

Aristotle's Virtue Ethics and Applied Ethics

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Abstract

In the modern ethics (esp. applied ethics), virtue ethics is often regarded as important alternative to current moral theories (e.g. utilitarianism, deontology). Virtue ethics is a kind of revival and reinterpretation of that of Aristotle. However, I suspect that modern virtue ethics and that of Aristotle himself have a difference in several crucial points. In my paper, I examine distinctive features of Aristotle's own virtue ethics. They are, for example, as follows. (i) Aristotle emphasizes circulate and complementary relationship between character (virtue / vice) and action. He also realizes the significance of action. (ii) He regards the case study approach as important and introduces it in his own ethical inquiry. (iii) He does not necessarily hold a moral or cultural relativism concerning the content of each virtue. I will examine these points and evaluate the significance of his virtue ethics in the context of modern applied ethics at the conference.