking about and sharing with others. Given that I have chosen this example for these reasons, I ask that the pedestrian character of the example be excused. Its importance to us is as a very clear example in our experience of the education of desire, related to what is regarded as a moral virtue and traditionally even a "cardinal" virtue.

Here is an example. Suppose that a man dieting sets the goal that he wants his body to weigh less than 190 pounds, whereas currently he weighs 220 lbs. Rather, to state the goal properly: it is that he wants his habits to change such that he becomes the sort of person who habitually stays under 190 lbs. The change in character is most important. If he became that sort of person right away, by a sudden transformation, then it would only be a matter of time before he weighed less than 190 lbs.; on the other hand, if he suddenly became 190 lbs., but changed nothing about him, he would soon be 220 lbs. again. The outcome that the body change in weight is secondary. It is as if someone undertook training with the goal of becoming the sort of person who would stand firm in the upcoming battle and not run away. That is the same as aiming to become the sort of person who stands firm in all future battles, and even if no battles were ever fought.

We may sense especially in the case of standing firm in battle that we need to add a qualifier: he wants to become the sort of person who *of his own accord* stands firm and does not run away. He might, after all, become the sort of person who hires someone with a gun, to threaten to shoot him if he attempted to run away—and that would serve to keep him in line. Likewise, the dieter wants to become someone who of his own accord stays under 190 lbs., without, for example, needing to rely on being watched or using clever ways of having someone lock up the food. If one successfully reaches the goal, then self-management becomes unnecessary, or, if necessary, it need not be anything other than with a light touch. If someone with the virtue of moderation is the sort of person who of his or her own accord eats and drinks what is reasonable for him or her, then if it is reasonable to diet—arguably it is never reasonable to be over a healthy weight, and uncontestably it is reasonable to maintain proper weight on account of some medical condition such as looming

diabetes—dieting becomes some sort of particular manifestation of the virtue of moderation, or proof of its lack and an occasion to begin to acquire it to some extent.

All dieting requires at the start that one draw a distinction between a rational plan and its application, and the dieter, whose appetites are at first greatly at odds with this plan, precisely because the dieter is not yet the sort of person who of her own accord remains at or below the target weight. The adoption of the plan may take the form of and be marked by a personal resolution, some agreement among a group of friends, or the retaining of a personal trainer. One wants to say that the genuineness of the adoption of the plan depends upon the dieter's proven past facility in actually tailoring what he eats to reasonable considerations, and the clarity of his conviction that the plan represents what is reasonable to eat in the immediate future. That is to say, there is some correlation between the dieter's having the virtue of moderation and the genuineness of the adoption of the plan. Both Aquinas and Aristotle take a moral virtue to set an end for action; here the virtue plays the role of setting the end of *eating whatever is reasonable*, and, if the plan is seen to be reasonable, then adopting the plan in the manner of an end. The goals of reaching the target weight, becoming the sort of person who of his own accord maintains the target weight, and following the plan for as long as is necessary for these purposes, can and should be conceived of as a single goal.

Then there is the application of the plan to facts and circumstances, such as, "it's breakfast on Thursday and therefore one has a protein shake and nothing else." The application of the plan requires on the part of the dieter repeated choices against inclination. The plan says eat a protein shake; you are used to eggs and bacon. The contrary inclinations will be attributable to oneself and past habits; those around you who may prepare eggs and bacon in front of you and ask if you want some; and incidental circumstances such as that donuts are put out at work because it is someone's birthday. The choice will be regarded as between two sorts of things which differ in kind: following the plan and therefore attaining one's goal insofar as it is available in the here-and-now, and simply enjoying some pleasure of eating or being done with some felt pain of abstention.

The successful application of the plan to varied facts and circumstances, and unforeseen changes, will require a certain flexibility, cleverness, and self-knowledge, together with an understanding of the principles underlying the plan—and these together count as the role than an analogue of practical wisdom (Greek, *phronēsis*, Latin, *prudentia*) plays in the circumstances. Practical wisdom does not set the end—that has already been taken care of by the adoption of the plan—but it works out what counts as following the plan in the facts and circumstances, and how despite obstacles one best succeeds in following the plan nonetheless. Aquinas and Aristotle refer to such decisions as matters which "contribute to or serve for the attainment of the end" (Greek, *pros to telos*, Latin, *ad finem*).[5]

One needs to distinguish flexibility built into the plan, from breaking the plan, from a forgivable breaking of the plan (implying nothing beyond itself), from an

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[5]These are not correctly construed as instrumental means productive of the end.

overriding of the plan by more important considerations. The first in a diet would be for instance allowing a certain number of unbudgeted calories, to be applied at someone's discretion: so the dieter gets to eat her favorite pastry, but it is under a rule. The second would be for instance someone just "gives in" and eats her favorite pastry, realizing that she is casting off the plan, but probably giving herself rationalizations—"just once will not make a difference," "I'll compensate later," "I was very good earlier today," "how often does my favorite pastry turn up?", "I wouldn't want to look boorish," and so on. That she gives a rationalization shows that she does not want to give up the goal and the plan but also does not want to make the choice which the goal and plan require.[6] At some point, some act which amounts to repentance and some kind of self-punishment will be practically necessary to signal an intent to return to a faithful following of the plan. The third would be when one gives in and understands oneself to be giving in but one cannot from a third-person point of view be fairly construed as choosing to break the plan, because the external incentives were too strong and too unusual, say, you have just returned home after many months, and your mom is taking your favorite pastry out of the oven which she baked just for you. Such a case may sometimes seem to elide into the fourth, which is when a more important goal supervenes, say, as in the last instance, you regard showing gratitude for your mom's thoughtfulness on this special occasion, and not hurting her feelings, as more important than keeping to your diet. We distinguish these cases as showing the significant work that remains for practical wisdom to do, in deciding what counts *ad finem*, even after the adoption of an apparently comprehensive plan.

Practical wisdom determines the "mean" in part by correcting for biases. What Aristotle calls each extreme's pushing the mean over to the opposite extreme (Aristotle 1894, book II, Chap. 8) is seen very clearly in dieting, in the phenomenon, usually seen near the end of the day, of "you owe it to yourself" to have more, or "you earned it," or "you have room in your diet for this"—all of which are generally made plausible by unclarity, perhaps deliberate unclarity, about calories or budgets. The unclarity gives scope for systematic distortion—consistently underestimating how many calories one has taken or overestimating those lost through exercise—or momentary distortions, such as surprise at how many calories this food actually has, or not enjoying eating until one begins to get close to or to exceed the budgeted calories. Given such distortions, choosing in the particular facts and circumstances what the plan dictates, against hunger and longing, and contrary to distorted perception, looks mean-spirited and constricted, as if one is rejecting life itself or its enjoyment. One takes oneself to be that insensible person who Aristotle says hardly exists (Aristotle 1894, book II, Chap. 7).

But how exactly do one's character and desire change through dieting? Character changes perhaps primarily through developing habits of making good choices involving behaviors, such as: you plan meals with more greens, fiber, and protein; you go first to certain areas of the supermarket; you do not eat meals on the run; you

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[6] *L'hypocrisie est un hommage que le vice rend à la vertu* (La Rouchefoucauld 1664, 218).

avoid prepared foods; you exercise at fixed times. If friends do the same along with you, so much the better. Do we have "despotic" control over these actions? Yes, in the sense that if we choose them, we immediately carry them out. But the development of the habit seems to need inclination. With the development of the habit comes a pleasantness in doing those things, from familiarity and from a certain self-pride, in living in a way that we understand as best, and that we have attained through a kind of conquest or mastery, which may have been difficult. These inclinations and feelings make it so that, for example, we are "drawn" to certain areas of the supermarket now, or are saddened if by necessity we miss exercise or must eat fast food.

Desire changes first by its getting calmed down in intensity, and in a sense becoming chastened, as it seems to recognize that it does not have free reign but needs to be under a plan, even if in the sense that the plan gives it some limited scope of free action. Desire seems to become calmed down from often being checked, when one chooses execution of the plan against inclination: it becomes less vehement and increasingly easier to choose against. This seems to be simply how we are constituted; the speed or ease of its taking place presumably varies with temperament. As for the chastening of desire, this is most evident in the change in the thought which accompanies it, from "I'll eat what I feel like," which is the same as "I'll eat what and how much and for as long as I take pleasure in it," to recognizing, that is, feeling and sensing, that such outlooks simply spell disaster for maintaining a goal weight. They are simply incompatible with it. One does not merely *fail to embrace* such an attitude, then, but rather one views it as an *enemy*, as undermining what one has been struggling with difficulty to attain.

Besides calming down, and being chastened, desire also changes in its becoming informed, with perhaps the first two being preconditions of the third. When someone thinks, "I'll eat what and how much and for as long as I take pleasure in it," there is no objective articulation of what he desires. The desire perhaps strikes him as responding to an emptiness or depletion in him, which needs to be filled. But through dieting the desire itself gets articulated. Here is an example of a simple informing of desire: it is 10 am, and I have been traveling and not taken food, so I feel hunger. I interpret the desire as, and perhaps it even strikes me as, a desire for *breakfast*: "I really need to get breakfast before it gets too late and it would make more sense to wait for lunch." That is, already my desire "for food" throughout the day is a desire to take three meals, which in a traditional society means also a desire to sit down at certain times, use certain utensils, be with others, selecting from a small set of familiar options, of dishes prepared from a certain cuisine, and so on. (On this last point, my desire for breakfast is definitely not a desire to be served certain kinds of edible insects, which form rules out too.) Clearly, this rudimentary informing of desire is helpful for moderation, just as its lack leads obviously to obesity.[7] But then a desire gets informed with greater particularity, given the theory behind the plan

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[7]Consider the maxim: A good culture is one in which it is easy to be good. Cultures can assist or work against moderation in eating.

adapted, so that the desire even appears good or bad accordingly, depending on its object—a desire for potato chips (fat and grease) comes to "look" bad, while a desire for Greek yogurt (high protein, low in calories, and fat) comes to "look" good. Even that one have a desire at all can look good or bad—a desire to eat between meals when the last meal was wholesome "looks" bad. In short, an informed desire can and will be perceived and evaluated as good or bad.

It seems to be a presupposition of this conception of desires being calmed, chastened, and informed, that desire be located in a "faculty" to which a certain personality and agency can be attributed, rather than that we interpret individual desires as primary and independent (as, for example, on standard accounts of desire in the British empiricist tradition), or as imprecise ways of referring to discrete behaviors shaped by reinforcement (as on standard behavioristic accounts). A faculty is thought to have a natural function or purpose, and to be equipped sufficiently by nature for carrying out this function, indeed, if formed and cultivated through an appropriate process. If, to simplify, the function of the desire for food is to promote health in accordance with rational considerations of health, then it must be the case that the faculty to which desires for food are attributed is somehow capable of responding to reasoning, in the ways mentioned, and "sharing in it," especially in its being informed, such that it becomes supportive of the necessary habits and way of life. That is what it is to be a faculty anyway.

29.4   The Role of *Synderesis*

This example of dieting was meant to put in place some crucial ideas of the moral psychology of Aquinas and Aristotle which apply in particular to moral virtues: that a virtue sets a goal insofar as it expresses a commitment to abide by the relevant reasonable standard, which, in particular facts and circumstances, it chooses over competing inclination; but some power of practical intelligence is necessary to see what the reasonable standard is in the short term, how it should be applied in facts and circumstances (identifying the so-called "mean," which inclination can then overshoot or undershoot), and what tactics of self-management are useful when there is a gap between what the plan dictates and inclination.

The example also shows what it means that moral virtue "rectifies" appetite: it does so by calming, chastening, and informing appetite, as discussed. Moreover, it shows how moral virtue can be the sort of thing which has the stability one looks for in a virtue, because the strengthening of the virtue means mainly greater success in choosing to follow the plan in facts and circumstances, over inclination, when they diverge, and this capacity belongs to what Aquinas calls the will (Latin, *voluntas*), which looks like the sort of power within us which, if anything is, is capable of a certain inflexibility of purpose. Finally, it shows why one could not speak of the misuse of a moral virtue, because what is correct by a reasonable standard just is what one wants, by the virtue. Indeed, one can imagine cases where, say, one is not prepared to give up strict adherence to a plan of dieting out of charitable kindness

(out of strictness to your diet, you turn down your mom's pastry and hurt her feelings), but these are not well described as abusing the power which is the virtue, or putting the good outcome of the virtue to some bad use, but rather as a disordered placement of the goal of that virtue.

There will be disputes over whether a faculty psychology which is functional and teleological ("the part in us or aspect of us which is meant to serve this other part or aspect") explains anything at all, and, if so, how. But let us put these aside. They are too large to engage in here. In this section, briefly, I want to look at a difficulty that arises in this account, on its own terms, which is this. We spoke about a virtue of moderation, as regards eating, as implying a commitment to follow a reasonable consideration against inclination if necessary. Where does this preference for reason, which seems a kind of rudimentary stage of the virtue, come from? How is it accounted for, again, on the terms of this model?

Aquinas has an answer to this question; Aristotle may have had one too, but if so, his remarks are muted, as if he did not think it so important as to stress. For Aquinas, his answer is found in his fascinating account of *synderesis*. Synderesis is sometimes discussed by scholars of natural law, who recognize that Aquinas posits a distinct faculty for grasping starting points or precepts (Latin, *principia, praecepta*) of practical reason, just as Aquinas followed Aristotle in accepting "intelligence" (Greek, *nous*, Latin, *intellectus*), as a natural virtue for grasping starting points of speculative reason. However, it is not often grasped that for Aquinas *synderesis* plays the role of grasping and setting down, not simply the natural law, but also principles of action, which serve to guide the development of the moral virtues. The natural law involves our relationships with others and therefore pertains to the moral virtue of justice solely. But there are principles or "laws" which *synderesis* also sets down for moderation and courage.

His doctrine of *synderesis*, in brief, is the following. It is a habit not power, by which, as was said, first principles of action are grasped. It is not properly called a power, because if it were a power, it would be a rational power, and a rational power inclines just as much to one opposite as to the other. But it inclines solely to the good (Aquinas 1911–1925, I, q. 79, a. 12, *sed contra*). It needs experience and memory solely to grasp the terms of the precepts it affirms, but, as soon as it does, it sees that the precept is true (Aquinas 1929a, *Super II Sent.,* d. 24 q. 2 a. 3 co). These fundamental precepts serve, each in its own way, as a stable basis for all practical reasoning, especially, in providing a uniform way of dealing with variations in facts and circumstances (Aquinas 1929a, *Super II Sent.,* d. 24 q. 2 a. 3 co). As a habit, it urges (*instigare*) or inclines (*inclinare*) toward good and grumbles (*murmurari*) against bad (Aquinas 1911–1925, I, q. 79, 12, *corpus*; Aquinas 1975, q. 16, a. 1, ad 12). Sometimes Aquinas seems disposed to say that it is confined *only* to this, which then provides the basic premise of all practical syllogisms.[8] Any more specified premise, on this view, would be the work of "higher" or "lower" reasoning

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[8] And yet even in such contexts he says that *synderesis* is the habit of grasping universal principles of law, using he plural, *ipsa universalia principia juris*.

(a distinction he gets from St. Augustine), not *synderesis*. And then the reasoning needed in order to reach a conclusion about action in the particular conclusion would be "conscience" (Aquinas 1929a, *Super II Sent.,* d. 24 q. 2 a. 4 co.). Yet sometimes *synderesis* too is called "conscience," in the way that a cause gets denominated from its effect (Aquinas 1911–1925, I, q. 79, 13 *corpus*). There are many habits which inform conscience (presumably the virtues, and also those which grasp precepts of the natural law), but all of these have their efficacy from one original, natural habit of first principles, which *synderesis* is (Aquinas 1911–1925, I, q. 79, a. 13, ad 3). It is sometimes called the "law of our reason," because it is a habit that contains all the precepts of the natural law (Aquinas 1911–1925, I-II, q. 94, a. 1, ad 2).

Importantly for our purposes, *synderesis* presents the end to the moral virtues. It does so as natural or intuitive reasoning (Aquinas 1911–1925, II-II, q. 47, a. 6, ad 1). Through setting the end for the moral virtues, which then set the end of prudence, *synderesis* moves prudence; Aquinas says that this is not unlike how the grasp of first speculative principles "moves" demonstrative knowledge (Aquinas 1911–1925, II-II, q. 47, a. 6, ad 3).[9] To moderation it presents the end, "one is not to stray from reason on account of concupiscence," while to fortitude it presents the end, "one is not to stray from reason on account of fear and audacity." It does so because of, and as a kind of exegesis of, a more basic principle, "act according to reason" (Aquinas 1911–1925, II-II, q. 47, a. 7, *corpus*). These precepts for the two chief moral virtues can be restated and construed as instructing that one aim at an end conceived of as a mean, that is, "one is not to stray from reason—by overshooting or undershooting—on account of concupiscence" (Aquinas 1911–1925, II-II, q. 47, a. 7, ad 3). Finally, *synderesis* never fails; it is perpetually right; it cannot be corrupted (Aquinas 1929a, *Super II Sent.,* d. 24 q. 3 a. 3 ad 5, *Super II Sent.,* d. 39 q. 3 a. 1 co). In support of its being incorruptible is the metaphysical consideration that it represents the highest attainment of the lower order of rational animal, which corresponds to the lowest reach of the higher order of angels.[10] Thus, it is a way in which human beings share in the quick, intuitive grasp of principles which angels typically or solely have (Aquinas 1975, q. 16 a. 1).

I give this summary in the manner of stakes in the snow that will need to guide any development of an account of *synderesis* in Aquinas and its role in moral virtue. The summary is merely programmatic: actually carrying out that program is beyond the scope of this essay.

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[9]On the other hand, prudence "moves" the moral virtues, insofar as it prepares the way for them to reach their end (ibid).

[10]Aquinas accepted the view from neo-Platonism that reality is organized in "orders," in a Great Chain of Being (Lovejoy 1936), and that, for the orders to match well, constituting a unity, the highest element of a lower order matched the lowest element of the higher order.

29.5 Conclusion: Moral Virtue as Educating Desire in Aristotle

This essay has been about the ethics of Aquinas, but it also constitutes a Thomistic interpretation of, and commentary upon, Aristotle's ethics, insofar as Aquinas makes constant and crucial reference to the *Nicomachean Ethics*, in nearly all of the passages cited above, and insofar as he takes himself to be accurately and faithfully developing Aristotle's view, with very few accentuations or embellishments drawn from Christianity—no doubt because he regards the moral virtues as common to the human race.

The question then arises of whether this interpretation of Aristotle is defensible in fact. Obviously, such a task cannot be undertaken here. But one can say in conclusion where one might look for it, and what one would have to find to corroborate it.

In this regard, one can identify five areas that need special attention:

- The function argument in *Nicomachean Ethics (Nic Eth)* I.7. To sustain Aquinas' interpretation, one would need to show that its role is not simply to provide guidance for the extended investigation which constitutes the *Nicomachean Ethics*—along the lines of, "now we need to look at the individual virtues"—but also to point to the natural and implicit reasoning which is engaged in, intuitively, by every human person, arriving at the working principle, which all of us adopt and testify to, that reason is the most authoritative faculty and to be followed in human action, against inclination if necessary.[11]
- Natural virtue in *Nic Eth* VI.13. Aristotle argues clearly that we are neither virtuous nor vicious by nature (*Nic Eth* II.1). Despite this holding, one has to show that Aristotle agrees that all human beings are endowed with natural habits that enjoin the following of reason in preference to sense desire and reason in preference to feelings of fear and audacity. His remark that training completes nature (*Nic Eth* II.1) and his comments on natural virtue would be the place to look.
- Virtue simpliciter in *Nic Eth* VI.13. Aristotle does use the phrase good man *simpliciter*, apparently referring to someone who possessed the moral virtues, and at the beginning of his treatment of justice (*Nic Eth* V.1) he seems very sensitive to the feature of moral virtues that they do not extend to pairs of opposites, the way intellectual virtues do.
- Will (*Nic Eth* III.1–5). Generally, Aristotle is believed not to have a doctrine of free will or even will, and scholars treat his discussion of wish (*boulēsis*) as though it referred to discrete acts solely, not a faculty. Also, typically, wish is taken to have just one end, happiness (*eudaimonia*, *beatitudo*). One needs to see to what extent this general interpretative stance is mistaken, and whether will-as-

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[11]In old treatments of natural law, it was always thought necessary to show, as a preliminary, that human nature is a hierarchical system with reason at the top. See as a very clear example of this in Hooker (1989).

faculty can be ascribed to Aristotle, as also the view that there can be willed ends short of happiness.

- Choice (ibid). Finally, choice (*prohairesis*) tends to get understood, by scholars who understand wish or will in the way just mentioned, as a working out for particulars of the final end of all of human life, in which case choice gets almost inevitably construed as the selection of instrumental means. Given the account here, one wants to know whether Aristotle seems to embrace the view that choice in virtuous action typically amounts to "revealed preference" (as economists call it) of a rational plan or consideration (more precisely, what it implies in the facts and circumstances) over inclination. Aristotle's discussion of how to discern true courage and differentiate it from false forms (*Nic Eth* III.8), by careful attention of what a soldier is preferring to what on the battlefield, seems like a good place to start.

Regardless of the results of this additional study, Aquinas' account of Aristotle's Ethics is important and interesting at least because of how it construes the moral virtues as setting down ends for prudence, how it understands prudence to refine or define the mean in particular facts and circumstances, and in the way it conceives of choice. Scholars have generally been baffled by the first two and misled, I believe, in their treatment of the third. Aquinas' treatment provides a compelling way out, which has the additional virtue of supplying insights for practical education in ethics.

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