

Who do we mean by humanity?

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Practice Notes are short easy to follow articles to clarify primary concepts in apithology theory for novice practitioners.

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HUMANITARIAN CARE

The most vitally important idea that we can take to heart for the wellbeing of the human species and its supporting habitats is to care for each other. What is also clear is that we must also care for the others each of us holds dear. If you harm what I care for, you may unwillingly also harm, my capacity for caring. Given these recognised principles, how does the field of apithology approach what it means to care for humanity? As a discipline of humanity caring how do its considerations differ from other humanitarian ambitions, especially those affecting the different fortunes of all humans?

THREE HUMANITIES

Not surprisingly, the concept of humanity has three distinctive uses, each with a difference in emphasis. There is the 14th Century study of the human experience through the arts, music, literature, poetry, religion and philosophy, all known together as the humanities (i.e. Latin: *humanitas*). There is also the 18th Century morality of giving others benefits we hold personally valuable in humane decency (i.e. to act with humanity). There is only more recently the 20th Century explicit recognition of equal human rights arising from our in-common membership of the human species (i.e. our humanness). We now hold true a declaration of human freedom and equality irrespective of origins, locations, cultures, genders, capacities or circumstances. We are a species intensely interested in ourselves and reflective on our processes of reflection; logically, artistically, practically and poetically. As humans, we express our humanity, humanely (and inhumanely), as recorded by the humanities.

HUMANITY HOLDING

In apithology, humanitarian actions are additionally informed by motivations of humanity-level caring. Moving pathology from one location (or generation) to

another is not seen as necessarily health giving. Even if our intentions are sound, the enablement of health for all, is not accomplished by the amelioration of suffering only for some. This simple premise creates an entirely different basis for ethical practice. A humanity holding informs individual enactments of apithology practice. A wider gaze applies. The question is how to do this actually?

HUMANITY'S ONE CARING

To adopt an ethic of humanity caring is to embrace three apithological graduations in the concept of humanity. These are known by three succinct maxims. They are: one humanness (many capacities); one caring (many contributions); one destiny (many pathways). The first maxim recognises that all of humanity is of one membership, with differing capabilities (causing distinct inequalities). The second maxim recognises there are many forms of caring, and all are needed (even if conflicting). The third maxim recognises that our existential aims have diversity, but do not need to be disparate (nor involve animosity). Holding these principles equally prompts an inquiry into humanity's potentialities. The three maxims together provide a premise for investigation of what it means to care for a small humanity, intimately. Our actions with locality extend in apithology to the care we have as humans, with humanity, for all humanity. This invites a responsibility as a member of humanity to be contributive to the health of the whole, of all of us. This simple understanding involves an ethic of situating the practical actions of our own contributions within a context of wider caring. We reflect on our own desires, so as to not impact unconsciously. This means beginning differently so as to be in service 'as, with, for' a future humanity that will one day come to hold itself, in one-caring.

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