

<<伦理学>>

图书基本信息

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前言

中国是伦理思想的富国，先贤对道德人生的探讨源远流长，其理论和信念也曾颇为有效地维系了一个人口众多的政治社会共同体的延续和发展。

现代意义上的伦理学学科史则只有一百余年的历史，这个时间虽然比起前面几千年的中国伦理思想的历史要短得多，其影响却几乎笼罩了今天我们的伦理学探讨：我们今天所使用的伦理学主要概念、术语以及习惯性的思维，大都是从西方来的。

近处的东西容易挡住远处的东西，即使这近处的东西较小。

如果我们不意识到这一点，它就会像一副眼罩一样，遮蔽许多有意义的东西。

但如果我们有反省精神，则我们还是可以使之变

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内容概要

学习西方人文科学的理想方法是从一开始就面对经典原文，这样可以尽量避免诸多转述，减少讹传。北大西学影印丛书首先推出的哲学系列涵盖了一般意义上的哲学的主要分支，均经相关领域的著名学者多层甄选，以求能系统全面地满足相关专业学生学习西方哲学。这套丛书均由世界著名高等教育出版机构汤姆生公司出口，并充分体现其一贯的简易精严的风格，是优秀的入门教材。

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书籍目录

PART ONE ETHICAL THEORY1.Ethics and Ethical ReasoningWhy Study Ethics?What Is Ethics?Ethical and ReligionEthics and ArgumentsEthical TheoryTypes of Ethical TheoryCan Ethics Be Taught?READUBGSPlato EuthyphroPhato MenoReview ExercisesSelected Bibliography2.Ethical RelativismWhat Is Ethical Relativism?Two Forms of Ethical RelativismReasons Supporting Ethical RelativismAre These Reasons ConincingFurther ConsiderationsMoral RealismMoral PluralismREADINGMary MidgleyReview ExercisesSelected Bibliography...3.Egoism4.Utilitarianism5.Kant'Moral Theory.....

章节摘录

Evaluating Natural Law Theory Natural law theory has many appealing characteristics, including its belief in the objectivity of moral values and the notion of the good as human flourishing. Various criticisms of the theory have also been advanced, including the following two. First, according to natural law theory, we are to determine what we ought to do from deciphering the moral law as it is written into nature——specifically, human nature. One problem that natural law theory must address concerns our ability to read nature. The moral law is supposedly knowable by natural human reason, but various thinkers throughout the history of philosophy have read nature differently. Even Aristotle, for example, thought that slavery could be justified in that it was in accord with nature.¹⁷ Today, people argue against slavery on just such natural law grounds.¹⁸ Philosopher Thomas Hobbes defended the absolutist rule of despots and John Locke criticized it, both doing so on natural law grounds. Moreover, traditional natural law theory has picked out highly positive traits: the desire to know the truth, to choose the good, and to develop as healthy mature beings. Not all views of the essential characteristics of human nature have been so positive, however. Some philosophers have depicted human nature as deceitful, evil, and uncontrolled. This is why Hobbes argued that we need a strong government. Without it, he wrote, life in a state of nature would be "nasty, brutish, and short."¹⁹ Moreover, if nature is taken in the broader sense, meaning all of nature, and if a natural law as a moral law were based on this, then this general approach might even cover such theories as Social Darwinism. This view holds that because the most fit organisms in nature are the ones that survive, so also the most fit should endure in human society and the weaker ought to perish. When combined with a belief in capitalism, this led to notions such as that it was only right and according to nature that wealthy industrialists at the end of the nineteenth century were rich and powerful. It also implied that the poor were so by the designs of nature and we ought not interfere with this situation. A second question raised for natural law theory is the following. Can the way things are by nature provide the basis for knowing how they ought to be? On the face of it, this may not seem right. Just because something exists in a certain way does not necessarily mean that it is good. Floods, famine, and disease all exist, but that does not make them good. According to David Hume, as noted in our discussion of Mill's proof of the Principle of Utility in Chapter 4, you cannot derive an "ought" from an "is."²⁰ Evaluations cannot simply be derived from factual matters. Other moral philosophers have agreed. When we know something to be a fact that things exist in a certain way, it still remains an open question whether it is good. However, the natural law assumes that nature is teleological, that it has a certain directedness. In Aristotle's terms, it moves toward its natural goal, its final purpose. Yet from the time of the scientific revolution of the seventeenth century, such final purposes have become suspect. One could not always observe nature's directedness, and it came to be associated with the notion of nonobservable spirits directing things from within. If natural law theory does depend on there being purposes in nature, it must be able to explain how this can be so.

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