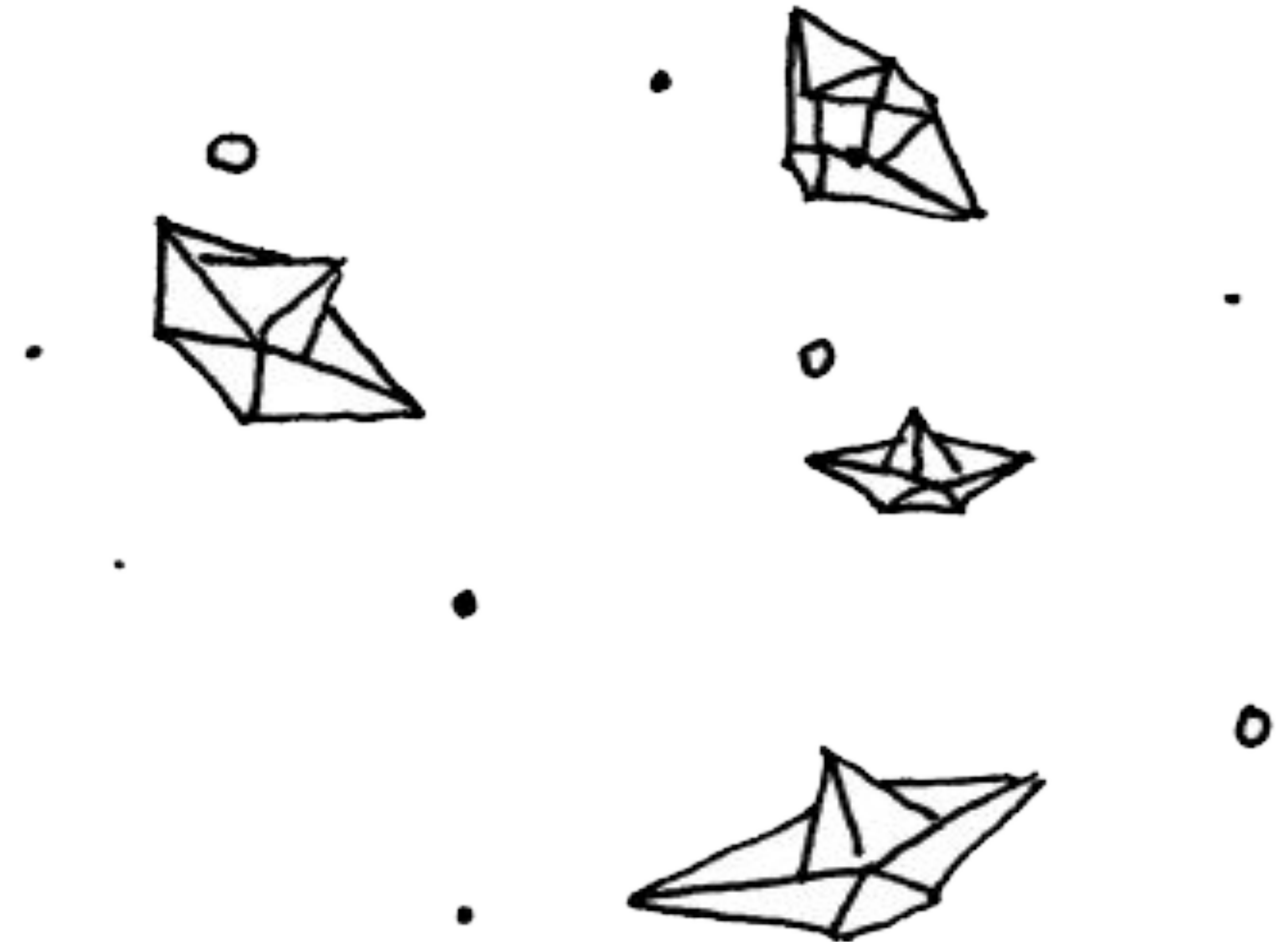


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# Ethics | Class 1

Introduction

Case discussion



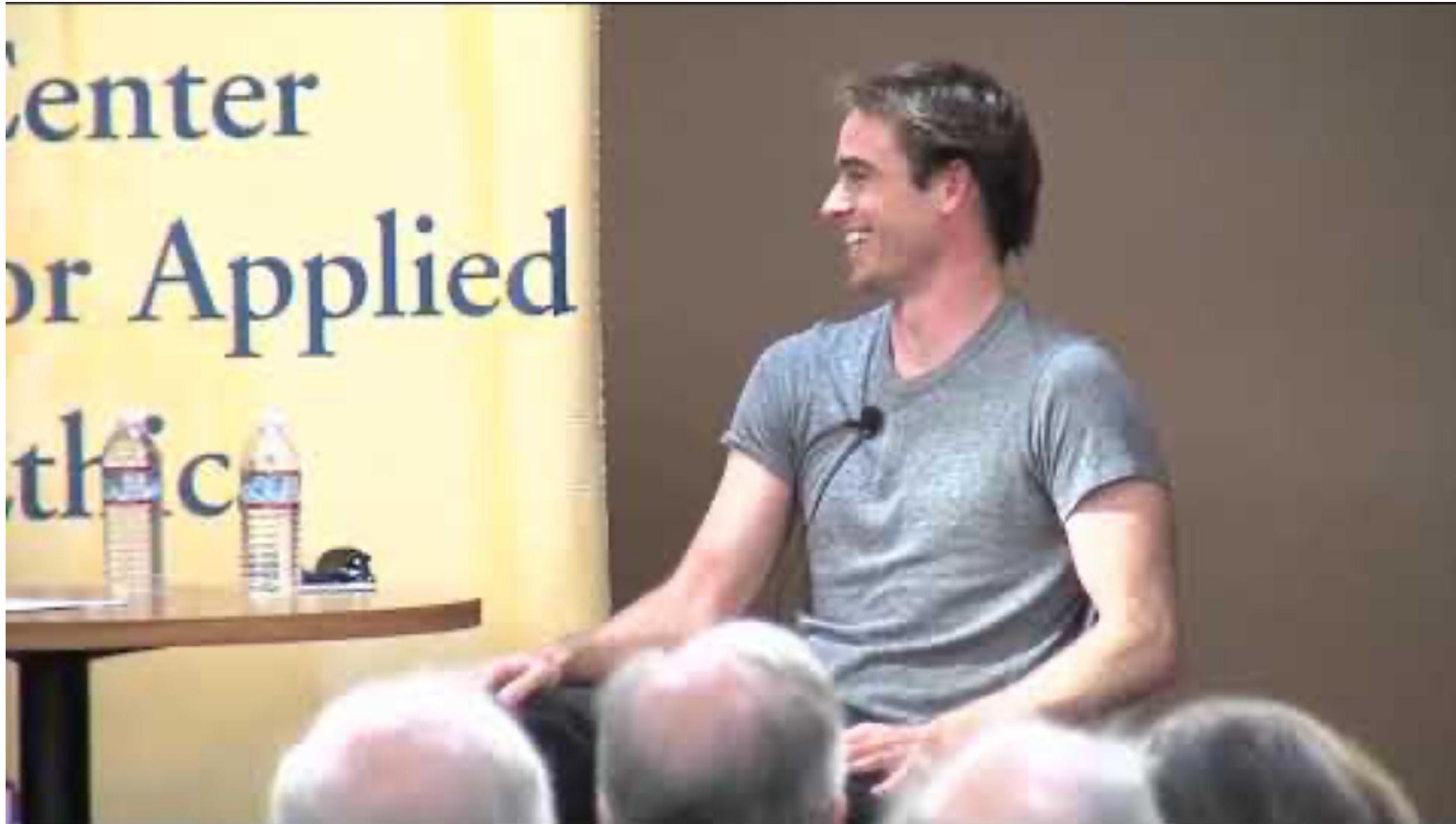












# Questions to discuss:

1. What beliefs, values or character traits would you consider in your decision about your course of action if you were in Tyler's shoes?
2. If the employees of any given organization are typically good people, why do various unethical practices keep recurring?
3. Do you think Tyler struggled in coming to the decision to blow the whistle? Which of his actions support your opinion that Tyler did or did not struggle?
4. Do you think Tyler regrets blowing the whistle on Theranos? Why?
5. Did Tyler do the right thing? Why or why not?

# Ethics: 2 very broad but practical questions

(1) What really matters?

(1) What is involved in answering (1)?

# Ethics: 3 fundamental and slightly more specific questions

- (1) What does morality demand?
- (1) Under what conditions are we responsible for our success or failure in living up to these demands?
- (1) What connection is there between our being moral and our living a good (satisfying, fulfilling life)?

# practicalities

(1) Course structure: seminar & lecture

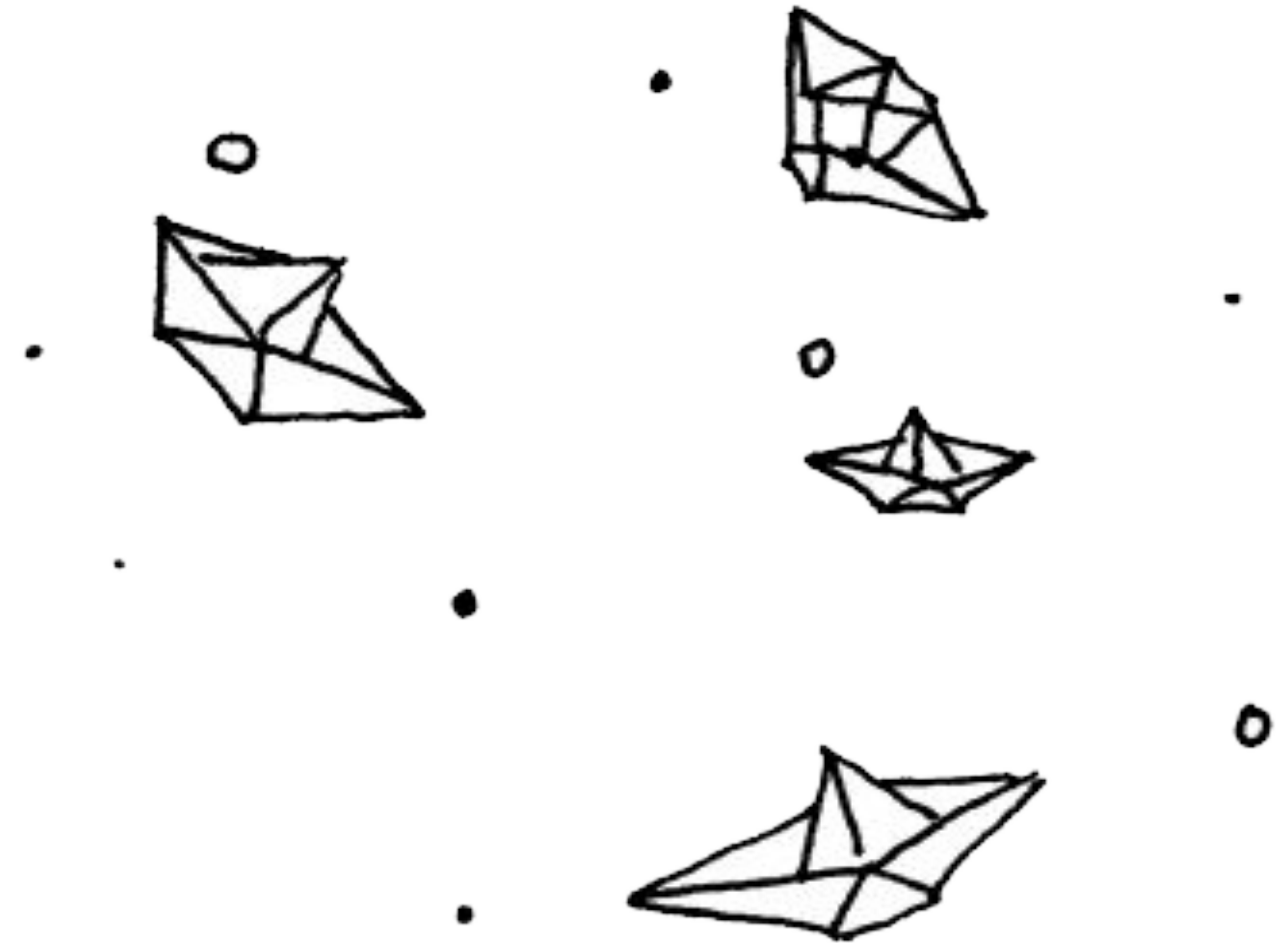
(1) Evaluation – group presentation + check-point reflections + written exam

(1) Moodle – course enrolment key: ETHICS2425



# Ethics | Class 2

Human flourishing, the good life,  
free will, purpose,  
virtues and vices, character



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**Plato**

*Republic*



*eudaimonia*

justice







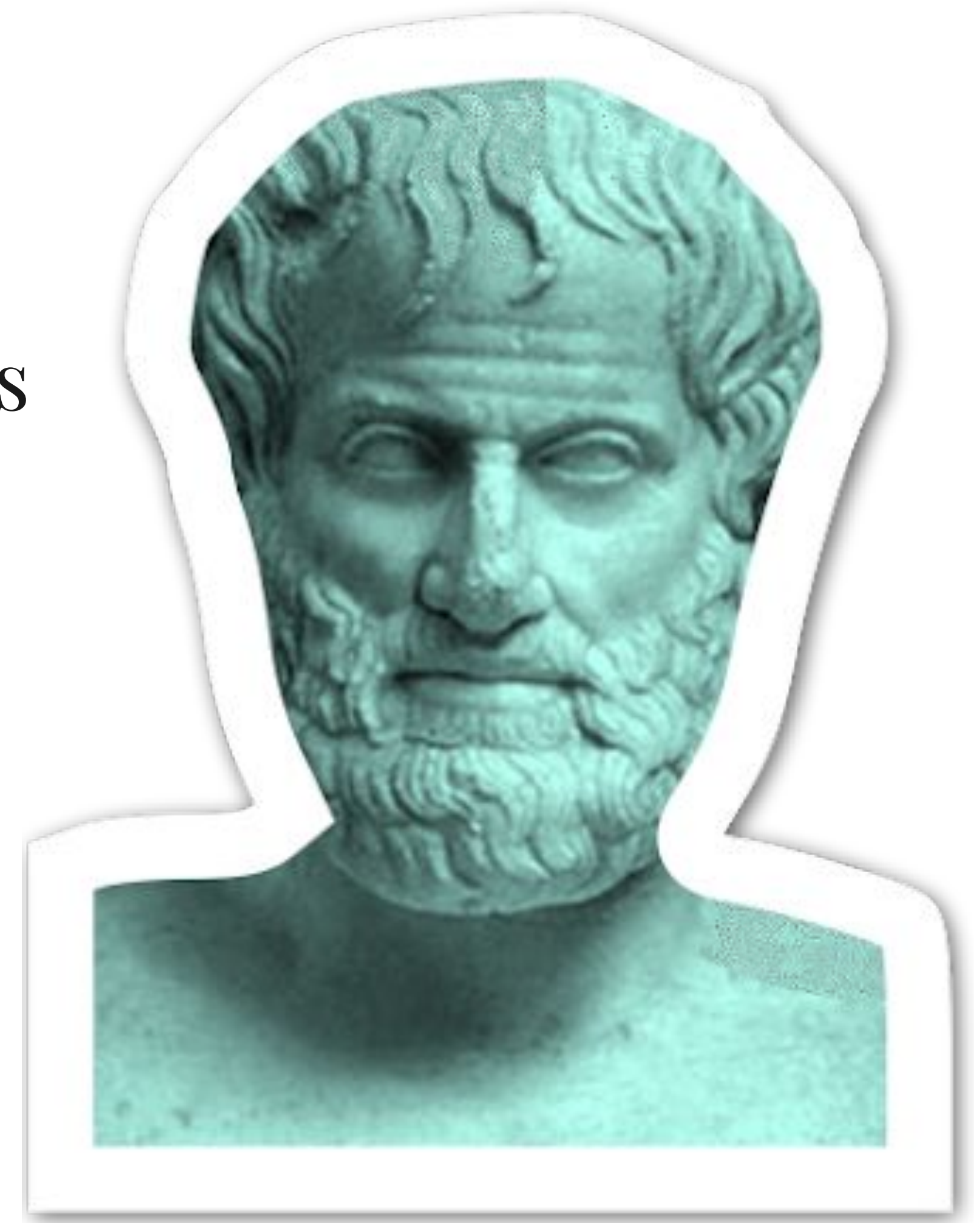
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Evil is ignorance, virtue is knowledge.

Philosophical wisdom will make people – and states  
– good.

Has it?

**Aristotle**

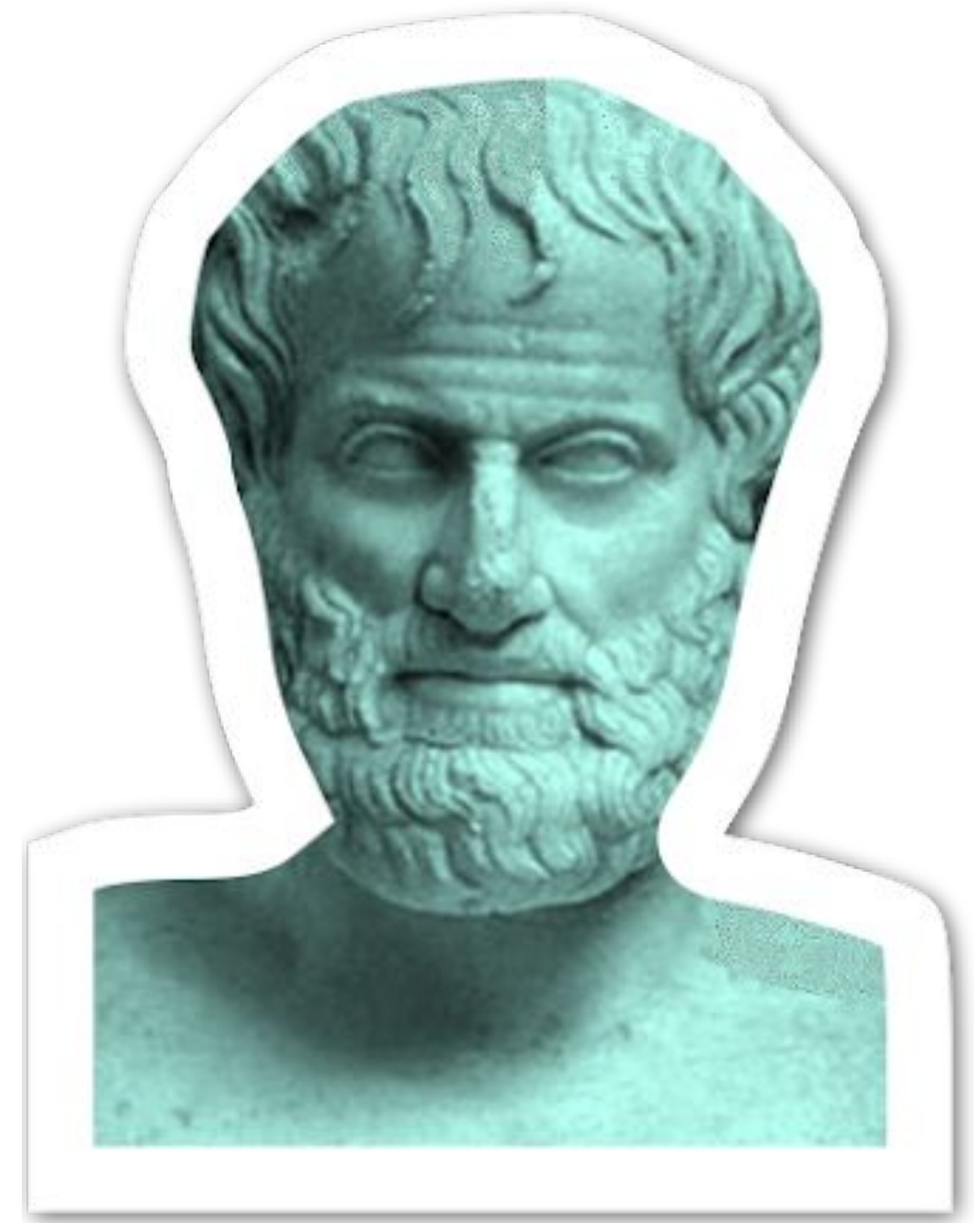




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Could a fake happy life be better than a really happy life?

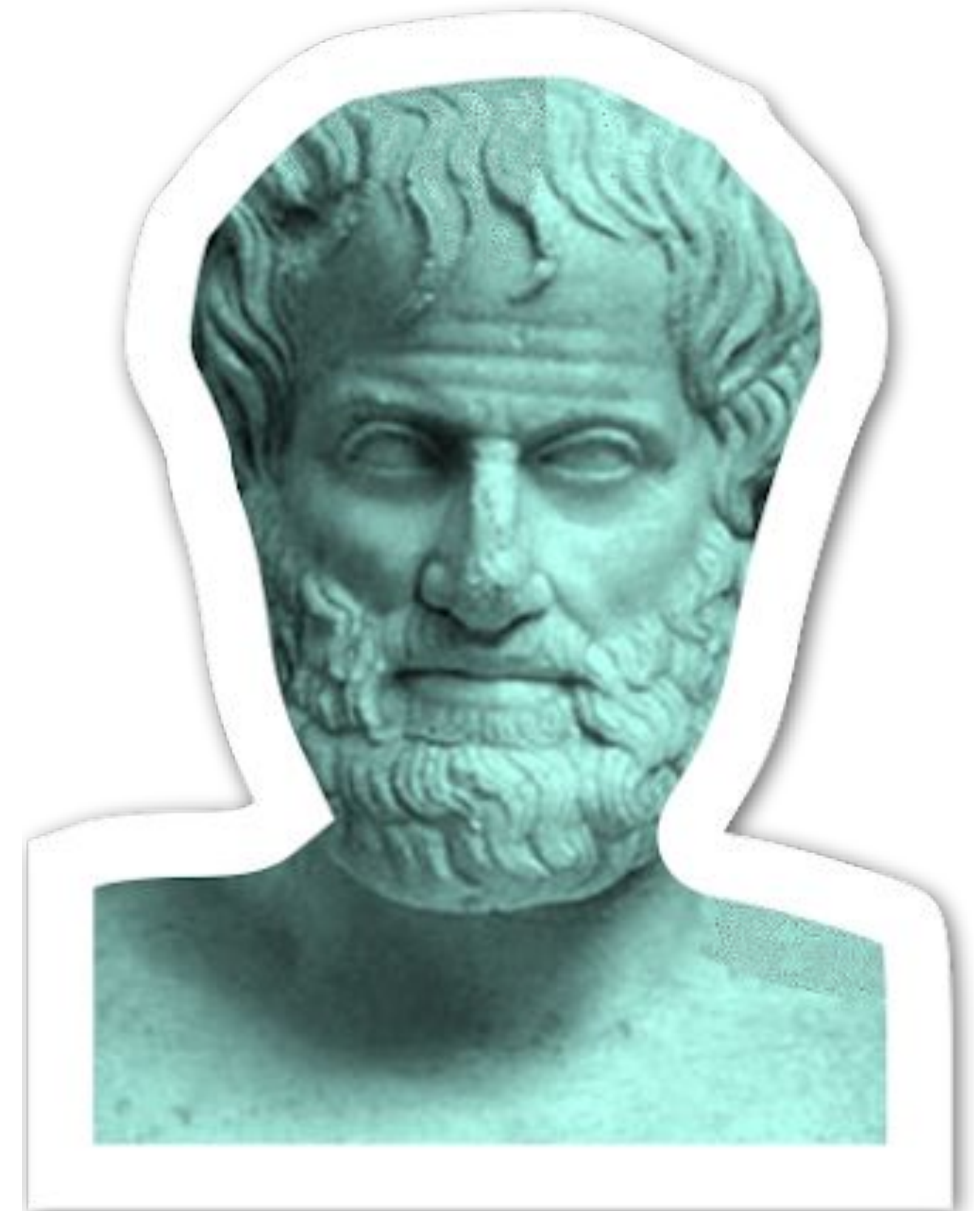
What is a good life?



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“Every craft and every line of inquiry, and likewise every action and decision seems to seek some good [...] Suppose, then, that the things achievable by action have some end that we wish for because of itself, and because of which we wish for the other things, and that we do not choose everything because of something else – for if we do, it will go on without limit, so that desire will prove to be empty and futile. Clearly, this end will be the good, that is to say, the best good.”

*Nicomachean Ethics* I, 1, 1094a

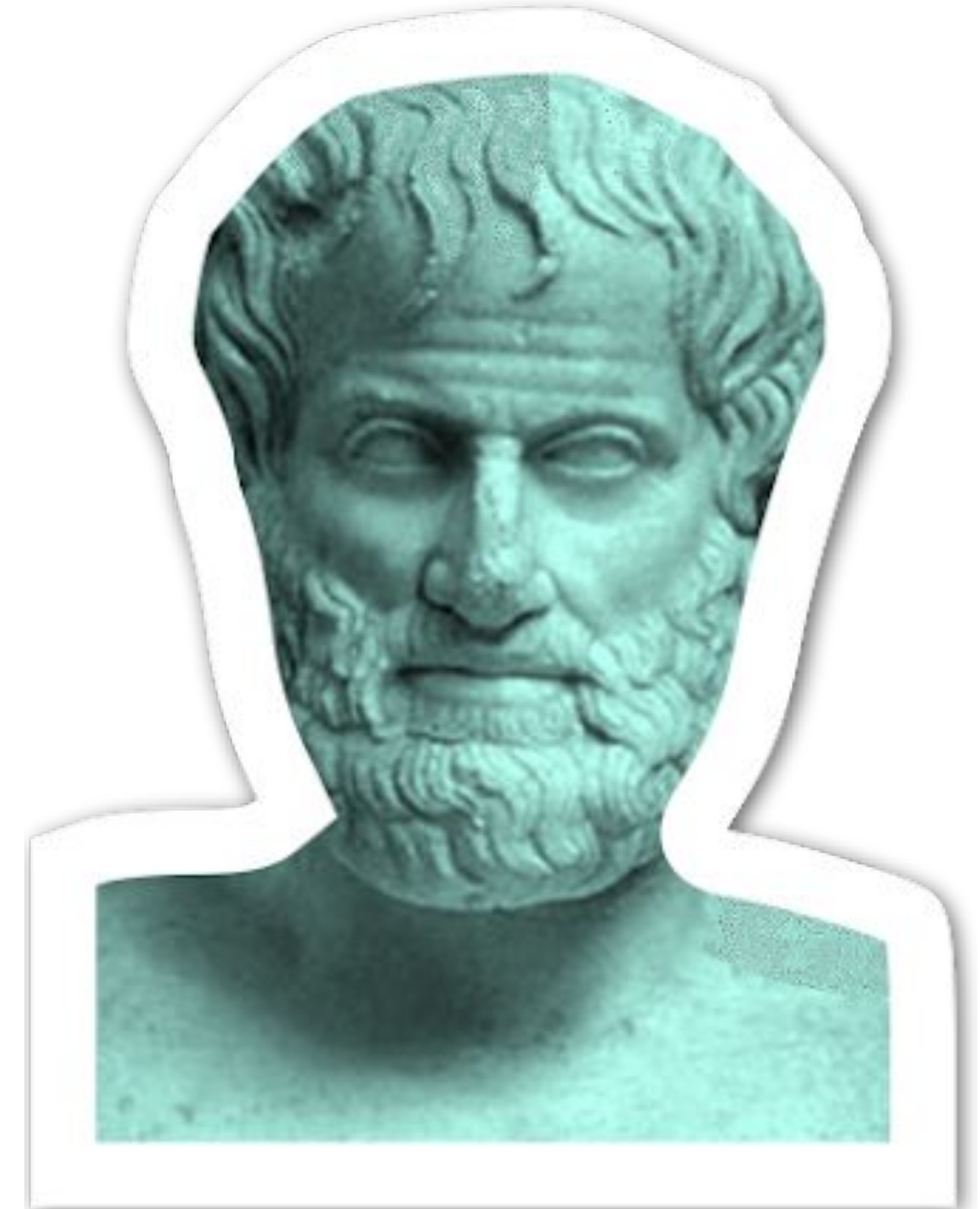




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“Now happiness (*eudaimonía*), more than anything else, seems complete without qualification. [...] Honor, pleasure, understanding, and every virtue we certainly choose because of themselves, since we would choose each of them even if it had no further result; but we also choose them for the sake of happiness, supposing that through them we shall be happy.” *NE* I, 7, 1097b

“For just as the good, i.e., [doing] well, for a flautist, a sculptor, and every craftsman, and, in general, for whatever has a function and [characteristic] action, seems to depend on its function [*ergon*], the same seems to be true for a human being [...]. Now each function is completed well by being completed in accord with the virtue proper [to that kind of thing]. And so the human good proves to be activity of the soul in accord with virtue.” *NE* I, 7, 1097b–1098a



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## *What is virtue?*

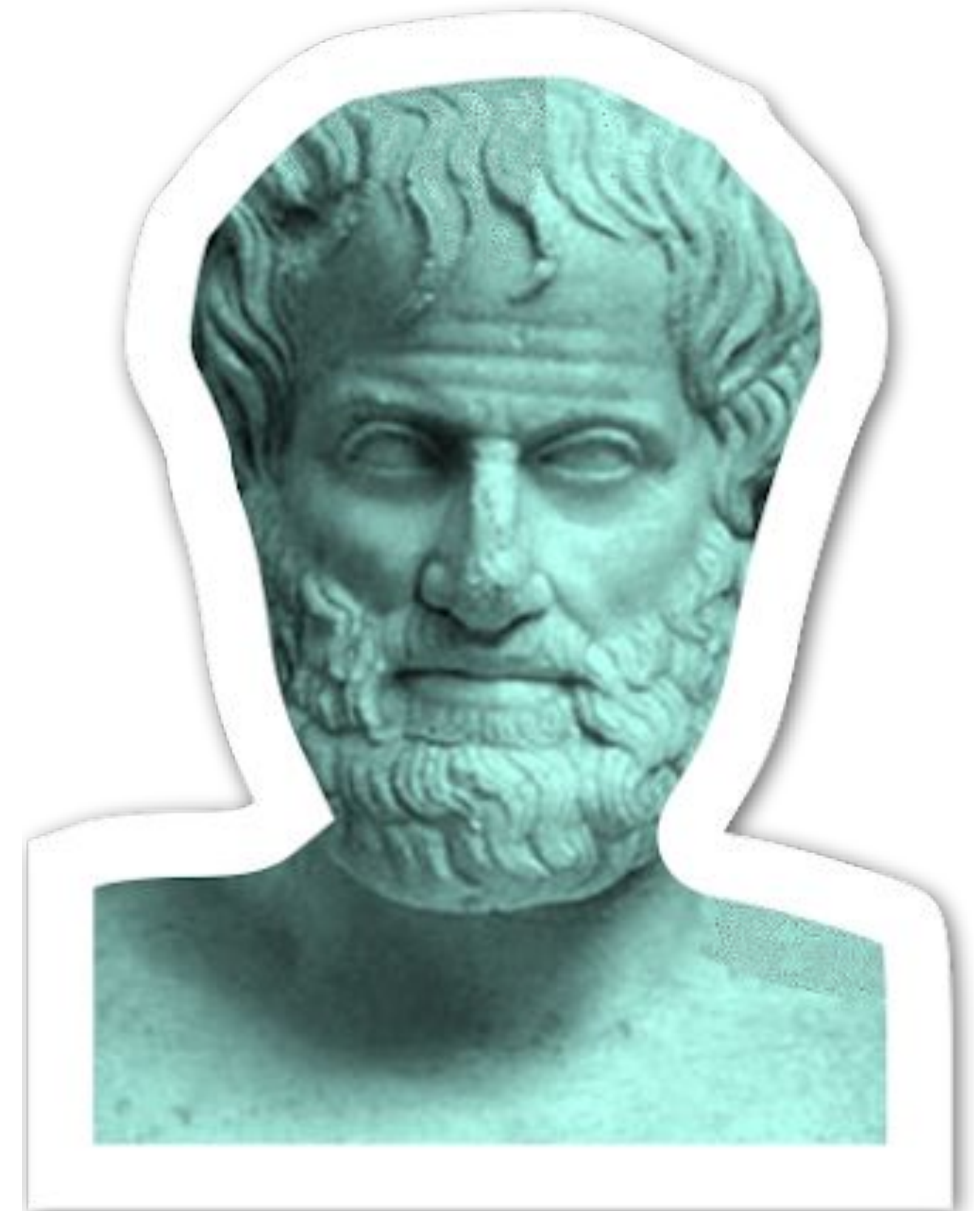
A stable disposition (*hexis*) to act according to a mean between two extremes. See *Nicomachean Ethics* II 4-6 1105a-1107a.

## *How does it arise?*

Through habituation. See *Nicomachean Ethics* II 1-2, 1103a-1104b.

## *What does virtuous action require?*

Stability of character, voluntariness and choice (*proairesis*), reason and the corresponding affection. See *Nicomachean Ethics* III, 1-4, 1109b30ff.







Voluntariness □ free will

Knowledge □ character □ heart (seat of the will)

All evil is wrong thinking □ all evil is disordered love

# Augustine

# Confessions

## BOOK VI

*Tomorrow I shall find it; see, it will be perfectly clear and I will have no doubt. I will have no more doubts. Faustus will come and explain everything. What great men the academic philosophers were! Nothing for the conduct of life can be a matter of assured knowledge. Yet let us seek more diligently and not lose heart. The books of the church we know not to contain absurdities - the things which seemed absurd can be seen in another way which is edifying. Let me fix my feet on that step on as a boy I was placed by my parents until clear truth may be found. But where can truth be sought? When can it be sought? Ambrose has no time. There is no time for reading. Where should we look for the books that we need? Where and when can we obtain them? From whom can we borrow them? Fixed times must be kept free and hours appointed for the health of the Soul. Great hope has been aroused. (...) Why do we hesitate to knock at the door which opens the way to all the rest? Our pupils occupy the mornings... What should we do with the remaining hours? Why do we not investigate our problem? But, then, when should we go to pay respect to our more influential friends whose patronage we need? When are we to prepare what our students are paying for? When are we to refresh ourselves by allowing the mind to relax from the tensions of anxieties?*

# Free will

## BASICS

To be (in at least some kind of) control of one's own actions

To determine one's own actions (at least partly)

To be able to choose a course of action and execute it according to one's will.

## RELATED ISSUES

Responsibility and agency; power to do otherwise; self-determination; causality; etc.



# Confessions

## BOOK II

*We carried off a huge load of pears, not to eat ourselves, but to dump out to the hogs, after barely tasting some of them ourselves. Doing this pleased us all the more because it was forbidden. Such was my heart, O God, such was my heart—which thou didst pity even in that bottomless pit. Behold, now let my heart confess to thee what it was seeking there, when I was being gratuitously wanton, having no inducement to evil but the evil itself.*

*It was foul, and I loved it. I loved my own undoing. I loved my error—not that for which I erred but the error itself.*

# Modern conceptions of freedom / free will

To be ~~(in at least some kind of)~~ constantly in absolute control of one's own actions

To determine one's own actions ~~(at least partly)~~

To be able to choose a course of action and execute it according to one's will = to choose between contraries without any type of constraints

(e.g. Jean Paul Sartre's existentialism *Being and Nothing*)



# Thomas Aquinas

1225-1274

Was born in the castle of Roccasecca, near Aquino, at the time controlled by the kingdom of Sicily (now Italy).

Died at the Fossanova Abbey, Italy, on his way to the Second Council of Lyon.





# Thomas Aquinas on Free Will

SUMMA THEOLOGIAE (I-II, q. 8-13)

*The will is a rational appetite. Now every appetite is only of something good. The reason of this is that the appetite is nothing else than an inclination of a person desirous of a thing towards that thing. Now every inclination is to something like and suitable to the thing inclined. Since, therefore, everything, inasmuch as it is being and substance, is a good, it must needs be that every inclination is to something good. And hence it is that the Philosopher says (Ethic. i, 1) that "the good is that which all desire."*

*But it must be noted that, since every inclination results from a form, the natural appetite results from a form existing in the nature of things: while the sensitive appetite, as also the intellectual or rational appetite, which we call the will, follows from an apprehended form. Therefore, just as the natural appetite tends to good existing in a thing; so the animal or voluntary appetite tends to a good which is apprehended. Consequently, in order that the will tend to anything, it is requisite, not that this be good in very truth, but that it be apprehended as good. Wherefore the Philosopher says (Phys. ii, 3) that "the end is a good, or an apparent good." (ST, I-II, q. 8, a1)*