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Consoling the Troubled: An Ancient Art of Kindness

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When I began my research that led to the writing of this paper on consolation, I never foresaw discovering the substantive – I dare say, forceful – combination of ideas regarding the practice of consolation that I will lay out before you. It arose from my multi-year research project on the idea of care – research undertaken without an agenda, with no convictions as to what care *ought* to mean. As the research progressed, I was taken with the dialectic I discovered between two very basic and early meanings of care: care as anxious or worried care, as in the phrase, the cares and worries of life; and care as solicitous care, which, while retaining the notion of anxious care, shows a certain tendency towards attentiveness to other and self – hence a protecting or helping care. An important question had arisen in that research: What are the significant ways in which humans have responded, psychologically and morally, to anxious care?

Until I began the recent research that led directly to the claims you find in this paper, I had regarded consolation simply as one of about fifteen care-like actions or virtues, alongside others like hospitality, mercy, charity, and sympathy. As you will see, research involved in preparing this paper brought those two major themes (the meaning of care and consolation as the practice of care) together in unexpected ways, leading me to a number of major conclusions: that consolation is an originary act or practice of care; that it probably should be regarded as a plausible starting-point for the moral life and in the art of living; that the structure of consolation requires a radical rethinking of the meaning of empathy, compassion, and sympathy; and, consequently, that it is important to retrieve the forgotten tradition of consolation.

Accordingly, my analysis of the extensive 'Consolation Literature' that reaches back to antiquity responds to a number of specific questions: What does it mean to console? What are some of the dominant themes in the history of consolation literature, themes that have a bearing on how one consoles and is consoled? What is the inner structure of consolation, in the classic (Roman) sources, and how does the structure of consolation relate to the history of the idea of care? What is the role of 'security' in the classical world's attempt to alleviate anxiety? What conclusions can be drawn from the classical sources, regarding the dialectic found at the heart of consolation? What are the implications of the classical sources for our understanding of traditional meanings of empathy and compassion? What role does

In this issue

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consolation play in ethics; and especially, what sort of virtue is exercised in consoling? Is there a similarity between the structure of consolation in antiquity and the structure of consolation in modern neuroscientific discoveries? How are these new conclusions regarding consolation that we gain from ancient and modern sources applied to the practice of medicine?

There are several reasons why it is important for us to rediscover and revive the great tradition of consolation. One could start with the observation that there is a great need for consolation in today's world, on both the personal as well as social levels. People are often in enormous discomfort and feel powerless over the causes of anxiety and unrest. That alone is sufficient reason for turning our attention to consolation or comfort.

For those of us who work in the humanities there is another reason: to console another provides an approach to these human problems that is active, direct and practical. In its inner core, where its meaning is found, consolation in the classical tradition does not rely on a complicated web of psychological or philosophical analysis. By contrast, the only other sentiments or virtues that are commonly regarded as serving this sort of function – especially empathy and compassion[1] – involve, more immediately, the question of sharing with and understanding the feelings of the other, without having an essential connection with action. I will argue, in this article, that consolation fills a need in ethics and the art of living that no other virtue, sentiment, or motive supplies.

I suspect many people think of consolation as related only to the grief of someone who has experienced the death of a loved one; and hence we tend to regard consolation as a very isolated act that has little to do with the moral art of living. I will argue that it pertains to so many aspects of life and is called for so frequently that it can be called a fundamental response to a fundamental aspect of human living.

To console: its meaning

In English there are three words related to consoling: to console, to offer solace, and to comfort. All three are roughly equivalent; but in this presentation I will speak only of consoling. To comfort is a term that, like console, means alleviating pain or anxious worry, and hence is equivalent to console; but because it also conveys the notion of strengthening the self or other (etymologically, 'com' means with and 'fort' suggests strengthening) it raises questions about how that strengthening or restoring is to occur –questions that I will not discuss explicitly in this lecture. For the purposes today, I will discuss 'to comfort' insofar as it is equivalent to the basic meaning of 'to console' and leave to another time an analysis of how one might develop a philosophy of comfort that corresponds to contemporary psychology, phenomenology, and the ethics and practice of health care.

Put quite simply, the usual definition of 'to console' is to mitigate or alleviate the anxiety of another. To this definition, which corresponds to Cicero's understanding of the term[2], I would add two elements. First, the object of consoling can be not only another person, but oneself as well; indeed, in some of the most important classical consolation literature, consoling oneself is the standard for consoling others. Second, consoling can go beyond mitigating or calming anxiety (which is the 'palliating' action of consolation); in some circumstances it is possible to *remove* the anxiety or suffering or transform it into something else, so that it no longer remains an 'anxious worry'.[3] Thus, the person who truly gives up a deep resentment, however difficult or rare that may be – for example, the patient who abandons her resentment over being 'the victim' of multiple sclerosis – loses the anxious care. An example is found in the dying Ivan Ilyich, who, having been consoled by an unexpected person, having been disappointed with the inadequate attention of family and doctors, and having drastically altered what he expected from his family, experienced a profound compassionate love for his family and thus discovered that death and the anxiety surrounding it had simply disappeared.[4]

The consolation tradition

Consolation has been promoted and expressed throughout the ages through Consolation Literature, Consolation Music, and Consolation Art. At the core of this tradition is the classical consolation literature, produced in the Greco-Roman world, which will serve as a model for my interpretation of consolation. But the history of consolation is much broader than that it includes Jewish and Christian literature on consolation that preceded the classical tradition, developed side-by-side with it, and then reshaped it.

Consolation literature is quite expansive. It includes letters, poems, tracts, and books, as well as sacred writings and sermons, much of it written for the benefit of friends, relatives, fellow-believers, and even strangers, who are anxious or suffering – frequently because of a death, but also because of some other onslaught or trouble of whatever kind.

The classical consolation writings were predominantly of a literary, rhetorical-philosophical character. I will begin

with the most famous consolation book of all times, *The Consolation of Philosophy,* written by Boethius in the sixth century (480-525 CE), while he was awaiting his execution. Prior to Boethius are sources that had a major influence on his thinking. The most influential of the classical consolation literature was written in the Hellenic period by Seneca (4 BCE - 65 CE), for example, his *Letter to Helvia*, and Cicero (106-43 BCE) in his *Tusculan Disputations,* in the first century of our era. One could then reach back eight centuries to the *Book of Consolation* which is contained within the Hebrew biblical book of Isaiah (8th century BCE)[5] and to the Book of Job (possibly 4th century BCE). In the Christian scriptures, the Gospel of Matthew, chapter 6, the Second Epistle to the Corinthians, chapter 1, and the Epistle to the Philippians, are all key consolation texts.

Some of the great minds of early Christianity composed literature of the same type, under the influence of classical secular antiquity, the Hebrew Scriptures, and the new Christian teachings. Those consolation writers included Cyprian, Basil the Great, Gregory of Nazianzus, Gregory of Nyssa, Chrysostom, Ambrose, Jerome, and Augustine. Isidore of Seville (560-636 CE) wrote on consolation at the beginning of the medieval period and Jean Gerson (1363-1429) at the end. In addition, there were the 14th-century mystics – especially the Rhinelander Meister Eckhart who composed a work of major importance called *The Book of Divine Consolation* and the English mystic Walter Hilton – and the influential devotional writer of the 15th century, Thomas à Kempis. Petrarch's book *The Secret Conflict of My Anxious Cares* was the most important consolation literature in the Renaissance period.

Some historians of consolation claim that consolation literature did not extend beyond the medieval period; but in fact there have been many influential modern writings on consolation, building on this tradition. Martin Luther (1483-1546 CE) wrote his *Fourteen Consolations* and many other writings on consolation; and Thomas More's *A Dialogue of Comfort* (1553), written when the author was awaiting his execution, is patterned after Boethius's work. Søren Kierkegaard's *Consider the Lilies* (1849) is a small classic of modern religious consolation; and Viktor Frankl's *Psychotherapy and Existentialism* (1967) employs some of the elements of classical consolation to develop psychotherapeutically-inspired approaches to consolation in the doctor-patient relationship.

The classical consolation literature of the Western world employs both broad themes and brief arguments (*topoi*) to accomplish the consolation of those who are grieving, as well as those who are experiencing troubles and suffering in other areas of life. Among the broad themes are discussions of detachment and fortune in consolation. A typical *topos* of consolation is found in the very first consolation writing in classical Greek literature, in the Iliad: 'But bear up, nor mourn endlessly in your heart, for there is not anything to be gained from grief for your son; you will never bring him back; sooner you must go through yet another sorrow.'[5]

Cicero offers an extensive philosophy in his work, *Tusculan Disputations*. For example, he argues that death is not an evil; that pain is not an evil; that the wise man will not suffer from anxiety and fear; and that virtue, found through philosophy, is sufficient for a happy life. These were the kinds of arguments that lay at the roots of classical consolation literature.

The Roman philosopher Seneca, in his *Letter to Marcia*, a woman whom he was consoling for the loss of her child, offered some of his typical arguments why a person should be consoled. He suggested that virtue should balance her grief, so as to make sure that she doesn't fall into excessive grief.[6] Another famous letter written by Seneca offered consolation for a circumstance that did not pertain to grief following a death. Writing to his mother Helvia, perhaps in the year 43 or 44 CE, Seneca consoles her over his own banishment to Corsica. Seneca consoles his mother because of the anxiety and worry she would be experiencing due to his absence and his enforced exile from his homeland. Seneca consoles his mother with simple, practical arguments, insisting that his situation in Corsica is quite pleasant; he has peace of mind; and she can too if she practices balanced virtue in the face of emotional distractions.

In the classical tradition that was firmly established by the Roman philosophers, consolation depended on arguments. That does not mean 'argument' in the sense of modern philosophy, which emphasizes precision, avoids emotion, and favors abstraction. As I see it, the word 'argument' simply meant that some reasonable explanation was given, or some account was offered, as to why the listener should be persuaded that his/her trouble is not insurmountable, and thus is alleviated. Thus, I think consolation is universal, even if it happens on occasion to use the language of belief, for at its core it is appealing to the person who is invited to use his/her reasoning powers to deal with anxieties. However, once the reasons are given that might alleviate the person's suffering, emotions also enter in, as the troubled person absorbs, accepts, and perhaps is greatly relieved to realize that all is not lost.

The rational approach to consolation was later absorbed into a Christian perspective by the most important early Christian intellectuals, who argued that the divine destiny of humans was a major source of consolation; but they

offered their arguments while absorbing the rational approach within their worldview.

The inner structure of consolation, starting with Boethius

While many different approaches have been taken to consolation in the Western world's vast literature on the topic, my purpose is to examine what I call the basic structure of consolation as manifested in classical texts. However, the basic structure of consolation that begins with classical Latin sources can be found and confirmed in Italian Renaissance sources and modern German literature, all of which have been strongly influenced by the same Roman literature. That distinctive model of consolation shows how consolation is fundamentally linked with the primordial experience of care (the Latin *cura*) understood as worry or anxiety (as in the English-language phrase, 'the cares and worries of life').

The starting-point for best understanding the inner structure of the experience, idea, and practice of consolation is an understanding of the object of consolation. If we ask what the classical consolation literature regarded as the object of consolation, the answer would be the other person's anxious care, worry, or preoccupation. This starting-point will help us to develop a framework for a philosophical anthropology of consolation that can be useful for understanding what consolation is and how best to practice the art of responding to the anxieties, worries, or preoccupations of self and others.

The basic structure of consolation – which provides a basic model for understanding consolation – can be found in the language of Boethius's *Consolation of Philosophy*, which has been called 'the single most important document of the entire consolation tradition.'[7] No one doubts that Boethius's book, completed between the years 524 and 526, had enormous influence on subsequent consolation literature. What makes Boethius even more interesting is his place in history: although chronologically he belongs to antiquity – and reflects views on consolation from classical antiquity – he is often categorized as a medieval thinker, because the philosophical style in which he wrote guaranteed his enormous influence on medieval philosophy and theology.

There have been many historians of philosophy who have held that Boethius is not a great thinker, because he was too unoriginal, having served as a mere conduit for the ideas of others from antiquity. Relihan rejects this view, arguing that Boethius's book is 'a work of surprising originality.'[8] The great medievalist John Marenbon has demonstrated in considerable detail and quite convincingly that Boethius was 'an original and important thinker...a great author.' He concludes that Boethius's arguments, especially in the *Consolation*, 'are often far more careful, sophisticated, and, in their own terms, successful than has usually been recognized....'.[9]

What makes Boethius's book on consolation so effective is partly the fact that he, one of his age's most capable philosophers and theologians, wrote it while in prison awaiting his own execution under mandate from Theodoric, king of the Ostrogoths. His anxiety and suffering must have been truly intense, partly accentuated by the fact that, as a member of one of the great families of old Roman aristocracy who held important positions both in Rome and in Ravenna, the imperial capital, he was powerless to find reprieve from his condemnation. On internal grounds, his work's effectiveness is assured by its literary style: Boethius uses a combination of poetry and prose to probe the images of consolation; and through his dialogue format – in conversations, sometimes quite contentious, between himself and Lady Philosophy – he works out the issues and problems associated with consolation.

It is not my purpose to summarize and analyze Boethius's entire approach to consolation – which is philosophically complex and moves in various directions that do not always appear consistent one with the other – but rather to draw from his fascinating text some of the components of what I take to be a major model for understanding and practicing consolation. Thus, my method is literary, and my goal is to develop a model-ethic that can be used in professional ethics and the art of consoling and being consoled.

The object of consolation in Boethius: anxiety or worried care

My attempt to construct a basic model for understanding and practicing consolation depends substantively on what I have discovered, in the literature of late antiquity, to be an implicit yet very clear and forceful underlying structure of the meaning and components of consolation. I offer a vision of that basic structure of the experience of consolation by describing its three elements. The first element is found by asking the question: What, in Boethius's work, is the object of consolation?

In her very first statement, Lady Philosophy – the personified symbol of wisdom, one who connects earth and heaven, the practical with the contemplative, and who showed evidence of grief, the same feeling that she would attempt to cure in Boethius – began her discourse with Boethius by identifying the object of consolation in him: it was the '*noxia cura*' of the Latin text, the 'noxious cares' or 'noxious anxieties' or harmful worries that Boethius

was experiencing.[10] Lady Philosophy described Boethius's worst symptoms in a sentence that can be loosely translated this way: '...the mind, having abandoned its own light, moves into external darkness whenever noxious care arises in immense proportions.'[11]

It is interesting to note that there is a certain linguistic affinity among the words used for the object of consolation in three dominant western language groups: in Latin (the *'cura'* of which Boethius speaks); in the Romance languages (e.g. the Italian *'cura'* or *'affanno'* understood as preoccupation); in German *('Sorge');* and in English ('care' in its meaning as worry or anxiety).

This linguistic coincidence – whereby the same concept is used to designate a single, overriding object of consolation in various cultures – would seem to enable a certain unity of consolation across cultures. Yet it is important to acknowledge that what we are dealing with are emotions and emotion-words in various languages, and we cannot assume that there is a shared culture of emotion-words in general and of care-language or consolation-language in particular across the various language barriers. For that reason it is important to offer some critical comments on the international and intercultural semantics of care in reference to my observation that the language of anxious-care is used to describe the objects of consolation.

The need for a comparative critique of anxious care can begin with a consideration of the English word 'care'. Many people for whom English is their second or third language, as well as native speakers who have learned the language only in recent decades, may not be aware that one of the most basic meanings of the English word 'care' is anxiety or worry. Consequently, some may be of the opinion that, because the English word 'care' is not so commonly associated with emotions of anxiety, worry, and grief, it should probably not be put on the same plane, for example, with the German word for care, '*Sorge,*' which is defined as 'oppressive feeling of unrest and anxiety'.[12] Yet the apparent weakness of the anxiety element in the English word 'care' is only apparent, for the definition of the English word 'care' as anxiety, worry, or mental perturbation is just as basic a meaning for the English word 'care' as are the parallel meanings that attach to the care-words in Latin, Romance, and German languages. The English word 'care' derives indirectly from the Middle High German word *'kar'* – a word that meant 'trouble, grief, or care.'[13] Indeed, the meaning of care as anxious worry seems to have been the most common understanding of the word 'care' in English literary texts right up until the mid-20th century.

Thus, while it is important to be attentive to possible variations in the emotional meanings and connotations of care words in contemporary languages, I believe we can be assured that the three groups of modern languages that I am discussing have consistently been used, in agreement with the ancient language of the consolation literature (Latin), to designate the *single, unified* object of consolation that we find in Boethius: anxious worry or preoccupation.

However, that preliminary conclusion leads us to an additional step in our inquiry; for we must now ask whether the writings that preceded Boethius and on which he depended also designate human cares or anxious worries as the object of consolation. Consequently, we will now attempt to see how Horace, the most important Roman literary author, who clearly influenced Boethius and other consolation writers through the centuries, spoke about the anxious care that he – and his readers as well – would want to alleviate.

Horace: a witness to anxiety in antiquity

Horace has offered, in his poetry, some unforgettable images of anxious care or anxious worry. It should be noted that he also discusses the more positive care, the solicitous care that one may direct towards other humans, the self and other interests; but he wants to highlight the negative experience of the burden of the existential worry expressed by the Latin *cura*. He refigures human anxiety by personifying her as the *comes atra*, the dark companion who oppresses him without giving him a moment's rest.[14] She becomes a 'maleficent divinity, external to man but firmly and inexorably tied to him'.[15] Kiesling calls this oppressively anxious *'cura'* that infests the human an instance of 'the kingdom of worry' (*der Reich der Sorge)*; and in so doing he is making it clear that *when the Romans spoke of consolation they were speaking of a remedy for a far-reaching, ever-present force in their everyday lives.*

The negative and sometimes personified image of anxious care in Roman antiquity is not unique to Horace; Virgil used comparable images[16], and Lucrezio used the image with the same sort of frequency and intensity as did Horace.

It is also important to note that Horace situates his repeated and multi-dimensional representation of anxious worry in the framework of the art of living. He is concerned with the question: How should I deal with the suffering that comes with anxiety? For example, he is concerned with problems that are deeply embedded in the history of the art of living: the fear of death; the sense of precariousness with which one lives; and the constant

loss of time. He wonders whether it is useful to try to make anxiety succumb to the wine or sleep that he turns to as an escape; and he discusses whether wealth will remove anxious worry – unlikely, he claims, because wealth is the source of a new anxiety. Thus, from the personal level Horace elevates *cura* to a personified symbol of human unrest and anxiety[17] which, already in Horace, symbolizes the comprehensive object of human consolation.

Some six centuries later, Boethius uses the same imagery as Horace to describe the object of consolation: the 'dark cares' *('atras curas'*: III, V, 1-2; 8-10) which, interpreted as excluding light, guarantees that neither power nor glory will supply the needed consolation. And some thirteen centuries after Boethius, Goethe presents, in his *Faust,* a personified anxious worry *(Sorge)* in the form of a threatening grey hag who challenges Faust's soul and purpose in life: 'Care nesting deep within the heart/ will quickly wreack her secret pangs.'[18]

We are now able to point to an additional element of consolation in antiquity, for it is clear, partly from the literary sources I have cited, that *the world of late antiquity, in which the consolation literature arose, was shaped by anxiety and by the search for remedies for the torments of anxiety.* Hans Dieter Betz explains that there were many reasons why E. R. Dodds appropriately spoke of the later Roman Empire as an 'Age of Anxiety.'[19] 'The political catastrophes and socioeconomic unrest of the period have often been detailed. Less widely known is that for centuries men and women had been taught by anxiety-ridden writers, teachers, prophets, and philosophers.'[20]

This aspect of ancient consolation – that it was directed to an anxious worry that shaped all of human existence – means that consolation had a significance that went beyond the mere quieting of an individual's emotional confusion. What the classical writers are telling us is that consolation addressed a basic – perhaps *the basic* – negative characteristic of life; and as such, it addressed a feature of the broader culture. Perhaps consolation has the potential for serving the same purpose in our culture today.

Whereas we, in today's world, have multiplied the numbers and kinds of anxiety, each with its own diagnosis and treatment, the ancient tradition I am citing portrayed for us a single, unitary object of consolation: *anxious worry*, whether it was caused by injury, insult, loss, illness, death, socio-economic upheaval, invasion, natural disaster, or any other source of suffering. And whereas we tend to analyze the many dimensions of compassion and empathy whereby we might respond to those many troubles, a reading of the ancient sources convinces the reader that one can become a consoling person to the extent that one is simply attentive to the shared, common human experience of anxious suffering.

Security: consolation's way of treating anxiety

I turn now to the second step in establishing the framework of consolation from late Roman and other ancient sources. Just as *cura* (anxiety) is the object of consolation, so it can be said that the goal and means of consolation are found by way of security. Security was a care-related term of enormous importance in antiquity, and indeed right through the 19th century, in Western philosophy, religion, and literature. The Latin word *'securitas'* comes from *'sine cura'* – literally, 'without care' – and consequently its first meaning is the absence of worried anxiety, preoccupation, or fear.

Yet to live free from anxious worry and fear, security must also mean to be free from the dangers and risks that cause them. Taken in a positive sense, then, certain meanings of security go beyond the absence of anxiety to embrace additional effects that arise from living in security. Thus, security means *safety* when it is defined as freedom from risk or danger; and when it is defined as freedom from fear, it means *confidence*. In addition, it means *tranquillity* or even a tranquil life when it is defined as freedom from anxiety. At the level of emotions, security means *feeling of security*, especially when security is understood as a lack of dangers.[21]

The term 'security' was commonly used in these ways among the writers of the classical Latin period, for whom security was often viewed as the principal means of consolation and at the same time a major objective of the care of self. Thus, to find consolation was to find security; or, put another way, the purpose of consoling the self or others was to achieve security, the absence of anxieties or cares. The only reliable source of consolation would be any fortuitous, divine or human agency that could accomplish security for the person who is in anguish. We find the anxiety/security connection clearly articulated in Boethius's *Consolation of Philosophy.* Speaking of those who would rely on *power* (the power of kings is explicitly mentioned) to remove their cares and enable them to attain security and hence happiness, the lady *Philosophia* says this to Boethius: 'What then is this power, which cannot drive away the bite of worried *cares*, nor escape the stings of fear? Kings would all want to be *secure*, but they cannot; and yet they boast of this power.'[22] Another example is found in a dialogue on whether *glory* offers satisfactory consolation. Lady Philosophy asks Boethius: 'Would you like to have glory? But, distracted by glory's rough road, consider how you would stop being secure.'[23]

Security continued to be a significant idea throughout Western intellectual history, and not just at the personal level. It has played a major role in the history of political philosophy, including the thought of Augustine, Descartes, Spinoza, and Hobbes. For example, security was a constant concern in Thomas Hobbes's *Leviathan*. In this work, written in the seventeenth century, he spoke of the 'security of a man's person, in his life, and in the means of so preserving life, as not to be weary of it.'[24] The same sort of security is a major problem in many countries today, where the issue is whether and how the widespread anxious worries of an entire population create an intense public need for the sort of security that alleviates or removes anxiety through safety and confidence in the source of protection. Yet many modern nations fail to provide security, partly because of their love of profiteering from weapons, their fascination with violence, and the priority they place on ideology over safety. It is sad that they lack the will to deeply examine the ancient and modern philosophies of security and provide a revised sort of program of human survival that is acutely attentive to the social requirements of living (relatively) without anxiety and fear, ultimately for the sake of happiness.

In addition to its role in political philosophy, the idea of security, or a life 'without cares', has long played an important role in religious assurances against anxiety that have been presented by the Christian community. The need for spiritual security is high, when 'noxious worries' are the result of an intense consciousness that one's life, purpose, and soul have been lost or will be lost through sin and other human failings. The response of Christian religions to this anxious worry often uses the language of security; for example, in debates about Calvinism, one notes the importance of the eternal security of God's chosen people.[25] What we see here is the way in which the human quest for spiritual security is met with assurances from religious teachers that believers can have a very high degree of certitude that the anguish of being spiritually lost – which means an anguish that affects the whole *psyche* – will never return, under certain circumstances of faith and behavior. This would seem to be the highest form of consolation, particularly when death approaches. The problem with this approach is that security itself, or even the certitude of security, becomes the object of veneration. This can, in turn, create further basic anxieties on the part of the believers that they may be on the verge of betraying the requirements of faith, which are viewed as conditions for the reward of a certain security.

A very different approach is suggested by the rather more mystical idea that, beyond the quest for security through religious doctrine and belief, there must simply 'be room for God to be God'; and for that to happen – for God to be allowed to offer whatever divine security God wishes – we must be nothing but space for God to be God.[26] The idea that a more direct reliance on God will provide the sought-for security is found in the *Book of Proverbs, Proverbs 1, 20-33*'. But whoever listens to me may live secure, will have quiet, fearing no mischance.' In the surrounding text of Proverbs 1, security is united with personified wisdom, which is the same sort of imagery that Boethius proposed when he described the Boethius-like prisoner dialoguing with *Philosophia*, the lady who represents love of Sophia, or wisdom.

Care meets care: Dialectic at the heart of consolation

The third and final element of the inner structure of consolation that I have found in the texts of late antiquity is what I call texts in which two conflicting sorts of care meet, creating a dialectic at the heart of the dynamics of consolation. This conflict of word and image is common in secular literary and philosophical texts, but is probably nowhere so clear as in the First Letter of Peter, chapter 5, verse 7. The King James Version of the text is most striking from a linguistic perspective, because it (accurately) uses the single English word care for both conflicting meanings: 'Casting all your *care* upon him, for he has *care* of you.'[27] Scarcely any statement could be more powerfully consoling – at least for those who believe there is a God who has the capacity to care – than that simple statement of the dialectic of cares, which suggests a powerful inter-reaction between the Consoler and the human experiencing a crisis such as a terminal illness or impending death or, indeed, any burdensome trouble.

The difference between the two kinds of care mentioned in this text – the cares that we turn over to a God who is prepared to care for us – is very clear also in the authoritative Greek text, which opposes the worried care of *'merimna*', that we would want to get rid of, to the simply solicitous care of *'melei'*, which a consoling God will provide for us after we turn over our anxieties to the divinity.[28] The imagery suggested here is that we are invited to turn over our anxious cares or worries, and, in their place, receive, from whatever source, a solicitous care that consoles. Regarding the *merimna* word (negative care), one commentary says that 'the New Testament understands [anxious] care chiefly as the natural reaction of man to poverty, hunger and other troubles which befall him in his daily life. Oppressed by the burdens laid upon him, man imagines himself delivered to a fate before which he stands powerless. By his care man tries to protect himself as best he can

from what confronts him.'[29]

This sort of care dialectic can also be seen in Boethius's *Consolation of Philosophy:* Lady Philosophy, looking upon Boethius's anxiety, which she had already designated as the object of care, chases away the Muses standing by Boethius's bedside, whom Boethius had chosen to console him. She took on the role of caring for him, hence caring for his cares; Boethius ascribes to her the caring role of 'healing' and 'curing' him. I can summarize the care-care dialectic this way:

1. Harmful, worried care comes face-to-face with solicitous, helpful care. There is a meeting of the two cares. In their encounter, each seems, at times, to take on a personality of its own.
2. There is a dynamic relationship between the two; each one is affecting the other. In some settings, care-ridden anxiety yearns for solicitous care.
3. There is a dialectical relationship between the two: each kind of care is changed by its encounter with the other. This interactive care-care relationship can be expressed as a simple dyad: My worried care consoles your worried cares. The care that heals is a solicitude that turns its potentially inward-turning worry outward towards the anxious worry of the other. The 'preoccupation' of the healer becomes his or her 'occupation' of assisting, for the solicitous care of the healer turns its preoccupations, that have now become healing, towards the worried preoccupations of the other.
4. The reader or other witness of this dramatic care-care dyad is led to hope that the worried anxiety that is affecting the human in a negative way will diminish through its encounter with positive, solicitous care, which is another name for consolation.
5. Finally, because the inner structure of consolation, as found in classical sources, derives so strongly from the interaction of the two basic types of care, I would claim that the act of consoling is, without doubt, an originary act of care.

Our search for the meaning of consolation in the language of consolation that is rooted historically in the language of care has been an exercise in the alienation of language. By that I mean that, going to those 'origins' of consolation that are situated in language and imagery disrupts many of the usual conceptual assumptions regarding the meaning of consolation, while also revealing the inner structure of consolation. This exercise also can have the effect of objectifying the language of consolation in such a way that the reader can reflect upon his or her own situation-in-life with respect to the meanings that are disclosed in the ancient imagery of care and consolation. A linguistic inquiry of this sort acts as a hermeneutic of self-critique and enhanced self-understanding, which can play an important role in the discovery of the meaning and recommended practice of consolation.[30]

The ethical priority of consolation – not empathy, compassion, or sympathy

One of the most striking things about consolation that one discovers by a close reading of some of the classical consolation literature is how consolation differs so notably from compassion, empathy understood as compassion, and sympathy. In today's world we speak most commonly of responding to the *sufferings* of others through the rather demanding practice of empathy or compassion. My research into the ancient notion of consolation leads me to suggest that that situation should change – that consolation should take practical and developmental priority over compassion, empathy, and sympathy understood as 'full-blown' compassion.

Why do I recommend such a radical departure from the widely accepted 'ethic of compassion,' as one might label it? The three virtues that constitute the accepted 'ethic of compassion,' especially empathy and compassion, require entering into, understanding, and identifying with another person's situation, feelings, and motives – and then, perhaps, doing something about their plight.[31] What I call 'full-blown' compassion and empathy required placing oneself in someone else's position, in both their external situation and their particular internal situation, and from that perspective, to think or feel in their position.[32] That exercise, which can be quite demanding, is not required in consolation. Consolation, a remarkably uncomplicated virtue, entails simply *being aware of the plight* of the other, *recognizing it as a common human experience,* without necessarily identifying with it psychologically and understanding it morally, and attempting in whatever way to alleviate what is perceived as being a certain kind of distress that this person is experiencing.

The second problem with these two virtues (compassion and empathy as understood in the standard account) is that they do not, of themselves, suggest any action. A person can be empathetic or compassionate or sympathetic towards another without that sentiment necessarily entailing any action; furthermore, neither the definitions of nor the dominant theories regarding this trio of virtues necessarily entails any direct linkage

between sentiment and action, with the possible exception of compassion, which can be defined as entailing a *disposition* to help others, though not necessarily any helpful action. (Sympathy has a different relationship with helping action because of its origins in natural philosophy, i.e, its close association with the natural sciences prior to its development as a social virtue in the writings of philosophers.)

Empathy, in particular, makes no reference to action. One sees this quite clearly in an important book on *Empathy and the Practice of Medicine.*[33] The book's essays were helpful in espousing an empathic outlook in medical practice and then advocating actions that would seem to correspond to empathic sentiments; but one essay after another was either silent or confused on the question regarding the link between empathy as feeling and empathy as action. The result is that we have been operating in a framework which isolates sentiment from practice while claiming to unite them. Of course, it has always been possible to help another and then attribute it to the motivations entailed in empathy, compassion, or sympathy, or to espouse empathic sentiments that then undoubtedly encourage helpful actions.

On the other hand, I believe a renewed attention to the structures, methods, and practices of consolation makes it clear that one consoles those who are troubled, anxious, or suffering without the requirement of any demanding sort of identification with the other, for the ancient Greeks and Romans carefully distinguished between the two terms, sympathy and consolation. 'Ancient consolers were by no means unsympathetic to those afflicted with grief; however, *they understood their primary task to be not one of sharing in the grief of others, but one of removing that grief by rational argument and frank exhortation.*'[34] Thus, something occurs in the tradition of consolation that is very different from that of empathy or compassion. The consolation of philosophical antiquity – and of Jewish and Christian religious antiquity, parts of which were influenced by classical Greek and Roman consolation literature – entails action (usually in the form of words) *based simply on the recognition of the need of the other*, the awareness that the need of the other it is a common human need, and the willingness to address that need.[35] It is *the shared human experience of loss, grief, pain, and other experiences that cause anxious worries* that prompts one to console and seek consolation, not the entering into the feelings of the other as such. It is not the shared feelings with others so much as a shared humanity or common humanity that provides the basis for consolation. Thus, the moral psychological basis of consolation is an awareness of the humanity of the self and the shared humanity of the other – and ultimately an awareness of our own vulnerability to the other and the other's vulnerability to the common anxieties of humankind.[36]

From an ethical perspective, one can say that the practices of consolation manifest a life of virtue; and that the specific virtues entailed in this approach to the moral life are those that are defined in terms of what we have just concluded about consolation: that it comes about because our worried concerns manifest an awareness of the humanity of the self and the shared humanity of the other. The Romans called that virtue 'humanity'.[37]

I believe it is time for the virtue of humanity to be restored to the pantheon of contemporary virtues[38]; another name for the virtue of humanity is kindness, a word that is sometimes used to translate the Latin *humanitas.*[39] From an ethical perspective, a minimal form of empathy, compassion, or sympathy, prompted by humanity[40] are certainly ingredients in the practice of consolation; but the exercise of full-blown empathy and compassion, following the initial step of consolation, should be regarded as *subsequent* steps in the moral life, that are ingredients in the task of achieving the overall goal of morality, which is the art of mutual help based in sympathetic concern for self and other. However, consolation is the place to start: it is more rudimentary and more action-oriented than are either the standard accounts of empathy or compassion.

Consolation and Neurosciences: The brain and automatic empathic concern

Having developed the foregoing explanation of the fundamental role played by consolation in our moral life, I am struck by an additional affirmation of my thesis. I find that the simplicity and directness of the structure of the consolation that is found in classical antiquity, which has extended to the modern era, is matched and strongly supported by some very recent discoveries in neuroscience, which reveal the neuronal basis for a very simple and direct understanding of and empathic concern for the trouble of another person, the same sort of trouble or anxiety (the Latin *'cura'*) about which the ancients spoke. I am referring to a fascinating recent discovery that shows how what I call the simple communication of shared pain and shared care, such as occurs in the moment of consolation, is actually initiated through activities in neurons located in the brain.

They are called mirror neurons, a small circuit of cells in the premotor cortex and inferior parietal cortex of the brain. The mirror neurons were recently discovered, first in monkeys and then in humans, by a team of Italian research scientists – Giacomo Rizzolatti, Vittorio Gallese, and Leonardo Fogassi – in the laboratories of the Department of Neuroscience at the University of Parma.
The cells of the mirror neurons are highly interesting, because they are activated not only when we perform a certain action, such as grasping a cup or smiling, but also when we observe another individual performing the same actions.[41]
These cells are very significant for clarifying how we understand each other, at a pre-reflective level, and how we relate to one another in a mutually sympathetic way. Put briefly, mirror neurons provide the neuronal basis for an automatic, involuntary empathic concern for the troubled other. I believe their function could actually prompt a revolutionary reconsideration of our entire moral social life, human social morality, and the way that ethics reflects on the moral life.[42]
According to Vittorio Gallese, one the leading researchers, 'a direct form of 'experiential understanding' of others is achieved ... on the basis of the equivalence between what the others do and feel and what we do and feel.' He explains that what is operative here is an embodied simulation of what is observed. 'By means of embodied simulation we do not just 'see' an action, an emotion, or a sensation.... (I)nternal representations of the body states associated with actions, emotions, and sensations are evoked in the observer, as if he/she would be doing a similar action or experiencing a similar emotion or sensation.' The mirror neuron matching systems map the intentional relations between the two parties in a way that is 'neutral about the specific quality or identity' of the agent being observed. In this way, the other party becomes 'another self'.[43]
I see a direct parallel between the findings of the neuroscientists – that the brain's mapping of the intentional relations between the two parties is 'neutral about the specific quality or identity' of the agent being observed – and our findings from the history of moral ideas of consolation in antiquity, that we need not penetrate sympathetically the quality or identity of the precise sentiments of the worried other. To repeat: Neither the history of the idea of the consoling response to the anxieties of others nor the neuroscientifically-based involuntary affective-empathic response to the anxious worries of others requires a detailed knowledge of and participation in the emotional experience and attitudes of the other. Neither mode of empathic impetus to console entails an active reaching out into the interior of the other, a positive effort to enter into and 'suffer with' the other, as one finds typically, with unrelenting emphasis, in the vast literature on empathy and compassion. The child need not know what is causing the painful contortion in the other's face (an example found in the neuroscientific literature) in order to experience an empathic response, nor does the adult need to know and consciously share the particular emotions of the friend who has lost a daughter in order to be moved to console (an example found in classical Roman consolation literature). It suffices simply to recognize and receive the emotion-laden knowledge of the other's anxious worry.
Thus, what is principally operative in both the historical idea/practice of consoling and the involuntary neural response of empathy for the worried or suffering other on the part of the observer/consoler is a *receptivity of* the anxiety of the other – an anxiety for which there may be only minimal and simple evidence. Thus, we do not need to project ourselves into the anxiety of the other in order to console; by way of a very rudimentary empathy we simply receive the human (and humanly shared) meaning of the kind of action they are performing, say, with their face.[44]

Conclusion

We are left now with the task of developing and encouraging the art of consoling, viewed as fundamental to our social moral life. The texts that are most interesting and important for understanding consolation can, for the most part, be called exhortatory rather than doctrinal or imperative. The questions then arises: What sort of rational (including, at times, religious-rational) communications have the potential for effectively consoling? Whereas some consoling is rightly done by professionals, it is a moral art that pertains to all of us. Thus, at one end of the spectrum there are some professionals who can console profoundly through thorough and sustained communication. But we need to give more attention to the consolation offered by friend, spouse, partner, mother, father, busy surgeon, physician, nurse, and social worker. For the benefit of their consoling, we need to encourage the skill of simple aphorisms which

reflect an awareness and receptivity of the anxious concern of others, but without presenting us with the daunting task of probing the intense, complex inner feelings of the other.
For example, in the medical setting palliation, another word for consolation, needs to be given central place in any institution that aspires to humanistic care of the ill, injured, or dying. Our consolatory aphorisms need to be crafted in terms of what we believe others are existentially capable of becoming, or at least are desirous of becoming. Some aphorisms, simple in structure, have also been profoundly crafted and professionally analyzed for their effectiveness. I am speaking, for example, of the empathic-consolatory phrase offered and analyzed by the Harvard psychiatrist Leston Havens: 'No wonder you were frightened.'
This statement acknowledges and validates the naturalness and appropriateness of such feelings as fright or fear or pain, for it implies that *anyone* would have been filled with fear, thus alleviating the anxiety caused by the feeling of being trapped in the grips of a frightening medical condition or procedure.
I do not want to imply that consolation can be accomplished by some automatic uttering of pre-packaged wisdom; it must be accompanied by a genuine, if not heroic, humanity for the worried other. What is most important in the consoling communication, however brief it may be (and it may require only one minute of our time!), what is most essential for its effectiveness, is that the words be an expression of the way we accompany the other, the way we simply stand by the other. Even if the words are at times awkward – and it is highly likely that we will not have the studied wisdom of a Cicero, a Seneca, a Christ, a Meister Eckhart, or a Kierkegaard – what counts is the willingness to regard the other as sharing our humanity, in a minimally empathic way. That should not be too difficult to accomplish.

End Notes

[1] Sympathy, the most ancient and varied of this sort of sentiment, is in a somewhat special category because of its deeper historical entrenchment in natural philosophy.
[2] See 'consolor', in: J. R. V. Marchant and Joseph F. Charles, eds, *Cassell's Latin Dictionary*. 27th ed., p. 128. (London: Cassell, 1955).
[3] The first-century Roman poet Horace was not so optimistic: he believed that the one who is affected with anxious worry 'is engaged in an unending and fruitless struggle: anxious care cannot be conquered but only momentarily taken away.' See Alessandra Minarini, 'Cura,' p. 346, in: *Enciclopedia Oraziana*, Vol. II (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana, 1997).
[4] Tolstoy, *The Death of Ivan Ilyich*. Toronto; New York: Bantam, 1981.
[5] Homer, *Iliad*, 24, 549-51, in *The Iliad of Homer*, trans. by Richard Lattimore (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951), p. 489. Quoted by Gregg p. 3
[6] See *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy:* http://www.science.uva.nl/ ~seop/ entries/seneca/
[7] John Marenbon, *Boethius*, p. 4. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2003
[8] Joel C. Relihan, 'Introduction,' in Boethius, *Consolation of Philosophy*, translated with Introduction and Notes by Joel C. Relihan (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2001), p. x.
[9] Ibid.
[10] Boethius, *The Consolation of Philosophy*, p. 37. Translated with an Introduction by V. E. Watts (London; New York: Penguin, 1969).
[11] The following Latin text is taken from: Severino Boezio, *La Consolazione della Filosofia*, Claudio Moreschini, ed. (Turin: UTET Libreria, 1994); 'Heu,quam praecipiti mersa profundomens hebet et propria luce relicta/tendit in externas ire tenebras/terrenis quotiens flatibus aucta/crescit in immensum *noxia cura*!'[I, II, 1-5. Pg 86.]
The English translation by Watts, p. 37, is as follows:'So sinks the mind in deep despair/And sight grows dim; when storms of life/Blow surging up *the weight of care*,/It banishes its inward light/And turns in trust to the dark without.'
[12] See 'Sorge' in: *Meyers Enzyklopädisches Lexikon*, Vol 32, pp. 2427-2428 at 2427 (Mannheim/Wien/Zürich: Bibliographisches Institut, Lexikon Verlag, 1981), where 'Sorge' (care) is defined as 'bedrückendes Gefühl der Unruhe und Angst' ('an oppressive feeling of unrest and anxiety').
[13] See 'care' in: *The Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd ed., Vol. II, p.893 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989): 'Burdened state of mind arising from fear, doubt, or concern about anything; solicitude, anxiety, mental perturbation....' The same source explains that the word 'care' is a common Teutonic word evidenced, for example, in the Middle High German word 'Kar', which meant 'trouble, grief, or care.' Remnants

of 'Kar' persist in today's German only in the words Karfreitag and Karwoche (days commemorating the passion and death of Christ) and 'karg' (which originally meant 'traurig, bekümmert, besorgt' – sorrowful, concerned, worried. See 'Kar' and 'karg' in: *Meyers Enzyklopädisches Lexikon*, Vol 31, pp. 1425 and 1427 (Mannheim/Wien/Zürich: Bibliographisches Institut, Lexikon Verlag, 1980).

[14] *Carmina* 3-1-40. For the text, see: Adolf Kiessling, Q. *Horatius Flaccus*. Berlin: Weidmannsche Buchhandlung, 1917.

[15] Alessandra Minarini, 'Cura,' pp. 346-347 at 346, in: Enciclopedia Oraziana, Vol. II (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana, 1997). The description of *cura* that I cite is stated thus by Minarini: 'divinità malefica, esterna all'uomo ma a lui saldamente e inesorabilmente legata'. Minarini is the principal source for my commentary on Horace's 'cura'.

[16] Virgil, in his *Aeneid*, 6,274, offers his only personification of Care when he places the 'ultrices Curae' ('avenging cares') at the entrance to Hades. See Paolo Fedeli, 'cura,' in: *Enciclopedia Virgiliana*, Vol. I, pp. 961-962 at 962 (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana, 1984).

[17] Alessandra Minarini, 'Cura,' p. 346.

[18] 'Die Sorge nistet gleich im tiefen Herzen,/ Dort wirket sie geheime Schmerzen.' Goethe's *Faust*, lines 644-645. Although 'Sorge' (anxious care) causes pain for Faust, it is not Goethe's purpose to portray or explain consolation. Yet there is a sense of comfort in this epic poem; in the sense that Faust makes himself and others stronger – and eventually finds redemption – by transposing negative, oppressive Care into the modern world's task of striving – striving for technological mastery and the building of an international empire based in trade, and ultimately for building a society in which the masses can live in peace. See: Warren T. Reich, "Sorge' in Goethes *Faust*: Goethe als Moralist?' ["Care' in Goethe's *Faust*: Goethe as Moralist'?], in *Erzählen und Moral - Narrativität im Spannungsfeld von Ethik und Ästhetik* [Narrative and Morality: Narrativity in the Margins Between Ethics and Aesthetics], pp. 143-165. Dietmar Mieth, ed. Tübingen: Attempto-Verlag, 2000.

[19] Eric R. Dodds, *Pagan and Christian in an Age of Anxiety: Some Aspects of Religious Experience from Marcus Aurelius to Augustine* (New York; London: Norton, 1965).

[20] Hans Dieter Betz, *The Sermon on the Mount: A Commentary on the Sermon on the Mount, Including the Sermon on the Plain (Matthew 5:3-7:27 and Luke 6:20-49)*. p. 461. Adela Yarbro Collins, ed. (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995).

[21] See: Karl Ernst Georges e Ferruccio Calonghi, eds., 'securitas' and 'securus', Dizionario del centenario latino-italiano, cols. 2487-2488. Turin: Rosenberg & Sellier, 1991.

[22] The Latin text is as follows: 'Quae est igitur haec potestas, quae sollicitudinum morsus expellere, quae formidinum aculeos uitare nequit? Atqui uellent ipsi uixisse securi, sed nequeunt; dehinc de potestate gloriantur.' (Boethius, *Consolation of Philosophy*, III, 5, 7.) The translation and emphasis are mine. I have relied partly on the translation of the *Consolation of Philosophy* by W. V. Cooper; edited by Israel Golancz (London: J.M. Dent and Company, 1902), http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/jod/.

[23] The translation is mine. The Latin text is: 'Gloriam petas? Sed per aspera quaeque distractus securus esse desistis.' (III, 8, 4-5).

[24] Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* Pt. 1 Ch. 14 Para. 8/33 p. 119 mp. 192

[25] J. Matthew Pinson, ed., *Four Views on Eternal Security*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002.

[26] Simon Tugwell, *Prayer in Practice*, pp. 113ff. Springfield, IL: Templegate, 1974.

[27] http://quod.lib.umich.edu/cgi/k/kjv/kjv-idx?type=DIV2&byte=5345923. A German translation similarly uses the same care-word for both meanings: 'Werfet eure *Sorge* auf Ihn, denn der *sorgt* für Sie.'

[28] See Gianfranco Nolli, ed., *Novum Testamentum Graece et Latine*, pp. 1212-1213 (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2001. The Latin text, which is not so clear as the much earlier Greek text, opposes 'sollicitudo' to 'cura': 'Omnem sollicitudinem vestram proicientes in eum quoniam ipsi cura est de vobis.' The term 'merimna' appears again in the Epistle to the Philippians 4: 6-7, where Christians are urged not to be burdened by anxious care (merimna); prayerful persons will find that the peace of God will protect their hearts when they are confronted with this anxious care.

[29] J. Goetzmann, 'Care, Anxiety,' pp. 276-279 at 277, in: Colin Brown, ed., *New Testament Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan,1975). This is a translation and edited edition of the *Theologisches Begriffslexikon zum neuen Testament*, edited by Lothar Coenen, Erich Beyreuther and Hans Bietenhard (Wuppertal: Theologischer Verlag Rolf Brockhaus, 1971).

[30] For a way in which this hermeneutical critique has been used in another context, see: Oliver Davies, 'The Unspoken Word: Negative Theology in Meister Eckhart's German Sermons (review),' Journal of the *History of Philosophy* 42, 3 (2004), pp. 341 ff.

[31] *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*. 3rd ed., p. 603. Boston; New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1992.

[32] Gerhard Wahrig and Ursula Hermann, eds., *Deutsches Wörterbuch*, rev. ed., p. 1026. Bertelsmann, 1980.

[33] Howard M. Spiro, Mary G. McCrea Curnen, Enid Peschel, and Deborah St. James, eds., *Empathy and the Practice of Medicine*. New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1993.

[34] Paul A. Holloway, *Consolation in Philippians: Philosophical Sources and Rhetorical Strategy*, p. 1. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001. This does not mean that consolation was presented in a rationalistic way, but rather made use of rational arguments in a rhetorical strategy that could be designated as an exercise of paranesis or exhortation.

[35] For the link between consolation and need, I am indebted to Maurice Lamm, Professor of Professional Rabbinics at Yeshiva University, who wrote, in *Consolation: The Spiritual Journey Beyond Grief* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 2005)

[36] Raimond Gaita has developed these themes in *his A Common Humanity: Thinking About Love and Truth and Justice*. London: Routledge, 2000.

[37] 'humanitas,' in: A Latin Dictionary Founded on Andrews' Edition of Freund's Latin Dictionary, Charlton T. Lewis and Charles Short, eds. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1879), pp. 868-869. See also: Paul Veyne, 'Humanitas: Romans and Non-Romans,' in Andrea Giardina, ed., *The Romans*. Translated by Lydia G Cochrane. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993, pp. 342-369.
[38] Jonathan Glover has employed humanity as a way of countering the human destruction experienced in the last century, in his *Humanity: A Moral History of the Twentieth Century* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2001
[39] See William S. Hamrick, *Kindness and the Good Society: Connections of the Heart*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002.
[40] For an explanation of how the virtue of humanity is a presupposition for empathy and sympathy, see Julien A. Deonna, 'Sympathy and Empathy,' pp. 344-45, in Donald M. Borchert, ed., *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, 2nd ed., Vol. 9 (Detroit: Macmillan-Thomson Gale, 2006).
[41] For a more detailed explanation of the implications of the mirror neurons for human social interaction, see Marco Iacoboni, *Mirroring People: The Science of How We Connect to Others*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2008; and Vittorio Gallese, 'The 'Shared Manifold' Hypothesis: From Mirror Neurons to Empathy,' *Journal of Consciousness Studies* 8, pp.5-7 (2001), pp.33-51.
[42] http://www.unipr.it/arpa/mirror/pubs/pdffiles/Gallese/Gallese%20Psychopathology%202003.pdf]
[43] Vittorio Gallese, 'Embodied simulation: from mirror neuron systems to interpersonal relations,' http://www.novartisfound.org.uk/catalog/278abs.htm.
[44] Some elements of the receptivity of the other are found in the work of Edith Stein, who defines empathy as the 'experience of being led by the foreign experience.' See Edith Stein, *On the Problem of Empathy* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1964), as cited in Susan Verducci, 'A Conceptual History of Empathy and a Question It Raises for Moral Education,' *Educational Theory* 50, 1 (2000), 63ff.