

Spring 59

ON THE MORAL BELIEFS OF THE UDEMONIANS

disgust + loathing

The Udemonians disapprove of anger, fear, hatred, jealousy and envy, and in fact of negative emotions in general. Not that they are an unfeeling people. They love gaiety, activity and show. They admire steadfastness and courage when directed to a good cause, but not for its own sake. They do not believe in vindictiveness, or in returning injury for injury. Rather in good will toward all men, and indeed toward all animals and nature at large. They are very much at home in the world.

They have a particular regard for truthfulness, and dislike hypocrisy and pretense. This must be understood. A Udemonian will not always tell the truth, for they are an eminently practical people, and practice requires lying on occasion. But they take the need for lying as indicating a certain rottenness in the situation which compelled it. In fact their test of a healthy social arrangement is that one can express exactly what one feels toward it without hesitation. The Udemonian desires to be true to himself above all--that is, to know his innermost desires and to live by them, and to know his capabilities and limitations, utilizing the one to the full and not straining beyond its bounds. They dislike both over-modesty and vanity.

The Udemonians have a strong love of life because it is enjoyable and because it enhances other life. They look upon premature death as the greatest of tragedies and make every effort to preserve themselves at the peak of health and vitality. They do not use capital punishment. In the case of certain hopeless diseases or very bad accidents, however, the victim may desire death, and, if the case is indeed hopeless, will be assisted in committing suicide. Also certain congenitally malformed infants may be killed. Their love of life does not prevent the Udemonians from engaging in certain hazardous pursuits when these are of importance for advancing the frontiers of civilization and knowledge. It extends to animals and plants, of which they have a great variety running around and growing in their homes. Hunting and fishing are permitted under restrictions. They are not sentimental about corpses, but dispose of them in practical fashion for medical, industrial or agricultural uses.