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Education and the Longing for Immortality: Classical and Contemporary Pathways

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My father, a teacher of medicine and mentor to countless students, residents and colleagues, once told me that his immortality would consist in his influence on those he had taught. Hearing this surprised me as a 16-year old, especially in light of the observant Jewish upbringing he had helped see to for my sisters and me. I was even more surprised when he told me that he had inherited this idea from my grandfather, someone I had always thought of as more orthodox still. And who knows where *he* got it? Did the conspiracy go back to Abraham, I wondered? So father, grandfather and however many additional ancestors unnamed did not harbor the orthodox religious beliefs I had always ascribed to them by default. And what's more, they both located whatever was enduring about themselves in something so this-worldly as to seem rather anti-climactic, rather disappointing to me, at the time an agnostic yet still-hopeful adolescent. I must have responded something like, "You mean that's *it*? Your influence on others? Your *teaching*?"

The banality of my patriarchs! What could be behind such ideas?

As it turns out, I've come to believe a great deal lies behind them indeed, and hardly any of it now seems banal. I would like to make the case, in fact, that my father's sentiment has, in the Western tradition, a long and even ancient history to it, extending at least to Socrates, philosophy's archetypal non-mentoring mentor.[1] It is, as I shall argue, one strand in a braid that coils in and out of the history of education and philosophy, sometimes hidden sometimes not. This is the idea, captured in my father's feeling of "living on" through his teaching, that via the enterprise of education writ large one can secure a kind of immortality beyond one's physical-temporal existence. Here lies a "motivation," the psychologist might say, at times powerful yet mostly unacknowledged. Milan Kundera, the Czech novelist, writes that there "is a certain part of us that lives outside of time. Perhaps we become aware of our age only at exceptional moments and most of the time we are ageless."[2] My aim here is to say something concerning a long yet mostly ignored tradition in educational thought echoing this sentiment, one that forges a link between teaching and learning on the one hand and that which is "ageless" and "outside of time" on the other.

This vision of education as immortality has, however, been subject to two quite different -- from time to time even competing -- formulations. These two formulations make an early appearance unified in the person of Socrates, although they are straight away split apart by Plato, who seizes in his own post-Socratic writings upon but half of the "original" Socratic vision. The other half, the one Plato mostly discards, reflects sensibilities consistent with the notorious sophists, the itinerant pay-per-view teachers of rhetoric and worldly success whom Plato famously vilifies. Since being split apart, both halves of the parent Socratic vision have been widely and enduringly influential, on their own, and occasionally in tandem. Taken together, they comprise two aspects of one of the most powerful motivating factors for why one would want to engage in teaching at all. It is a motivation little discussed, however, as if it might sound embarrassingly occult or perhaps selfish: the longing for immortality.

What are these two halves, then?

First is the Platonic side. Plato has Socrates say in the *Phaedo* that "doing" philosophy, that is, undergoing a philosophical education is a kind of preparation for death. In Socrates' beautiful gallows speech, just prior to the hemlock, he comforts his companions -- they being more distraught by his imminent martyrdom than he -- with the idea that there is nothing to fear in death if one has lived a contemplative life -- dwelling as much as possible among the Forms: "No one may join the company of the gods who has not practised philosophy and is not completely pure when he departs from life, no one but the lover of learning."[3] The lover of learning, the philosopher, avoids both worldly pain as well as pleasure, withdrawing from both as far as possible, regarding each as merely "another nail to rivet the soul to the body and to weld them together."[4] Prefiguring Christian asceticism, one withdraws from change and decay, from imperfection and impurity, from the corporeal world itself, in favor of that which is pristine and timeless and hence undying. To the extent one can "participate" in the latter world, the world of Forms, one can learn its laws and secrets, thereby gaining a kind of immortality-by-association. One loses oneself in, say, mathematical theorems; and that part of oneself, so engaged, escapes the fate of one's corpse. The more one can lose oneself in the eternal realm, the less one has to lose when death comes. However, insofar as one is preoccupied with sensual affairs, with food, drink and sex, or vanity, moneymaking and comfort, or anger, sadness, joy and laughter, one draws back from what is immortal and into the evanescent and perishing:

> The soul of the philosopher achieves a calm from such emotions; it follows reason and ever stays with it contemplating the true, the divine, which is not the object of opinion. Nurtured by this, it believes that one should live in this manner as long as one is alive and, after death, arrive at what is akin and of the same kind, and escape from human ills. After such nurture there is no danger…that one should fear that, on parting from the body the soul would be scattered and dissipated by the winds and no longer be anything anywhere.[5]

Thus the Pythagorean mystic-cum-Platonist aims not merely to discover the truth but also to identify actively with it, to *become* it and thereby live forever.

On the Platonic view, then, education's ultimate justification lies in its securing of immortality for the lover of learning. Soul and body being separate, education "turns" the soul out and frees it from its bodily imprisonment.[6] The occupation of teaching flesh and blood human beings is for the most part secondary; with one's eyes firmly fixed on the prize of immortality, the other-as-pupil is to be engaged only to the extent such pedagogical communion aids in deliverance unto the world of Forms. Analogous to the *Symposium*'s picture of "Platonic love," the beloved-student, a composite of body and soul, becomes in the end a means to a soulful end; one *ascends* from the beautiful other to Beauty itself.[7] The other may indeed share this same end, but it is not to him or her that we look; Platonic teaching does not look *to* other human beings so much as it looks *with* them or, perhaps, *through* them.

The other half of the unified Socratic vision, though, does look *to* the other in order to find and preserve itself. This is the view of immortality animating my father's remark cited above: one lives on by influencing other human beings as a teacher, and then in the influence they, in turn, have on still others, and so on *ad infinitum*, like never-ending ripples in an infinite human pond. For the purposes of chronological consistency, I shall label this view "sophistic" -- not in Plato's derogatory sense, but, generically, as a reference to the professional teachers of fifth- and fourth-century B.C. Greece.[8] The sophists *sold* their wisdom to others, mostly young male aristocrats who needed to "win friends and influence people" through rhetoric and other practical arts. Like all professionals the sophists collected fees, but what is central for present purposes is that, unlike Plato, and by virtue of their very trade, the sophists tended to see the ultimate "payoff" of education as centered squarely in *human* affairs. Education is for skillful domestic management, acquiring and maintaining social status and, most importantly, swaying hearts and minds in the law courts and in the Assembly.[9] As J.B. Bury writes:

> The institutions of a Greek democratic city presupposed in the average citizen the faculty of speaking in public, and for anyone who was ambitious for a political career it was indispensable. If a man was hauled into a law-court by his enemies and did not know how to speak, he was like an unarmed civilian attacked by soldiers. The power of expressing ideas clearly and in such a way as to persuade an audience was an art to be learned and taught. But it was not enough to gain command of a vocabulary; it was necessary to learn how to argue, and to exercise one's self in the discussion of political and ethical questions. There was a demand for higher education.[10]

The sophists, it must be remembered, were a mixed bag, representing a panoply of techniques, styles and concerns, so one must be careful not to paint them with too broad a brush. But one generalization might withstand scrutiny, especially relative to the Platonists: their main concern was by and large human and practical, focused as they were on preparing young men for civic life. Not that they were without ideals transcending utility, though. For example, as G. B. Kerferd notes, the pedagogical views of Protagoras, perhaps the subtlest of all the sophists, may be summarized in his statement that "Education does not sprout in the soul, unless one goes to a greater depth."[11] Indeed, by far the most influential educator of the day was a pupil of the famous sophist Gorgias, Isocrates, the rival -- in many ways, successful -- of Plato. In his landmark study, H. I. Marrou writes:

> On the whole it was Isocrates, not Plato, who educated fourth-century Greece and, subsequently the Hellenistic and Roman worlds; it was from Isocrates that, "as from a Trojan horse," there emerged all those teachers and men of culture, noble idealists, simple moralists, lovers of fine phrases, all those fluent voluble speakers, to whom classical antiquity owed both the qualities and the defects of its main cultural tradition.[12]

But whatever depths sophistic pedagogy reached, it was first and foremost directed toward augmenting the success and influence of its charges in a through and through human world. The sophists upheld the banner of "relevance to life" against, as they understood it, the Platonic School's obsession with "intellectual mastery of unimportant trifles."[13]

Classical Greece, then, presents us with two *de facto* separable foci around which the ultimate purposes of education and, by extension, motivating reasons for teaching, may be articulated. The one looks "upward" to the star-lit divine: the Platonic shedding of this-worldly distractions pursuant to an epiphanous yet enduring identification with the *logos*, the truth -- a yearning for a kind of immortality whose passageway is a glimpse at the structure and content of the cosmos. But the other ideal looks "downward" toward earth, to an educated *person* who can flourish him or herself as well as garner prosperity -- material, political, cultural, ethical -- within and for the world of other human beings. This earthward-gazing sophistic ideal lives on through people and their associations, not sublimated in a disembodied reason.

But what is the relevance of this ancient and local quarrel for the contemporary scene? I would suggest that it matters a great deal in fundamental, though perhaps surprising, ways. For, to use Zygmunt Bauman's phrase, both "immortality strategies" are still powerfully with us today.[14]

First, let us revisit Plato, this time in contemporary garb. The great tenor saxophonist Illinois Jacquet once said, "now I don't want to be around here forever, I just want to be a part of something that's gonna last forever."[15] Implied in this statement about jazz, I think, is a concern for immortality not so distant from Plato's -- which should not be surprising, after all, to find in a musician, music for Plato being an outflowing from a more primal celestial-mathematical harmony. Not wholly Platonic, of course (jazz music is a human creation, though what of the relations it expresses?), Jacquet is still articulating a rationale for doing what he does: at the end of the day it is worthwhile because it "links up" somehow with what is larger than his own immediate self, even larger than any individuals he has known or played with. In the above quotation he connects his legacy with something larger than himself or anyone in particular, that is, with *jazz music*. Posthumously, he was/is what he is by virtue of having been "a part of" that jazz music, his participation in it -- could the language be any more Platonic? -- defines his life's work, his artistic labors. At this momentary peak from which he surveys the course of his career he does not choose to say that he sold a lot of records or made anybody's life better. He is *not* saying, as one often hears, "it all would've been

worth it if I could've touched just one person," or anything of the kind. Not that he has *not* done this, though, or that it need be in any way distasteful to have done so. It is simply beside the point; the ultimate for this musician is just not to be found there. He is identifying himself with something larger, something altogether human, to be sure, but not for that reason *merely* human, something with its own life and times, maybe even its own death. In this sense, jazz is human, though not-too human; and, as they say, the beat goes on.

Perhaps the most powerful embodiment of this Platonic kind of immortality is to be found in the research ethos animating the natural sciences (and emanating, owing to very this-worldly causes, from there to other "wanna be" areas of academic inquiry, including educational research). Need it be said that the scientific enterprise is in some important sense beyond the individuals it engages, beyond even historical epochs, nations and cultures. This is not a point concerning the sociology of science or Thomas Kuhn. Maybe science as we know it is in some basic sense western, patriarchal, trapped within some epistemic paradigm, or otherwise shot through with particularity, limitation, and human interest. Be that as it may, the present point concerns the ideals, the self-understanding of the activity, of its institutions and its practitioners, not its ontological status. The Nobel Prize-winning physicist Steven Weinberg is not *merely* naive when he writes, "It certainly feels to me that we are discovering something real in physics, something that is what it is without any regard to the social or historical conditions that allowed us to discover it."[16] Embarrassing as it may be to the luxury box-seat observers of scientific research, from the players themselves, like Weinberg, slips the voice of the "real."

In this sense I wager that we are still Greek to the following extent: imagine there were no short or long-term "real world" payoffs to knowing the way the universe is structured, nothing one could make or do as a result. For that reason would we no longer want to *know*? A colleague of mine tells of a mathematician years ago at the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton who on occasion could he heard, sitting by himself in his office late at night, to be weeping at the beauty of a mathematical proof. Is this just a *silly* man? One gone insane? Hardly. This is a man better described as having a foothold in an immortal realm, halfway between human beings and the gods. So says the Platonist in our scientists. These are the ones whose all-too rare motivation lies in reaching for what is apart from the day-to-day. This is why, alone with a scratch sheet for numbers and formulae, a mathematician can shed the wondering, wonderful tears of a child.[17] Again, Weinberg: "It is when we study truly fundamental problems that we expect to find beautiful answers."[18]

Somewhere buried far beneath the grant-getting, the contracts, the everydayness, the engineering applications, and the sociology of scientific research, there lies a motivating purity, one captured in that solitary yet singularly un-lonely weeping. This is an unpopularly uncynical position, I realize. It assumes a distinction -- far beyond my present scope to defend -- between science and technology, as well as one between science and politics, each in broad senses. (If our scientists no longer weep, perhaps this means that we no longer have scientists.) The point for now is that there is a skyward Platonic gaze that has motivated scientific research in our culture and, here and there, still seems to do so. Consider the following from Albert Einstein:

> I believe with Schopenhauer that one of the strongest motives that leads men to art and science is escape from everyday life with its painful crudity and hopeless dreariness, from the fetters of one's own ever-shifting desires. A finely tempered nature longs to escape from personal life into the world of objective perception and thought; this desire may be compared with the townsman's irresistible longing to escape from his noisy, cramped surroundings into the high mountains, where the eye ranges freely through the still, pure air and fondly traces out the restful contours apparently built for eternity.[19]

Plato could not have said it better himself.

On these understandings, teaching is worthwhile because it continues and extends a noetic search for the *logos*, for the truth about the universe, not because it creates for oneself new and fashionable -isms or a circle of devotees (though it may in fact do this). Every research paper's footnote becomes

swept up in the quest. In this sense, Isaac Newton, regardless of how he is surpassed by relativity and quantum mechanics is never dead and buried, but is living in deathless nurturance of an undertaking that is "gonna last forever." Even as he dismantles the Newtonian worldview, Einstein pauses in his notes, offering an apologia across the centuries:

> Enough of this. Newton forgive me. You found the only way that, in your day, was at all possible for a man of the highest powers of intellect and creativity. The concepts that you created still dominate the way we think in physics, although we now know that they must be replaced by others farther removed from the sphere of immediate experience if we want to try for a more profound understanding of the way things are interrelated.[20]

The beat goes on here, too.

However powerful this Platonism of the scientist, it is the sophistic kind of immortality that is far more common in society at large, particularly among schoolteachers, usually so far removed from "advancing the frontiers of knowledge," from the research ideal, but all the closer to the actual human beings for whom they care and bring along. This is an ideal that binds together parents, educators, and lawmakers -- "making the world a better place," where "world" is understood as a *populated* one. How many tales are told of the Great Teacher without whom the author would not be here today? How much ink has been spilled, how many trees felled, to supply us with such literature (itself an apparently undying phenomenon)?[21] But however hackneyed the literary form, how many teachers can deny their desire to be that Great Teacher, at least once, or twice, or once in awhile? Here it makes sense to say, as it does not for Illinois Jacquet or for Albert Einstein, "if I can reach just one person it will all have been worth it." The smallest pebble creates ripples on the water's surface just as surely as the boulder. Two second grade teachers from suburban New York, when asked about the biggest rewards of their job, report:

> I think the biggest reward is watching the light bulb turn on in somebody's head. You try five or six approaches to get an idea across, and all of a sudden the child says, "Oh, you mean"…and you say, "Thank you, God. Yes, that is what I mean." Also to watch them grow up and see the people they have become by June.[22]

Such caringly *human*-directed sentiments, in all their variety, are typical enough of teachers, as well they ought to be. What would one make of a teacher who derived no sustenance at all from the students themselves?

Still, there are warranted worries about this picture of immortality through teaching -- mostly because it smacks of an egoism unseemly in a truly caring and hence other-directed teacher. In the extreme, in fact, it seems positively vampirish: the morbidly self-centered teacher searches for promising victims in whom his or her "influence" can survive. Even worse, as such a teacher, I may start to view my students as so many opportunities to carbon-copy myself -- my classroom a nightmarish (or maybe merely comical) sort of zomboid assembly-line. A variation might be a teacherly analogue to the "little league parent," who imposes his or her own dreams and lost opportunities onto the student, running roughshod over the individuality -- not to mention the mental health -- of the emotionally trapped child. "I want to give you what I never had" so often has its price. A final worry lies in the idea of "having influence" *per se*, as opposed to having a *educative* influence. Recall the notorious English teacher, Mr. Ostrowski, from *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, who told young Malcolm Little that, despite his demonstrated intellectual talents, he should lower his sights from law school to a more manual trade like carpentry, owing to his race. ("But you've got to be realistic about being a nigger. A lawyer -- that's no realistic goal for a nigger.")[23] This teacher surely "lives on" posthumously. But in that way so do not only Mr. Ostrowski (a "well-meaning" bigot, to be sure), but also Adolph Hitler and the executed serial killer John Wayne Gacy.[24] Bad guys have their kind of immortality, too. But is this what an educator is after: plain notoriety? This cannot be so, for mere infamy, as I shall make clearer below, is far too lonely a proposition for a teacher. What is needed here is immortality *as an educator*, an (after)life with living meaning. The notion of "influence" must be modified accordingly somehow.

Ironically, the antidote to egoism and manipulation as immortality strategies is to be found in that same Platonic skyward gaze that tends to appear so coldly impersonal to the caringly earthbound teacher. For such abuses are prevented precisely by one who cares for the logos, by one who is disposed toward Truth-seeking, even against immediate self-interest. Here, literally, is a teacher "beyond influence," one dedicated, above all, to ushering the student into some arena of human understanding, and not one recruiting acolytes for oneself or for some "cause." Paradoxically, you can find yourself in your pupil precisely by refusing to let her find herself in *you*, asking her, as does Nietzsche's Zarathustra, "One repays a teacher badly if one always remains nothing but a pupil. And why do you not want to pluck at my wreath?"[25] In this sense, the "truthful" teacher is *ipso facto* readied for the dissolution of the ego; she does not pretend to possess impossible Truths, but rather allows herself to be possessed of the intellectual virtue of Socratic ignorance -- which one must realize is consistent with a "will to truth," to adopt Nietzsche's phrase -- where the search never culminates in dogmatic and restful possession, but only in still further dogged and restive pursuit. If my aim is to teach what is true, I am at once placed beyond the more mundane egoistic forms of corruption mentioned above. Plato understands this well when he ensures that in his *Republic* the Guardians of the state are lovers of learning first and rulers only reluctantly, pulled by the collar as they must be from their turn at the pipe in their preferred opium den of philosophizing.[26] As always, there is a grain of insight in even the most outrageous Platonic proposal.

Thus the egoistic perversion of immortality-through-one's-students is held in check by an allegiance to something beyond the teacher-student dyad, something to which both sets of eyes must be turned. Conversely, however, the earthward glance that sees teaching as ensconced in human affairs countervails just as critically against *its* opposite -- the notion that education culminates in an attachment to some pristine, non-human Truth-In-Itself. The difficulty at this extreme is that sublimating oneself into the search for universal truths is no longer necessarily harmless, as the figure of the atomic physicist warns us so eloquently. The scientist-cum-technologist tinkering with irresistible brain puzzles may be tinkering at the same time with a great deal else (for example, human lives, the biosphere). Thus our latter-day scientific Platonists, to continue with this convenient example, find themselves encumbered inescapably by responsibilities of a *social* nature, by duties tethering them back to an all-too human world, even as cognition strains to break free of such associative bonds. The physicist Edward Teller's statement that "it is *not* the scientist's job to determine whether a hydrogen bomb should be constructed, whether it should be used, or how it should be used"[27] sounds less and less convincing in a world poised for high-tech annihilation as our post-Cold War world still is.[28]

To guard against disaster, then, the teacher-learner of science -- even at the most rarified levels of research -- must attend to the voices of other human beings. What are the consequences of my research? How am I implicated? Should I be? Such questions strike uncomfortably near the heart of Platonism as a guide to pedagogy, and the asking of them illustrates the limits to Plato's otherworldly extreme, an obsession that can now be mobilized to destroy its own conditions for existence in a Strangelovian push of the button. How much "Truth" can we uncover if we blow up the planet, or let it die a slow toxic death from our plastic abundance? Infamously, it should be remembered, Plato never even asks the following questions: after escaping out onto the sunlit surface, why should I return to the shadowy all-too human cave? Why not stay outside among the Forms? Why should I care to go back? What obliges me to share my learning, to teach? Without a pre-existing bond with other human beings, such questions can have no answer, and Plato's assumption that the teacher should return to the cave merely presupposes rather than argues for such intersubjective ties. As Bernard Williams has noted, one cannot *argue* a person into caring for someone else. All one can hope is to render the human ties more perspicuous; if they are not there -- somewhere -- all is pathologically lost.[29] Sophistic pedagogy's earthward gaze in this way grounds the moral voice that calls the educator back from the brink of Platonic indifference, just as a dose of Platonism wards off egoism and manipulation from the overly human-centered teacher. Yet this criss-crossing of motivation is not at all a simple matter. On the contrary, it will require daily, perhaps hourly, negotiation and renegotiation in response to the exigencies of practice. As a teacher,

one can be corrupted from many directions: subject, child and self may center as well as de-center, depending upon the situation. One might say that teaching is by nature a perpetually corruptible business, only for those who do not mind their hands a little dirty. Required is the artistry, a sort of Aristotelian phronetic "sense," not only of how to avoid the extremes, but also how to use them to maintain the sweet spot at the center, adjusting the tension from each end as need be.

A suitable parable may be found, appropriately enough, in the story of the original mentor, Mentor, the character in Homer's *Odyssey*. Mentor leads the son Telemachos in his search for Odysseus his long-lost father. Yet in doing so Mentor does not speak in his own voice. His role is to serve as a mouthpiece for Pallas Athene, goddess of wisdom and the lost father's guardian. Athene chooses to take on the visage and voice of Mentor as she guides the young searcher Telemachos. A wise learner, Telemachos allows her. Wisdom thus speaks *through* Mentor not *from* him, and so is heard; Mentor's proper role is to vanish into wisdom for the sake of wisdom's pupil, as the pupil searches for his past and for his future. So must die the teacher in order to live. And thus rehearses the learner for "the death that is common to all."[30]

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1. *The* archetype is the Mentor of Homer's *Odyssey*. See Homer's *Odyssey*, Parts II-III, *passim*.

2. Milan Kundera, *Immortality* (New York: Harper Collins, 1992), 4.

3. *Phaedo* 82c

4. Ibid., 83d

5. Ibid., 84b

6. *Republic*, 518b-d; *Phaedo*, *passim*.

7. *Symposium* 210-12.

8. In this I follow G.B. Kerferd, *The Sophistic Movement* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981).

9. They also trained teachers, who became further Sophists, see Kerferd, *The Sophistic Movement*, 17.

10. J.B. Bury, and Russell Meiggs*History of Greece to the Death of Alexander the Great* (London: Macmillan, 1975), 241. Quoted in Kerferd, *The Sophistic Movement*, 17.

11. H. Diels and W. Kranz, *Die Fragmente der Borsokratiker*, vol. II, 6th ed. (Berlin: 1952, and later reprints), Section C, "Aeltere Sophistik," 80B11. Cited in Kerferd, 41.

12. H. I. Marrou, *A History of Education in Antiquity*, trans. George Lamb (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1956), 79.

13. Werner Jaeger, *Paideia: the Ideals of Greek Culture*, Vol. III, trans. Gilbert Highet (New York: Oxford University Press, 1944), 68.

14. See his *Mortality, Immortality and Other Life Strategies* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1992)

15. This is taken from a documentary on Illinois Jacquet appearing on the Bravo Channel, Bloomington, Ill., March 1994.

16. Steven Weinberg, *Dreams of a Final Theory: The Scientist's Search for the Ultimate Laws of Nature* (New York: Vintage Books, 1993), 188.

17. The die-hard pragmatist will object that our mathematician's psychic-aesthetic "satisfaction" is but a practical consequence of his mathematical activity. This is true but trivial. It evacuates the term "practical" of any meaning at all, as pragmatists of a certain cast are wont to do.

18. Weinberg, *Dreams of a Final Theory*, 163.

19. Quoted in Banesh Hoffmann, *Albert Einstein, Creator and Rebel* (New York: Plume, 1972), 221. The quotation is from remarks delivered at the official celebration of Max Planck's 60th birthday. Einstein continues:

The supreme task of the physicist is to arrive at those universal elementary laws from which the cosmos can be built up by pure deduction. There is no logical path to these laws; only intuition, resting on sympathetic understanding, can lead to them.…The longing to behold [cosmic] harmony is the source of the inexhaustible patience and perseverance with which Planck has devoted himself…to the most general problems of our science.…The state of mind that enables a man to do work of this kind is akin to that of the religious worshipper or the lover; the daily effort comes from no deliberate intention or program, but straight from the heart (222).

20. Ibid., 247-48.

21. Where are the heartfelt memoirs, one might also ask, grateful dedications, fond remembrances for the pedagogical method, technique or machine that made me what I am today, gave me courage to do X, opened my eyes to Y, etc.?

22. Quoted from Susan Dichter, *Teachers: Straight Talk from the Trenches* (Los Angeles: Lowell House, 1989), 218.

23. Malcolm X, as told to Alex Haley, *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* (New York: Grove Press, 1965), 36.

24. There is also a question analogous to the problem of moral luck, "pedagogical luck," perhaps. Regarding the case at hand, Malcolm X later speculates:

I've often thought that if Mr. Ostrowski had encouraged me to become a lawyer, I would today probably be among some city's professional black bourgeoisie, sipping cocktails and palming myself off as a community spokesman for and leader of the suffering black masses, while my primary concern would be to grab a few more crumbs from the groaning board of the two-faced whites with whom they're begging to "integrate."

All praise be due to Allah that I went to Boston when I did. If I hadn't, I'd probably still be a brainwashed black Christian (38).

25. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Penguin Books, 1954), 78.

26. Plato, *Republic*, 540b-e.

27. Quoted in Paul Boyer, *By the Bomb's Early Light: American Thought and Culture at the Dawn of the Atomic Age* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1985), 342.

28. In the sciences these days, even the technocrat lacking moral resources must attend to human affairs, if only to lobby for the public funding Big Science now needs in order to advance itself (for example, the planned Texas superconducting supercollider of recent memory).

29. Bernard Williams, *Morality: An Introduction to Ethics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), 10

30. Homer, *Odyssey*, III, 237. The full quotation, from Athene in the voice of Mentor, reads: "Yet not even the Gods can ward off from a man they love/The death that is common to all at whatever time/The ruinous fate of all-sorrowful death seizes him" (236-38).

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