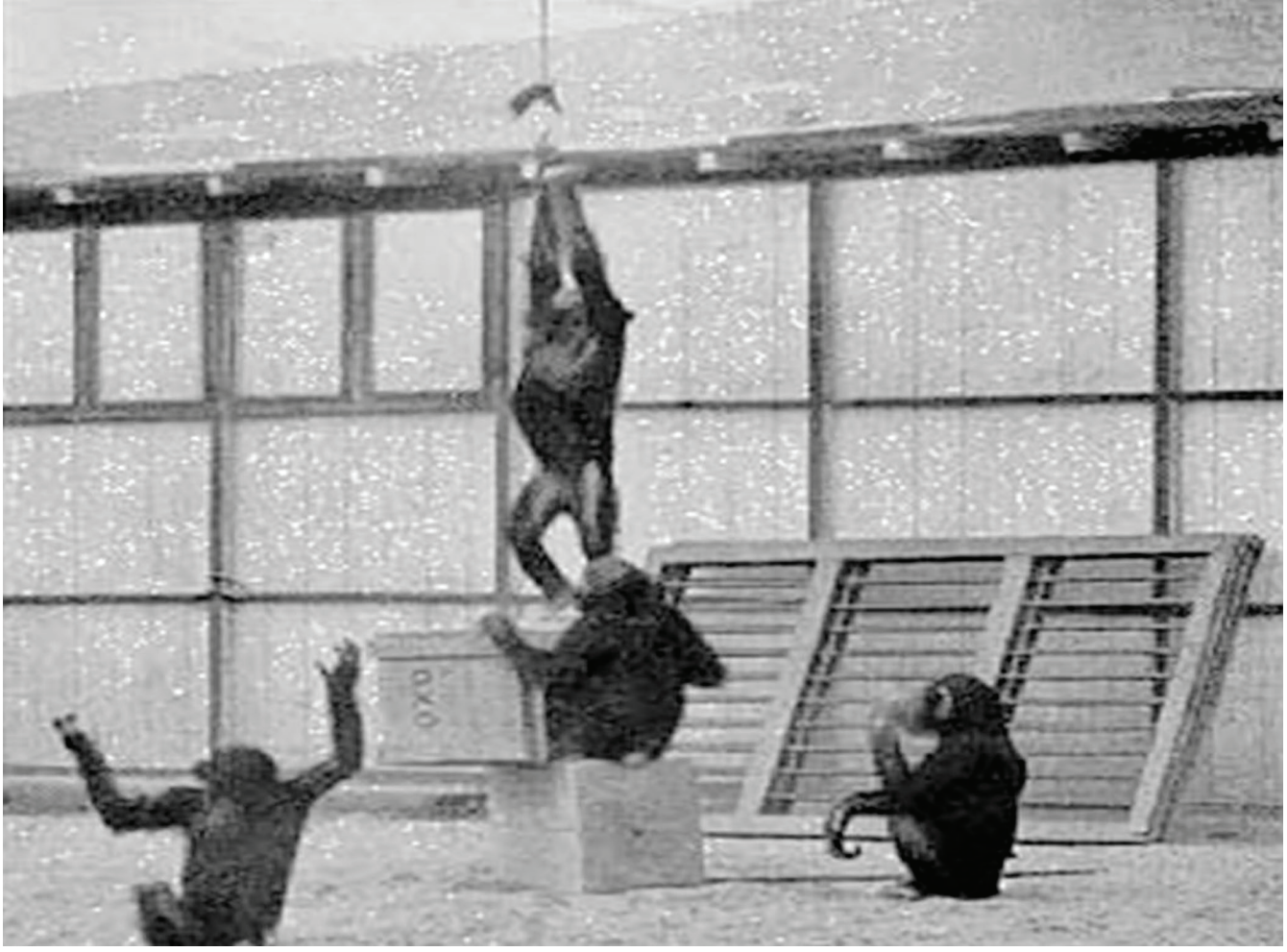

MORALS, VIRTUE, AND PERSONALITY

I DISCOVERED Dr. Max Schoen's essay, "A Scientific Basis for Moral Action," as the source for Paper 16's section "Morals, Virtue, and Personality" on November 23, 2009, using www.books.google.com.

The vivid language and mundane concepts of this section—so different from most of the rest of Paper 16—lent themselves to a source search. I googled variations of the phrase 'animals learn only by leaping, while humans can learn from looking as well as from leaping' and came up with a snippet from Schoen's article. I searched further into the article (only being able to read one snippet at a time, as the full article was not accessible) and came up with other snippets that paralleled passages in 16:7.

The fact that this apparent new source first appeared in 1939 in *The Scientific Monthly* (a popular American magazine published from 1915 to 1957) didn't surprise me, as I had already identified two post-1935 articles from this journal as Urantia Book sources. One was a 1942 article on the atmosphere, which was used in Paper 58; the other, also published in 1942, was on neutrinos and supernovae and used in Paper 41. Still, since most of Part I of the Urantia Book appears not to have used many identifiable sources besides the Bible, I was thrilled to come across a modern one.

After obtaining the article from a friend in the United States, I read it a few times and drafted a rough parallel chart. I returned to it almost a year later and am now presenting both the article and the refined parallel chart here. I'd also like to offer a few comments on both the article and how the UB author used it.

In his article, Schoen begins by recommending Socrates's conception of virtue, summed up as "the knowledge of the art of measurement," as the only valid principle for moral action. He then explains how this principle equates to modern psychology's conception of moral conduct as "action in keeping with human intelligence." After discussing our unique human abilities of discrimination and insight, Schoen concludes: "A moral act, then, for a human being, is an act in which human intelligence is operating in its complete form . . . and such an act is realized only when the chosen means are prompted by chosen ends. To be moral is to know what you are doing, why you are going there and how you are to get there."

Seasoned Urantia Book students who've read 16:7 several times will immediately recognize the similarity between Schoen's remarks and passages in the section.

But, as the very first row of the parallel chart shows, the UB *clashes* with Schoen's insistence that morality and intelligence are synonymous. Morality, the UB says, in keeping with its presentation in 16:6 of the three cosmic-mind-associated inalienables of human nature, can not be explained by intelligence alone. Here we see the author of Paper 16 critically revising the uncited source to fit the conceptual framework laid out earlier (and later) in the paper.

After this initial dispute, the parallelisms continue in a rather easy-to-follow way. The only complication is that the Paper 16 author begins gleaning midway through Schoen's article and then, at 16:7.6, goes to the beginning and continues gleaning from there.

The UB author refrained from importing the context and color of Schoen's article—neither mentioning Socrates or modern psychology, let alone Köhler's pioneering study of the mentality of apes made in the first third of the 20th century—so the section has a dry, abstract quality. But the UB author did supplement Schoen by imparting UB-unique (believers would say "revelatory") information about the cosmic nature of personality and the definition of supreme virtue as "wholeheartedly to choose to do the will of the Father in heaven."

As mentioned above, "Morals, Virtues, and Personality" stands out, in its rather mundane focus, from the rest of the paper. The Seven Master Spirits, after whom Paper 16 is named, are not even mentioned. It is interesting, then, to reflect on the probable fact that the section was a late insertion into the paper. Up until 1939 or later, the manuscript might well have had eight sections instead of nine.

Questions inevitably arise. The obvious one is, why was Schoen's article considered by the UB author to be so important as to warrant not only its gleaned incorporation into the Urantia Papers, but its late (post-1934) inclusion? The article didn't introduce any vitally new concepts, being little more than a modern psychological defense of the Socratic conception of virtue. What's more, the UB's rendition gives short shrift to Schoen's thesis, expressed in the first sentence of the article, that "a scientific foundation for moral action is not only possible but that it is the only foundation that can bring about results that are at all desirable." The UB's endorsement of this thesis boils down to the commonplace, on 16:7.9, that "Morality can never be advanced by law or by force." Further, most of the last half of the article wasn't even used.

Schoen himself, a professor of psychology and education at Carnegie Institute of Technology when he wrote the article, seems not to have been particularly distinguished, nor does his article seem to have had any decisive impact. A google search revealed that he wrote about a dozen books, including several on art and music, and a psychology primer called ***Human Nature.***

I would wager that one reason the UB author gleaned from Schoen to create "Morals, Virtue, and Personality" is that Schoen focused on our unique qualities as moral beings. Sections 6, 8 and 9 are likewise devoted to outlining our unique qualities, defining them as cosmic-mind-associated, innate capacities. The common denominator in sections 6, 7, 8 and 9 is the true significance and endowments of our human nature. Schoen's article was, then, *relevant* to the last half of Paper 16; but the question remains, why was that article chosen over the countless other and earlier sources that were equally relevant?

Meanwhile, in July of 2008, I discovered the probable source for a substantial portion of two other sections in Paper 16—section 6 ("The Cosmic Mind") and section 9 ("Reality of Human Consciousness"). It's ***God in Idea and Experience***, or ***The* A Priori *Elements of the Religious Consciousness: An Epistemological Study*** (1931), by Rees Griffiths. A few days ago I also discovered that this book was also used in Paper 196. I will be publishing my work-in-progress parallel chart for Paper 196 in a couple weeks, after which I'll present the Griffiths-Paper 16 parallels.

PARALLEL CHART FOLLOWS

WORK-IN-PROGRESS (DECEMBER 21, 2011) PARALLEL CHART FOR

16:7 ("Morals, Virtue, and Personality")

This chart is a revision of the ones posted on 13 November 2010 and 3 August 2011.

Key

(a) Green indicates where a source author first appears, or where he/she reappears.

(b) Yellow highlights most parallelisms.

(c) Tan highlights parallelisms not occurring on the same row, or parallelisms separated by yellowed parallelisms.

(d) An underlined word or words indicates where the source and the UB writer pointedly differ from each other.

(e) Blue indicates original (or "revealed") information, or UB-specific terminology and concepts. (What to highlight in this regard is debatable; the highlights are tentative.)

Source for 16:7

(1) Schoen, Dr. Max, "A Scientific Basis for Moral Action," *The Scientific Monthly*, Vol. 48, No. 3 (March 1939)

Matthew Block
21 December 2011

SOURCE OR PARALLEL

THE URANTIA BOOK

Work-in-progress Version 13 nov. 2010

Revised 3 August 2011
Third revision: 21 December 2011

PAPER 16 — THE SEVEN MASTER SPIRITS

7. MORALS, VIRTUE, AND PERSONALITY

"A SCIENTIFIC BASIS FOR MORAL ACTION" (Schoen 246)

It is the mental stature of man that makes of him a moral being.

16:7.1 Intelligence alone cannot explain the moral nature.

Morality, virtue, is indigenous to human personality. Moral intuition, the realization of duty, is a component of human mind endowment and is associated with the other inalienables of human nature: scientific curiosity and spiritual insight.

Man's mentality far transcends that of his animal cousins,

In other words, it is the moral action that distinguishes man from infra-human organisms, and moral action is synonymous with action that is indicative of the operation of human intelligence. To define morality scientifically, therefore, all that is needed is a definition of human intelligence (S 248).

but it is his moral and religious natures that especially distinguish him from the animal world.

SOURCE OR PARALLEL	THE URANTIA BOOK
Man is the most intelligent of animals because of the degree of selective behavior of which he is capable. The selective behavior of an animal is on a motor level. When a situation presents itself the animal will react to it either by an established habit or it will engage in a series of exploratory movements which will result in the setting up of an habitual response.	16:7.2 The selective response of an animal is limited to the motor level of behavior.
Even the alleged learning by insight of some of Köhler's apes was on a motor level,	The supposed insight of the higher animals is on a motor level
in that the insight took place only, if it took place at all, after the motor trial and error had failed.	and usually appears only after the experience of motor trial and error.
Man is capable of dispensing entirely with motor exploration and to engage only in selective activity that is the fruit of mental exploration, or thinking proper (S 248).	Man is able to exercise scientific, moral, and spiritual insight prior to all exploration or experimentation.
[T]his ability for what we may call delayed behavior by thought lifts man to the pinnacle of selective behavior, namely, knowing what he is doing, because he can deliberately proceed to know before he does (S 248).	16:7.3 Only a personality can know what it is doing before it does it;
	only personalities possess insight in advance of experience.
[contd] This ability of man to look before he leaps, and thereby learn by looking rather than by leaping, assumes two forms.	A personality can look before it leaps and can therefore learn from looking as well as from leaping.
	A nonpersonal animal ordinarily learns only by leaping.

SOURCE OR PARALLEL	THE URANTIA BOOK
Human selective activity can be either activity that consists of discriminated means for the accomplishment of unconsidered ends, or of discriminated ends that necessarily also imply considered means. In other words, the thought problem before the person may be only that of determining the most expedient way of accomplishing a goal that appears desirable,	16:7.4 As a result of experience an animal becomes able to examine the different ways of attaining a goal and to select an approach based on accumulated experience.
or it may consist of an examination of the desirability of the goal itself.	But a personality can also examine the goal itself and pass judgment on its worth-whileness, its value.
And it is these two forms of human selective activity that lead to an identification of morality with human intelligence. Moral action can not consist in the pursuit of indiscriminate ends by discriminate means, for such action invariably and inevitably leads to a rationalization of the ends pursued, and rationalization is humanly unintelligent, since the need for it arises from the failure to use human intelligence in its complete form. Furthermore, even if some animals do learn by mental manipulation, its fruit is always the selection of means, never of ends, and consequently, a human being acting in that manner is living on the level of animal and not of human intelligence (S 248-49).	Intelligence alone can discriminate as to the best means of attaining indiscriminate ends,
	but a moral being possesses an insight which enables him to discriminate between ends as well as between means. And a moral being in choosing virtue is nonetheless intelligent.
To be moral is to know what you are doing, and to be responsible for what you are doing, because you know where you are going, why you are going there and how you are to get there (S 249).	He knows what he is doing, why he is doing it, where he is going, and how he will get there.

SOURCE OR PARALLEL	THE URANTIA BOOK
	16:7.5 When man fails to discriminate the ends of his mortal striving, he finds himself functioning on the animal level of existence.
	He has failed to avail himself of the superior advantages of that material acumen, moral discrimination, and spiritual insight which are an integral part of his cosmic-mind endowment as a personal being.
[Virtue is righteousness, conformity to the law of the moral Governor (*Homiletic Review,* 1885).]	16:7.6 Virtue is righteousness—conformity with the cosmos.
[According to the Socratic conception of virtue as knowledge, as expounded in the Protagoras:] If virtue is like the parts of gold it can be defined, its nature can be determined, in which case it becomes knowledge and can be taught. On the other hand, if virtue is like the parts of the face the virtues can only be named, and enumeration is not a definition or knowledge (S 246).	To name virtues is not to define them,
	but to live them is to know them.
After Socrates [in the Protagoras] has shown that knowledge lies not in enumeration and specification, but in generalization, that virtue must be defined as we would define gold rather than a face, he proceeds to the main issue, namely, if virtue is knowledge, it must lie in the knowledge of something. What, then, is this something knowledge of which is a virtue? (S 247)	Virtue is not mere knowledge

SOURCE OR PARALLEL	THE URANTIA BOOK
	nor yet wisdom but rather the reality of progressive experience in the attainment of ascending levels of cosmic achievement. In the day-by-day life of mortal man, virtue is realized by the consistent choosing of good rather than evil, and such choosing ability is evidence of the possession of a moral nature.
The gist of the Socratic conception of knowledge as virtue lies in such statements scattered throughout the Protagoras as that a person may live inferior to himself, that to prefer evil to good is contrary to human nature, or that it is absurd to say that a person knows what is good but because he is overcome by pleasure he does evil. The implication throughout is that at any and every occasion one does that which one knows, and if the action results in evil it is not because evil was chosen but because the knowledge was defective.	16:7.7 Man's choosing between good and evil is influenced, not only by the keenness of his moral nature, but also by such influences as ignorance, immaturity, and delusion.
	A sense of proportion is also concerned in the exercise of virtue because evil may be perpetrated when
Now in what way can a man's knowledge about his behavior be defective? The answer is that he can mistake the lesser for the greater, the immediate for the remote, or, in other words, he can act impulsively or habitually instead of by choice, discrimination or deliberation. When a person acts in the former manner he is acting inferior to himself, in that his action is below his capabilities. And it is action in which something is mistaken for something else, a case of mistaken identity, that leads to evil, since a person is acting under a delusion, and brings about consequences that are harmful to him (S 247).	the lesser is chosen in the place of the greater as a result of distortion or deception.

SOURCE OR PARALLEL	THE URANTIA BOOK
The inferiority of a man to himself arises out of ignorance, while the knowledge that spells virtue is the knowledge of magnitudes, of lesser and greater,	The art of relative estimation or comparative measurement enters into the practice of the virtues of the moral realm.
and the art of virtue is therefore the art of measurement, of discrimination (S 247).	16:7.8 Man's moral nature would be impotent without the art of measurement, the discrimination embodied in his ability to scrutinize meanings.
	Likewise would moral choosing be futile without that cosmic insight which yields the consciousness of spiritual values. From the standpoint of intelligence, man ascends to the level of a moral being because he is endowed with personality.
The fact ... that a moral principle has to be defended, in other words, rationalized, is an indication that it is a false principle, and that is the reason why it calls for force to be put in operation. And the application of such an arbitrary principle to a material by force can only produce a distortion of the material (S 251).	16:7.9 Morality can never be advanced by law or by force.
	It is a personal and freewill matter and must be disseminated by the contagion of the contact of morally fragrant persons with those who are less morally responsive, but who are also in some measure desirous of doing the Father's will.
A moral act, then, for a human being, is an act in which human intelligence is operating in its complete form, an act for which the person assumes full responsibility, an act performed in full knowledge of what it is all about,	16:7.10 Moral acts are those human performances which are characterized by the highest intelligence,
and such an act is realized only when the chosen means are prompted by chosen ends (S 249).	directed by selective discrimination in the choice of superior ends as well as in the selection of moral means to attain these ends.

SOURCE OR PARALLEL	THE URANTIA BOOK
	Such conduct is virtuous. Supreme virtue, then, is wholeheartedly to choose to do the will of the Father in heaven.

A SCIENTIFIC BASIS FOR MORAL ACTION

By Dr. MAX SCHOEN

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THIS paper is an exposition of the thesis that a scientific foundation for moral action is not only possible but that it is the only foundation that can bring about results that are at all desirable. A scientific search for moral principles must be guided by four criteria:

(1) That a principle to be applied to man must be derived from man, must be consistent with the facts of man's nature.

(2) That if conformity to a principle can be obtained only by compulsion, of whatever variety, it is an indication that that principle belies human nature, since a principle that is true to the nature of any material is in conformity with that material, and the material therefore already obeys that principle.

(3) That if a principle is consistently violated by the material to which it is to be applied, it is the principle that is false, and not the material that is obstinate. A material can not be wrong, but a conception of its nature can be false.

(4) That if a principle fails to bring about expected or desired results in the realm in which it is applied it is the principle that is at fault and not the realm in which it is supposed to operate. If a medicine fails to cure a disease it is the medicine that is wrong and not the disease. The disease can not be wrong.

Since these four criteria represent scientific caution, it follows that a principle for moral action that is consistent with these criteria has scientific validity. And such a principle in the history of moral theory is found in the Socratic conception of virtue as knowledge as expounded in the Protagoras. The discussion between Socrates and Protagoras arises from the circumstance that Protagoras, a Sophist, a public teacher of virtue, tells Socrates that the young men who come to him for instruction increase in virtue day by day, that every day in every way they get better and better. Socrates expresses doubt as to whether virtue can be taught, which brings about a discussion regarding the nature of virtue. The discussion opens with Socrates raising the question as to whether virtue is like the parts of the face, each of which is independent of the others, in that each can exist without the others, and each of which is distinctive from the rest in structure and function, or whether virtue is like the parts of gold, all of which are of the same quality and can differ only in size. If virtue is like the parts of gold it can be defined, its nature can be determined, in which case it becomes knowledge and can be taught. On the other hand, if virtue is like the parts of the face the virtues can only be named, and enumeration is not a definition or knowledge. To state this differently: if we say that virtue consists of honesty, truthfulness, loyalty, and so on, we know nothing unless we proceed to define these terms and show why they are virtue, which only leads us to a need for a definition of virtue itself. On the other hand, if we have a definition of virtue itself we also have a definition of every specific virtue, since a definition of the whole is also a definition of its parts, a part being a partial manifestation of the whole of which it is a part.

In insisting upon a definition of the nature of virtue rather than an enumeration of the virtues as the way to a knowledge of virtue, and thereby making of virtue something teachable rather than preachable, Socrates brings virtue into the sphere of science, of investigation, of inquiry. And this is inevitable. For the moment we insist upon a definition that is to tell us the nature of a thing in terms of the real thing itself our procedure for reaching such a definition, if we adhere strictly to what we profess to wish to know, must be scientific, for we discard all preconceptions, reject all dogmatic statements, and insist upon verification of results. In so far, then, as Socrates calls for a definition of virtue that consists of a determination of its nature, and rejects a definition that only lists a number of disconnected items each of which itself stands in need of defining, his approach is scientific.

After Socrates had shown that knowledge lies not in enumeration and specification, but in generalization, that virtue must be defined as we would define gold rather than a face, he proceeds to the main issue, namely, if virtue is knowledge, it must lie in the knowledge of something. What, then, is this something knowledge of which is virtue? It is my main purpose to indicate that the conclusion Socrates reaches in answer to this question is also scientific, in that it is supported by what we know to-day about human nature through the science of psychology.

The gist of the Socratic conception of knowledge as virtue lies in such statements scattered throughout the Protagoras as that a person may live inferior to himself, that to prefer evil to good is contrary to human nature, or that it is absurd to say that a person knows what is good but because he is overcome by pleasure he does evil. The implication throughout is that at any and every occasion one does that which one knows, and if the action results in evil it is not because evil was chosen but because the knowledge was defective. Now in what way can a man's knowledge about his behavior be defective? The answer is that he can mistake the lesser for the greater, the immediate for the remote, or, in other words, he can act impulsively or habitually instead of by choice, discrimination or deliberation. When a person acts in the former manner he is acting inferior to himself, in that his action is below his capabilities. And it is action in which something is mistaken for something else, a case of mistaken identity, that leads to evil, since a person is acting under a delusion, and brings about consequences that are harmful to him. But he does not purposefully deceive himself, he does not deliberately mistake the lesser for the greater. The only reason why he does the lesser is that at the time it appears to him to be the greater, that is, the most desirable. The inferiority of a man to himself arises out of ignorance, while the knowledge that spells virtue is the knowledge of magnitudes, of lesser and greater, and the art of virtue is therefore the art of measurement, of discrimination. Socrates' own summary of the conception of the nature of virtue is as follows:

> Now suppose happiness to consist in doing or choosing the greater, and in not doing or in avoiding the less, what would be the moving principle of human life? Would not the act of measuring be the saving principle; or would the power of appearance? Is not the latter that deceiving art which makes us wander up and down and take the things at one time of which we repent at another, both in our actions and in our choice of things great and small? But the art of measurement would do away with the effect of appearance, and, showing the truth, would fain teach the soul at last to find rest in the truth, and would thus save our life. Would not mankind generally acknowledge that the art which accomplishes this result is the art of measurement?

When we translate this philosophical language of Socrates into psychological terminology we find that the definition of virtue as the art of measurement reduces itself to the conception of moral action as action in keeping with human intelligence, that is, a human being living as a human being can live because of his place in mental evolution. It is the mental stature of man that makes of him a moral being. In other words, it is the moral action that distinguishes man from infra-human organisms, and moral action is synonymous with action that is indicative of the operation of human intelligence. To define morality scientifically, therefore, all that is needed is a definition of human intelligence.

The behavior of all animal forms is intelligent, in that it is selective, discriminatory, motivated activity. All that intelligence then means is activity stimulated by the environment, but directed and controlled by the organism itself. The stimulus influences, but does not determine the response. Selective behavior means behavior in which the acting agent is also the determining factor in the behavior performed, so that without a complete knowledge of the present condition and the past history of the acting body no prediction of the ensuing behavior is at all possible from the stimulating situation alone. Since the term intelligence is applied only to the activities of animal life, and since the distinguishing characteristic of animal activity is selectivity, it follows that selectivity is the sign of intelligence, and also that the degree of selectivity of behavior is the sole indication of the degree of the intelligence of the behavior.

Man is the most intelligent of animals because of the degree of selective behavior of which he is capable. The selective behavior of the animal is on a motor level. When a situation presents itself the animal will react to it either by an established habit or it will engage in a series of exploratory movements which will result in the setting up of an habitual response. Even the alleged learning by insight of some of Köhler's apes was on a motor level, in that the insight took place only, if it took place at all, after the motor trial and error had failed. Man is capable of dispensing entirely with motor exploration and to engage only in selective activity that is the fruit of mental exploration, or thinking proper. He can make anticipatory adjustments, can make exploratory movements in his mind, so to speak, and to engage in motor activity only after having reached a decision as to what he really wishes to do. The factors that enter into the making of the final decision are of no importance in the present connection. The important point is that this ability for what we may call delayed behavior by thought lifts man to the pinnacle of selective behavior, namely, knowing what he is doing, because he can deliberately proceed to know before he does.

This ability of man to look before he leaps, and thereby learn by looking rather than by leaping, assumes two forms. Human selective activity can be either activity that consists of discriminated means for the accomplishment of unconsidered ends, or of discriminated ends that necessarily also imply considered means. In other words, the thought problem before the person may be only that of determining the most expedient way of accomplishing a goal that appears desirable, or it may consist of an examination of the desirability of the goal itself. And it is these two forms of human selective activity that lead to an identification of morality with human intelligence. Moral action can not consist in the pursuit

of indiscriminate ends by discriminate means, for such action invariably and inevitably leads to a rationalization of the ends pursued, and rationalization is humanly unintelligent, since the need for it arises from the failure to use human intelligence in its complete form. Furthermore, even if some animals do learn by mental manipulation, its fruit is always the selection of means, never of ends, and consequently, a human being acting in that manner is living on the level of animal and not of human intelligence. To put this in Socratic language, the person who pursues uncritical ends by critical means is ruled by the lesser good, because the immediate good, and therefore acts out of ignorance and not by knowledge. The Socratic virtue of the art of measurement is precisely that of distinguishing between that which appears desirable and that which is really desirable, and that means a discrimination between ends.

A moral act, then, for a human being, is an act in which human intelligence is operating in its complete form, an act for which the person assumes full responsibility, an act performed in full knowledge of what it is all about, and such an act is realized only when the chosen means are prompted by chosen ends. To be moral is to know what you are doing, and to be responsible for what you are doing, because you know where you are going, why you are going there and how you are to get there. It is to live the life that is worthy of a human being to live because he is capable of living it. And this is the life of human intelligence. Man's obligation to be intelligent, which simply means to be a man, a human being, is also his obligation to be moral, which in turn means to indicate by his actions that he is aware of himself as a man.

Thus far I have but indicated that the Socratic conception of virtue as knowledge of lesser and greater makes moral action a function of human intelligence, and therefore makes the science of behavior, psychology, the basis of the moral, or good, life. It now remains to see whether the identification of morality with intelligence is tenable. The evidences to be considered are fourfold: (1) that the view is in harmony not only with moral theory in general, but even with traditional or authoritarian morality; (2) that it is in keeping with the fact that morality is an exclusively human concept and even then only under certain circumstances; (3) that it is confirmed by common experience; and (4) that it is the only view that promises to fulfil the function of any moral principle.

(1) That moral action is impossible without critical knowledge, without the art of measurement, is recognized both by moral philosophy and moral tradition. There is a difference, however, even among moral philosophers, as to what it is that critical intelligence is to be applied to. For Plato, as has already been indicated, the knowledge of good and evil is the knowledge of magnitudes, resulting in the triumph of the greater over the lesser. In Aristotle, who identifies virtue with happiness, in that happiness is the supreme good because it is the end for which all else is desired, happiness is stated to consist in man's power to live the rational life in keeping with perfect virtue, and perfect virtue is defined as the life of moderation or the avoidance of excess and defect. The difference between Plato and Aristotle is that whereas for the former critical intelligence *is* virtue, for the latter critical intelligence *can* be virtue. In other words, the intelligent man of Plato can do no evil, whereas the intelligent person of Aristotle may do evil. In this respect Aristotle is more in the keeping with what we call practical common sense

than Plato, and to that extent Aristotle is probably also wrong. Spinoza, verging on the mystical in his pantheism, nevertheless conceives of virtue to lie in man's intellectual power, reason, which leads to knowledge, to understanding of ourselves. Virtue, he defines, as "acting, living, and preserving our being as reason directs," and "reason desires nothing but to understand, nor does it adjudge anything to be profitable to itself excepting what conduces to understanding." The absolute virtue of the mind is to understand, and only in so far as it understands "can it be absolutely said to act in conformity with virtue." Kant opens his treatise on "The Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysics of Ethics" with the proclamation that "It is impossible to conceive of anything anywhere in the world or even anywhere out of it that can without qualification be called good, except a Good Will." And this good will is good "not because of what it causes or accomplishes, not because of its usefulness in the attainment of some set purpose, but alone because of the willing, that is to say, of itself." But this good will is impossible without reason, in that reason is absolutely indispensable to it, because the good will itself consists in the conception of a law, and this conception is possibly only in a rational being. This law, the conception of which is the supreme good which we call moral, and which serves as principle for the will, Kant formulates as follows: "I am never to act otherwise than *so that I could at the same time will that my maxim should become a universal law.*"

Now, whatever the differences to be found among the moral philosophers, on one thing there is agreement, and that is that human intelligence is the source of moral action, that to act morally is to know what you are doing, which consists of knowing the ends being pursued, and controlling the action to conform to the end. The person planning to rob a bank does not know what he is doing because he has not stopped to examine the end he is pursuing.

Like moral theory, the moral injunctions of the religions, which together constitute the moral tradition of mankind, place moral action in the realm of knowledge. They hold, in agreement with moral theory, that a moral act is an act performed in full consciousness of the end to be achieved. But the end of moral tradition is a legal injunction of superhuman origin to which man is to give his consent and follow without question. By his own intelligence man can not discover his good, but by his intelligence he can learn to know the law, make it his own and demonstrate to himself that to obey it is wisdom, to disregard it is folly. Human reason operates for human good only when it is used to justify God's ways with man. Far apart, then, as moral theory is from moral tradition, both nevertheless posit knowledge as the basis of morality.

(2) When we examine the question as to why it is that no moral significance is attached to the actions of animals, infants, feeble-minded, insane, and even to normal human beings under certain conditions of stress, the answer again is critical intelligence. A man in a rage is not responsible for his actions because he is off his head, does not know what he is doing, although whatever he is doing may be well done. The person with a homicidal mania may show uncanny shrewdness in carrying out his purpose, but he is irresponsible because his purpose is insane. The infant and animal are judged to be neither moral nor immoral, but amoral, because we do not consider them capable of consciously controlled activity, and they are therefore irresponsible. The criterion, then, that we use in making moral judgments

in ordinary daily contacts is then that of critical intelligence: an act being judged moral only when it produces the impression that the acting agent is fully aware of what he is about.

(3) A further piece of evidence favoring the identification of moral action with the art of measurement is the use of the term character as a designation of personality. What is it that distinguishes between the weak and the strong character? The drug addict is a weak character, obviously so because he is ruled by his appetite. He may show no end of ingenuity in obtaining his drug, yet he is a weakling because he fails to control himself by controlling the end. Again, the concern here is not as to the reasons for his pursuit of an uncritical end, the point simply is that the judgment of weakness, with its implication of immorality, or perhaps amorality, is the value placed upon an act that does not involve the functioning in full of what human intelligence is capable. Weakness is sickness, and sickness is a lesser form of health. And when the lesser predominates over the greater in behavior, no matter what the cause, the character suffers, like a person with a physical ailment.

(4) But the final test of the validity of the psychological conception of morality as action in conformity with human intelligence must be in the objective of all moral precepts and principles, namely, the bringing about of a stable, harmonious society. And it can be demonstrated that the conception here presented not only promises to bring about an ordered society, but that it is the one indispensible condition for such a society. This can best be done by seeing whether the ills of society are not directly traceable to the operation of the very principles of moral tradition that are proposed for their cure, because these principles violate the criteria set down at the outset as the axioms of moral truth.

That society is sick, and that traditional moral precepts have failed to cure it, is not denied by even the most uncritical and fanatical supporter of supernaturalism in moral thought. But he will deny that the failure demonstrates the falsehood of his principles, but rather indicates the obstinacy and natural depravity of man. According to the moralist, what is needed is not a change of principles, but bigger and better enforcement of them, that is, more authority for the authoritarian. But this attitude violates all four axioms, in that a valid principle, that is, a principle derived from a material, does not have to be forced upon that material, because it already obeys it as the substance of its being. The fact, then, that a moral principle has to be defended, in other words, rationalized, is an indication that it is a false principle, and that is the reason why it calls for force to be put in operation. And the application of such an arbitrary principle to a material by force can only produce a distortion of the material. Besides, if a principle is concocted out of pure air, the realm of that principle becomes the playground for any one attracted to it, with the result that a horde of contradictory principles arises each of which is to be established as superior to the rest, and while the physicians quarrel the patient is passing out. The ailments of society are therefore implanted and aggravated by the medicines that are prescribed to cure them.

Another count against traditionalism is that it defines virtue, as did Protagoras, by enumerating the virtues, and calls this enumeration knowledge. It calls upon human beings to be honest, but does not define honesty, to be truthful, without defining truth, with the result that any one particular virtue becomes anything one finds convenient to

practice, just so long as he attaches the right name to it, and a label becomes a sanction for a practice, and pretty words substitutes for works. Thus the delusion arises that giving consent to a phrase transforms one into whatever the phrase represents, because that which the phrase represents, whatever it may be, or is supposed to be, is virtue. The fundamental question of morality, namely, that if human beings are to be taught to practice virtue it is necessary to ascertain its nature, traditionalism ignores.

The conception of moral action as critical intelligence, on the other hand, begins with a definition, which is the first step in any scientific procedure, and the definition itself is scientific in that it consists of a principle deduced from the material to which it is to be applied. It states what human action can be, rather than what it should, ought or must be. Since it defines virtue in terms of human nature it is consistent with human nature, and therefore true. Such a principle human beings can violate only by not living up to it, and if they fail to live up to it, it is because of ignorance, not out of obstinacy due to depravity. According to this principle, what human beings need in order to be virtuous is instruction rather than compulsion. A virtuous human being is one who lives as a human being can live because that is his nature. From this standpoint a good man is no different from a good potato. A good potato is one that adheres to the nature of a potato, that is all that a potato can be, that lives up to "potatoness." A poor human being is, again, like a poor potato, a potato that is not everything that we know a potato can be, that falls short of being a potato in its fullness. Morality as human intelligence thus obeys the criteria of scientific truth, namely, it is consistent with the facts, with the human material from which it is derived. As such it coordinates, orders and harmonizes human beings in their interrelationships, that is, socially, since in any coordinated whole a part that functions in a manner true to itself is also acting in a manner true to every other part, and therefore true to the whole.