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# An Analysis of Collectivity

Nersoyan: An Analysis of Collectivity

H. James Nersoyan

It may be argued along Hobbesian<sup>1</sup> and Benthamite<sup>2</sup> lines that a collectivity is an abstraction and can therefore be responsible only in a metaphorical sense. When we speak of collective responsibility we in fact refer, this argument would run, to the responsibility of each individual within the collectivity. When, for example, we speak of the moral obligations of the medical profession we are speaking of the moral obligations of each physician as physician. One may continue to argue in the same vein that efforts toward the moral and other improvements of the medical profession are efforts toward the improvement of each physician as physician, along with perhaps the improvements of the human and other services that the physician needs for the exercise of his profession. This stance raises problems that we must consider as we come to them: for example, to what precisely does the phrase "physician as physician" refer? Can we in fact separate the physician from the man? But more generally, faced with the plausibility of the argument under consideration, we may ask whether phrases like "the medical profession" are indeed substitutes for "all the physicians severally." This paper will endeavour to show that the answer to this question is a qualified no.

But first, is the medical, or the teaching, or the legal profession a collectivity? It is, if we look upon collectivities as belonging to a range. There are weak and strong collectivities, the weakness or strength of each being a matter of its relative position on the range. It would be a clear error to place any two or more people gathered together into either one of two categories: crowd or collectivity. The crowd is itself the beginning of a collectivity if, or at the point where, it distinguishes itself from another crowd, is seen by an observer as this, not that, crowd, and each person in it becomes aware that he or she belongs to it. Consider, next, a queue at a box office. A number of circumstances distinguish it from a crowd. (a) Every person in the queue is normally conscious of belonging to it. Unless he has a reason for doing otherwise, he will answer in the affirmative the question, Are you in this line? (b) Leaving the queue is a matter of deliberate decision. It is a change in status. (c) The position of each person in the queue is determined by, and subject to, certain rules: you stand behind the person who was there before you. (d) Each person has obligations that flow from his being a member of the queue: the queue has responsibilities of its own as a distinct entity. It must not, for example, obstruct pedestrian traffic on the sidewalk. That the members of a queue must be in physical proximity is irrelevant to our discussion, except as an indication of its being one important degree above a crowd.

Collectivities come into existence and pass away. A queue is a very short-lived collectivity. It is a collectivity in a weak sense because it has no aim of its own. Only its members have aims. These aims are numerically different, though identical in at least one respect: every member of the queue wants to be in the theater during the performance. There is a certain relation of mutual dependence among the members of the queue. If we take it to signify or symbolize all the people who wish to see the play, we realize that were it not for "the queue" there would be no play to see -- normally plays are not produced for an audience of one. Again, certain decisions that one person in the line takes may affect another. Suppose Tom is the twenty-fourth person in the line, standing with Dick, his

friend. He will wish that at least twenty-five tickets be available. Suppose further that there *are* only twenty-five tickets. Then a decision by a man standing ahead to invite a passing friend to stand with him will change Tom's disposition to the worse, and will create in Tom a moral-psychological conflict. The man ahead is violating the rules. Should he go ahead and at least tell him so? We can imagine how serious the rules of the game and Tom's dilemma and anger would be if the people in the line were waiting for rations of bread, their only food for the next twenty-four hours.

In spite of such dependencies and mutualities among the members of the queue, it remains a collectivity in a weak sense because in the mind of each of its members the following calculus is normally absent: if A and B, who belong to this group, do respectively c and d, and if I, who also belong to the group, do e, then together we shall achieve x. It is because of this calculus, whether or not actually and consciously made by each member of a group such as a corporation, that the group acquires added concreteness as a collectivity in a very strong sense. Here each member is a knot in the netting, or a link in the chain, or a cog in the machine of the corporation, though all of these similes are forcibly defective. The relationship between the corporation and each of its members is dialectical: the corporation fashions, gives character to, each of its members, and each member fashions the corporation. Any one member and the corporation are real forces in each other's destiny. The decisions taken by the corporation are fusions of the decisions, positive or negative, taken by each member in the performance of his or her job. A decision is indeed a determination to manipulate and channel in a creative or at least new direction elements that are at the disposal of the decision-maker. Every decision, positive or negative in form, taken by each member of a collectivity is constitutive of the facts that the visible decision-maker has at his disposal, overtly or otherwise.

Corporations are recognized as legal persons for reasons other than mere convenience in matters of litigation. As soon as a corporation comes into existence it acquires a self-consciousness of its own, partly experienced by each of its members. The closer the member is to the corporation's center of power and responsibility, the more keenly he or she partakes in that consciousness. Again, like a person, a corporation comes into existence, grows and passes away. It adapts the environment to itself and itself to the environment. It can do good to others or damage them. It occupies physical space and affects the behaviors, moods, preferences and value commitments of other individuals or collectivities. It exercises a will, makes errors, carries the burdens of its own past as well as of the past of its milieu, and plans for an envisaged future. It is creative -- it provides an atmosphere, points up needs which are decisively instrumental in the inventions by one or another of its members of a new procedure or device. It thinks and deliberates, not unmindful of the moral dimensions of its deliberations: even when some one person's suggestion carries in the course of such deliberations, this person's thinking is conditioned by his sense of the attitudes of the Board of Directors, and the competences of the corporation as a whole. Members that are a threat to the corporation are atrophied or discarded. With diversification, grants and foundations, the similarities between a person and a business or manufacturing collectivity become even more accentuated. Collectivities adopt more aims than one, including charity. Profit or survival is their principal drive and a condition for the adoption and execution of various ambitions. Nor is it the case that a corporation is devoid of characteristics that are animal and therefore not specifically human. It bares its destructive potential when threatened, it even reproduces itself in complex ways: it becomes a "parent" organization. It also extracts and consumes material and produces waste. In short, a corporation is what it is called: an embodiment, the embodiment of a goal-directed set of environmentally effective dynamisms. It is only natural then that this identifiable, visible, concrete entity, quite as concrete as any man or



woman, be perceived, treated, dealt with as a person, not only in the courts of law, but in the minds of all those who come into contact with it.

### Nersisyan: An Analysis of Collectivity

The theory that a collectivity is an abstraction can only be the logical consequence of an atomistic view of aggregates. With the adoption of a non-Platonic, perhaps Aristotelian, or Buddhistic, or Whiteheadian Process view of the individual the metaphysical distinctions between a man or a woman and a collectivity become blurred or vanish, or rather, the difference becomes a matter of appearance and size. Also become blurred are the phenomenological distinctions between the decision-making processes of an individual person on one hand and of a strong collectivity on the other. There are forces operative within the individual that result in decisions that will modify the course of his or her life. The decision-making process is roughly the same in the case of a collectivity. A strong collectivity can be said to have a consciousness of its own. More precisely, the consciousness of a collectivity becomes clearer as the collectivity acquires strength in the sense noted above. A strong collectivity is perceived by others as a definite decision-making entity. Each of its own members sees it not quite as other-than-myself, but as more-than-myself, where the more is not mindless matter.

We have been looking at paradigms of weak (or weaker) and strong (or stronger) collectivities. In a weak collectivity such as a queue each member stands only, as it were, at a limit. If the queue where Tom is waiting is long and the theater small, he will belong in either one of two groups within the queue -- that of those who will, or that of those who will not, be admitted to the play. The self-same group may shift from a weak to a strong, or from a strong to a weak collectivity. If a reduction in the number of the employees of a corporation or factory becomes imperative, the employees will be reduced to the status of people in a queue -- those with less seniority at the back of "the queue" will not be admitted next week. On the other hand, if enough people in a queue decide that they will stand there until the management of the theater brings the price of each ticket down by ten cents, we have the beginnings of a positive collectivity in the strong sense.

The term "positive" in the last sentence points to the existence of what may be described as negative collectivities. Twelve princes each of whom wishes to marry the same princess constitute a negative collectivity. All of them belong to the class of people wanting to marry the princess. At the same time the very reason which places them in the self-same class prevents the class from turning into a cohesive, positive collectivity. Again, in view of the fact that all collectivities must operate within a framework of scarcity, they, to the extent to which they operate with limited resources, can be positive and negative simultaneously. Negativities are built into positive collectivities and vice versa. Intracollective and intercollective competitions, to the extent to which they are pervasive and unblended with other concerns, militate against collective responsibility, for there can be no such responsibility where there is no cooperative purpose. It is interesting from this perspective that for Hobbes collective responsibility was something of a fiction. His estimate of human nature could not allow him to theorize differently.<sup>3</sup>

Between the two paradigms of collectivities that we have described, the queue and the corporation, there is the medical profession which can serve as an exemplar of other professions such as the legal and the teaching. Phrases like "it is the responsibility of the medical profession to . . ." or "the scientific community ought to . . ." are common currency. Ordinary language already indicates therefore that the profession, as distinct from physicians, lawyers, teachers, or scientists severally, has responsibilities of its own. But since the medical profession does not diagnose Smith's disease, prescribes no drugs for him and does not take his tonsils out, we presume, as hinted above, that "the medical

profession" means a "collectivity" (University of Dayton Review, Vol. 15, No. 2 [1981], Art. 12)." Inasmuch as the medical profession is a relatively weak collectivity there is a measure of truth to that surmise. Unlike the members of a corporation, those of a profession do not engage in a cooperative enterprise, though they do of course have broadly identical purposes. There are no complementary roles to be played, aimed at the production of an object or a state of affairs. A physician in Dallas can cure or worsen his patient's condition quite independently of the success or failure of a physician in New York with *his* patient. Yet a profession is a stronger collectivity than a queue. Breakthroughs, as well as less dramatic discoveries in medicine or a related science, make of the entire profession a more successful collectivity. Nothing the queue does transcends itself, except perhaps indirectly, in a farfetched way. If the play the members of the queue are waiting to see increases the esthetic sensitivities of each, or has cathartic effects on him or her, then seeing it will make the world more discerning and psychologically healthier. At any rate what is true of the queue in respect of self-transcendence is not true of the medical profession. The professions transcend themselves in that they are other-directed. There are of course physicians, lawyers, teachers, and scientists who practice medicine and so on to enrich themselves and for no other purpose, but we may utilize Plato's strategy against Thrasymachus and distinguish between the art of medicine, etc., and the art of self-enrichment.<sup>4</sup> Even if the physician's aim is to serve himself, the medical art he practices as this total man is other-directed.

Neither the queue nor the medical profession is hierarchically organized, the organization of medical associations notwithstanding, but it can be said with a measure of plausibility that the roles of physicians are complementary if we take the object of the interest of the medical profession to be not this or that individual, but mankind. The job of the medical profession is to keep mankind free of pain, incapacity, and physical abnormalities. Various specializations do this with regard to the various parts of man's body. In a sense, the staffs of most hospitals are miniatures of the medical profession.

Part of the concreteness of the collectivity referred to as the medical profession is constituted by the principles that have been governing physicians as a group before and since Hippocrates. Like an existing queue joined by newcomers, the medical profession, including, but not limited to, the community of physicians, exists prior to the individual physician. Upon becoming part of it the individual physician is expected to behave in certain ways. But whereas the first person in the queue can be indubitably singled out, the first physician would be impossible to identify even with the best of historical records. Moreover, one physician will not want another to deviate from the norms because he will not want the profession, and consequently possibly himself, to be tainted. Such concern is clearly absent in a member of a queue.

Someone may observe that we are using here the phrase "medical profession" equivocally, referring now to physicians, now to the medical art. Actually in all of the above uses of the phrase the reference is simultaneously to both and therefore partially to the men and women who practice medicine. The nebulousness with which the phrase is suffused or surrounded is a measure of the weakness of the medical profession as a collectivity. It remains true however that although without physicians there would be no medical profession, one ought not to confuse a thing with the conditions for its existence.

As we move from weak to strong, or less concrete to more concrete collectivities, from a crowd through a profession to a corporation, it becomes progressively clearer that the adherence of a member to, or his withdrawal from, a collectivity cannot be construed on the model of the addition or removal of a cookie to or from a jarful of cookies. The collectivity changes the individual person and the individual person changes the



The conditions necessary for a collectivity to be said to be responsible have been given above. They can now be listed as follows: (a) each person in the collectivity becomes aware of a common interest; (b) the interest is seen as served through the execution of a project or series of projects; (c) steps are taken to execute the project(s); (d) each person assumes a share in the execution of the project(s); (e) the usefulness of a successful contribution is a function of the success of every other contribution, or is so perceived; (f) there are no negativities militating against the passably good coherence of the group. To use the biblical metaphor, the house is not divided against itself. Wherever these conditions obtain, a group consciousness comes into being. Imagine the entire management and labor of General Motors saying together, "we shall build the best car," and a carpenter saying, "I shall build the best cart." There is a philosophically viable perspective from which it can be said that the only difference between the "we" and the "I" of those propositions is one of amplitude.\* The group consciousness is, as we have seen, experienced by each member of the collectivity not merely as other, but also as more-than-myself. Observers are aware of it as an effective presence. It is even immortal in a secular sense of "immortal": it weaves itself into the cultural fabric of society.

In the case of any one collectivity all or some of these conditions may obtain at various degrees of strength, the responsibility of the collectivity increasing with its strength. Paradigmatic of three stages in the strength and hence responsibility of the collectivity are a queue, a profession, and a corporation. Any one of these kinds of collectivities may contain elements of the other two. The research department of a company, for example, or the faculty of any one department of a university are professions within corporate structures.

Collectivities are formed deliberately, though people are more naturally inclined to some than to others. Broadly they fall into one of two overlapping categories. First, there are the collectivities formed for the purpose of producing goods. Examples are the extraction of minerals, the growth of corn, the manufacture of air conditioners. Second, there are those that bring about intentionally or otherwise a new or renewed state of affairs. Knowledge, skills, and the proverbial pecking order are necessary in either sort for the successful maintenance of the collectivity. The wants and needs that motivate the formation of collectivities call for two classes of objects and/or projects: those that provide comfort, and those that provide happiness. Factories as well as corporations which engage in trade or in the practical application of science are among those that seek to satisfy the need for a more comfortable existence. Other more natural collectivities such as the family, the tribe, the state or the church, along with scientific, cultural or charitable organizations are formed and maintained as environments, or contributory to environments, in which, it is presumed, happiness will be found more abundantly. Mankind is itself a collectivity, particularly if we exclude from our purview of it the past and future generations and consider the present one in distinction from them. But in this connection more must be said.

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\*"Amplitude" is meant here to refer to the sort of quality that a musical composition has when sung in unison, as compared to its melody whistled by a single person. A part sung by a chorus is not merely louder. It is more "ample."

The issue of morality arises with one's own individuation and with the awareness that one is an individual over against the world, or having the world over against oneself. The issue of morality in connection with collectivities arises along the same lines. For a group of people to incorporate themselves is, rather literally, to assume a large body. As such, the new collectivity finds itself over against the world or the world over against itself, and the issue of morality arises, for such encounter is bound to generate disagreements which will in turn suggest morally significant alternative solutions. Compared to that of individuals collective morality is a matter of greater urgency because collectivities are bigger. If they choose to be selfish the damage they can inflict will be in proportion to their power and size. Someone may argue that a corporation cannot be self-conscious in the manner of an individual man or woman. As has already been intimated, that would be a mistake -- or rather it is a mistake to the extent to which Rousseau's theory of the general will is truthful.<sup>5</sup> Also as intimated, there is this further consideration: the self-consciousness of Augustus Caesar is not the self-consciousness of Augustus alone, it is the self-consciousness of Augustus Caesar. It participates as it were in the consciousness of the commonwealth even as it contributes to the issuing forth of that consciousness. The self-consciousness of a ruler is what it is because of the position he occupies in the commonwealth. The same is true of the self-consciousness of a derelict. The self of which we are individually conscious is also a social thing, and this can be asserted without following Herbert Mead, for example, in his exaggerations.<sup>6</sup> No doubt there are psychological states of affairs to which not all collectivities are subject. It is doubtful, for example, whether a corporation ever feels lonely, but this does not constitute a radical disproof of the claim that a collectivity can have a consciousness of its own.

It follows that an account of the phenomenology of the morality of collectivities does not call for a set of ethical theories different from those that apply to individuals. The following considerations are particularly relevant in view of our distinction between collectivities that serve the satisfaction of the desire for more comfort, and those that propose to satisfy the desire for more happiness.

A measure of comfort is, to be sure, a condition *sine qua non* of happiness. But the overproduction of devices designed to increase comfort does not necessarily serve the cause of more abundant happiness. There are, for this, two principal reasons: (a) the measure of truth in the traditional contention that when "the body" has its unbridled way, "the soul" diminishes; (b) the limitedness at any one time of our scientific knowledge and competence. God punished Eve for picking the fruit he had told her not to touch. With technology we build our own apple to eat it as we please, but we always find a worm somewhere in it. The ambulance that rushes the stricken man to the hospital and saves his life pollutes the air in the process. The pill, designed to wrest this moment of love from the dimension of time with its worrisome future, adds the fear of side effects to the still lingering fear of pregnancy. The ongoing battle between the technologists and the environmentalists can easily be viewed as the contemporary version of the perennial conflict between the devotees of comfort and the seekers of happiness, and the dispute is perennial precisely because the ambiguity of the relation between comfort and happiness -- corresponding as they do to the body and to the mind -- cannot be cleared.

We must distinguish between collective morality and collective responsibility. The former is inclusive of the latter: the issue of responsibility arises when the issue of morality has already arisen. A collectivity is morally praiseworthy when the schema of the relationships governing it makes it possible for each of its members to obey the deontological imperative of treating every other member as an end in him/herself and never as a means only. This would be its internal morality. The same moral principle



governs the collectivity extending, via a chain of influence, to the collectivities that it has the opportunity to affect. In pointing out this intra- and intercollective moral principle one need not oppose Kant to Mill. One may, in this context, put motivational considerations in brackets, for surely the respect of the rights of others is both moral in the Kantian sense and a means of maximizing happiness.

As distinct from, though subsumed under, morality, responsibility comes into view in the matter of a collectivity's deliberate or known impact on the environment. This becomes a thing of concern because the environment includes people and animals. The responsibility of such collectivities as are defined by the goods they manufacture becomes complex because more is at stake than the quality of the goods they make. The production of an object, whether or not made well, is not always a morally neutral performance. Nor are the progressively increasing knowledge and skill related to the object always morally neutral. They are morality-bearing more often than not. The problem of the relation between making and doing is one way of taking cognizance of this issue. Another is the problem of the relation between having and being.

The directly moral question is not, "What do you make?" but, "What do you do with what you make?" Yet it is obviously because some things are made that some doings become possible, which doings lead to the making of further objects for further doings on the same path. This is not unrelated to the relation between having and being. To have *x* is to be *x* partly. When I drive the car I have, the car is in a very real sense part of my body -- I even "feel" the dent inflicted on it -- and I am certainly my body as when I say "I am six feet tall." My car extends my body: even while idle in the garage it enlarges my freedom of movement. Strictly speaking it makes of me a *different* person.

Any implications that statements like "I am six feet tall" or "this coat fits *me* well" may have do not preclude partial agreement with some philosophers who say that I am my freedom. I am also of course what I *do* with my freedom. My decisions "shape" me as the strokes of the sculptor's chisel shape his statue. The things I own make of me a different person because they enter into the making of my decisions. We mentioned the car. Take another more telling example: it would be a morally good thing to manufacture handguns inasmuch as the manufacture of anything reduces unemployment. A gun may even turn out to be a work of art. But precisely because *to have is to be partly*, and the decisions I make are made on the basis of what I *have*, the mere making and making available of an instrument that serves no purpose other than killing become morally suspect. To be responsible for making someone the owner of such a lethal instrument is to share in the responsibility of his or her becoming a different person as the consequence of that ownership. Hedonistic calculi and other dubious considerations enter the picture. One may dubiously argue, for example, that "if I don't do it someone else will."

Now if the mere production of an object is a morality-bearing performance, the application of knowledge and the exercise of skill by and in a collectivity are not morally neutral by the same token. On the other hand, the morality built into a set of rules governing the collectivity and the morality of a member of that collectivity are mutually determinative. Thus the objects produced, the pooled body of knowledge or information and of skill, along with the rules that govern the collectivity constitute the matter of its moral form. A consequence of this is that no physician, for example, can function as physician simpliciter. His physician-ness is inseparably bound up with his humanity, with his being this total man, active as such in various areas, including medicine, according to certain rules. When a member of a collectivity makes a moral choice he adopts without or with modification, or refuses to adopt a morality-bearing structure or set of practices, an



eventuality which does not leave the structure itself untouched. The overpricing of a commodity by executive order because the market allows it, the reduction by a physician of a generally accepted fee, a biologist's continuing to do highly risky genetic research, the determination of a professor of philosophy to make philosophy more interesting, are examples of decisions prompted by the collectivity that change the collectivity's picture. And one may observe in this connection that what a client expects from a collectivity increases in proportion to what the collectivity can provide. The more comfortable science makes us the more comfort we require, with the result that no present level of comfort is ever quite satisfactory.

We divided collectivities into two overlapping kinds: those that serve the need for comfort through, notably, the production of goods, and those that presume to fill the need for happiness through a new or renewed state of affairs. It is at once obvious that collectivities of the latter kind may be tempted to regard their own utopias as what the whole world needs for its own good. The determination to so regard one's collective project may suggest the notion that its execution is a religious obligation, and that the claims on which the project is based were revealed. A second danger to which such collectivities are subject is the disregard of the other collectivity's interest in favor of one's own. For example, the large insurance premiums that physicians must pay bespeak of conflicting interests between the medical and the legal professions.

We saw that a decision by a collectivity is a fusion of the decisions made by its members. The decisions of the collectivity on one hand, and those of its members on the other, are dialectically related. Six elements enter into the decision-making process of a member of a collectivity as such: (a) the amount of information or degree of skill available to the collectivity; (b) the dominant moral attitude of the collectivity as perceived by the individual; (c) the individual's own religious and/or moral sensitivities conditioned by his background and other circumstances; (d) the projected opinions and/or possible reactions of those to be affected by the decision; (e) the strength of the collectivity; and (f) the vaguely discerned, gradually receding background of society at large. In view of this complexity disagreements are bound to arise within the collectivity that affect the conflicts among collectivities.

Moral disagreement, as all disagreement, is possible only on a common ground, the ground of agreement beneath the poles of the disagreement. There may be babble and dispute, but there will be no *disagreement* without this ground which may or may not be present to the consciousness of the disagreeing parties. Two physicians will disagree as to how to treat Smith, because they agree that Smith must be cured. Labor and management may disagree on the amount of wage increase, or on the improvement of working conditions, because they both agree that the company must be able to continue to produce merchandise that will capture its share in a competitive market. One strategy suggested by this agreement/disagreement dialectic is to place the poles of the disagreement within a larger context inclusive of both. Since the avoidance of disruption is a, perhaps the, moral aim, collectivities are placed within collectivities in Chinese box fashion, the larger collectivities or their representatives having authority over the smaller ones. An advantage of this strategy is that it keeps the subcollectivities in communication without reducing them to homogeneity -- a danger which is nevertheless always there.

The collectivity of collectivities is the state. The Hegelian view of the finality of the state must nevertheless be complemented by a Kantian vision of a collectivity of the collectivities of collectivities, namely the world. These Hegelian and Kantian views complement, rather than oppose, each other. A man's or a woman's drive to belong to a

collectivity is motivated by the need to see him- or herself extended beyond his or her bounded "space" or "numbered days." Nationalisms arise partly at least because the world is too unwieldy a thing to identify oneself with. A nation is more homogeneous, more cohesive, more suitable to strong emotional commitment. It can also become an obsession of frightful consequences. It is no wonder that while Kant's rationalism embraced the world, Hegel's romanticism restricted itself to the state.\*

University of Dayton

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\*I would like to thank Michael A. Payne for reading a draft of this paper and making valuable suggestions.



Notes

<sup>1</sup>Cf. *Leviathan*, Ch. XVI: "... because the multitude naturally is not *one*, but *many*; they cannot be understood for one; but many authors, of every thing their representative saith, or doth in their name; every man giving their common representer, authority from himself in particular; . . ."

<sup>2</sup>Cf. *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation*, Ch. I, Section IV: "The interest of the community is one of the most general expressions that can occur in the phraseology of morals: no wonder that the meaning of it is often lost. When it has a meaning, it is this. The community is a fictitious *body*, composed of the individual persons who are considered as constituting as it were its *members*. The interest of the community then is, what? -- the sum of the interests of the several members who compose it."

<sup>3</sup>Cf. *Leviathan*, Ch. XIII: "It may seem strange to some man, that has not well weighed these things; that nature should thus dissociate, and render men apt to invade, and destroy one another.

"Let him therefore consider with himself, when taking a journey, he arms himself, and seeks to go well accompanied; when going to sleep, he locks his doors; when even in his house he locks his chests; and this when he knows there be laws, and public officers, armed, to revenge all injuries shall be done him; . . ."

<sup>4</sup>At *Republic* 346 a-e, Socrates tries to clear up Thrasyarchus's conceptual confusion. The fact that some physicians practice medicine in order to become wealthy does not lead to the conclusion that medicine is the art of earning high wages:

"Then this benefit, getting wages, is for each not a result of his own art; but, if it must be considered precisely, the medical art produces health, and the wage-earner's art wages;...And if pay were not attached to it, would the craftsman derive benefit from his art?"

"It doesn't look like it," he said.

"Does he then produce no benefit when he works for nothing?"

"I suppose he does."

Allan Bloom, tr. (New York: Basic Books, 1968.)

<sup>5</sup>*The Social Contract* is a forceful statement of the view that the self-consciousness of the human individual is not the highest form of self-consciousness. There is collective self-consciousness above it. Such hostilities as are bound to arise from the encounters of individuals with individuals give way to a fruitful life together, only when the collective self-consciousness is deliberately reflected in the socially significant decisions of each. Cf. I, 6-8; II, 6; IV, 1.

<sup>6</sup>G. H. Mead's thesis in *Mind, Self, and Society* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1934) is that the individual receives his unity of self from "the generalized other." The self is thus entirely a product of the organized community or social group. This notion appears to be counterintuitive. Nor does it do sufficient justice to the individual's presence in the individual/society dialectic.