***TJ, sections 60-68***

*Note that: much of what Rawls is doing in the early part of this reading responds to philosophical concerns that bulked large in the 1950’s and 60’s, when he was writing the book. Some of these sections therefore have a “dated” feel and we shall pass them over (e.g. §62)*

1. Why do we need a theory of the good at all to arrive at principles of justice?
   1. explain Rawls’s remark: “we need what I have called the thin theory of the good to explain the rational preference for the primary goods and to explicate the notion of rationality underlying the choice of principles in the original position” (349). Why does the priority of right require the thin theory here? (HINT: see p. 380 and explain the important passage on pp. 390-81.)
   2. explain the distinction between the thin and the full theories of the good in light of remarks made p. 349-50.
   3. why does Rawls think that “when we ask whether the sense of justice is a good, the important question clearly is that defined by the thin theory”? why not the full theory? And why would we ask that question?
   4. What is the “congruence” of justice and goodness? (p.347; HINT: see the last sentence of §60)
2. What is plan of life? When is such a plan rational?
   1. The opening sentence of §63 suggests that what we are most interested in is goodness as it applies to plans of life. Why should that be?
   2. why must the definition of goodness be extended to plans of life “if it is to serve the purposes of the theory of justice”? (358)
   3. When is a person happy?
   4. Note the claim that a plan of life “establishes the basic point of view from which all judgments of value relating to a particular person are to be made”. (p. 359) How does claim inexorably drive Rawls to his conclusion about the grass-counter?
   5. note the movement of Rawls’s thought from §61 to §63:
3. something is good if it has the features which it would be rational to want in things of that kind
4. therefore someone’s conception of the good is good if it has the features it would be rational to want in a conception of the good
5. someone’s conception of the good is rational is if his plan of life is rational
6. therefore someone’s conception of the good is good if his plan of life is rational
7. his plan of life is rational if and only if it satisfies the two conditions given on p. 358-9
8. therefore someone’s conception of the good is good if and only if his plan of life satisfies the two conditions given on p. 358-9

Isn’t this a weak and highly subjectivist account of what it is for someone’s conception of the good to be good?

Because of its weakness, isn’t Rawls trivially right that everyone in the philosophical tradition accepts (1)?

* 1. Explain the important closing sentences of section 63 on p. 365.

1. What is deliberative rationality as applied to plans of life?
   1. explain the distinction between regret and self-reproach (p. 370).
   2. Suppose that someone decides to be a just person. Suppose, that is, that she develops a conscience (or a sense of justice) and does what she can to heed and preserve it. Heeding and preserving her conscience, even in the face of strong temptation, is part of her plan of life. Suppose further that as result of being a just person, life goes badly her – others around her prosper and surpass her by doing things she refuses to do. Would she regret her plan of life? Would she reproach herself for adopting it? Explain.
2. State the Aristotelian principle. is it a psychological law or a norm? what is the difference?
   1. What are the two claims Rawls says the principle expresses in p. 374, note 20.
   2. What is meant by saying on p. 375 that the Aristotelian principle is a principle of motivation?
   3. What is the “companion affect” to the Aristotelian principle (pp. 375-76)?
   4. What intuitions or “considered judgments of value” (p. 379) does the Principle allow Rawls to accommodate? Does it allow Rawls, as it were, not to have his perfectionist cake but to eat it too? (HINT: Rawls says “assuming the principle is true we seem able to account for what things are recognized as good for human beings taking them as they are” (380). why is this a better account than, say, one according to which some human lives are better than others because they incorporate more or better intrinsic goods?)
   5. Many people think it is outrageous to claim that counting grass “is good for [the grass-counter].” (p. 380) Do you agree?
3. List the ways we might extend goodness as rationality to the case of moral worth. why is the third the most plausible?
   1. What are “broad-based properties”, and why does Rawls introduce them (p. 382)? How does Rawls understand the virtues (383)? On what grounds does Rawls argue that virtues are broad-based properties?
   2. Why is the extension part of the full, rather than the thin, theory of the good? What does Rawls mean by saying “developing the thin into the full theory via the original position is the essential step” (p. 382, 384)?
   3. Aristotle thinks a good person is a good citizen of the best regime. Does Rawls agree? (see p. 384)
4. What is self-respect and why is it important?
   1. How does membership in what we might call “communities of interest” contribute to our self-esteem (p. 386)?

* 1. Rawls says “this democracy in judging each other’s aims is the foundation of self-respect in a well-ordered society” (p. 388). what does Rawls mean by “democracy in judging each other’s aims”? does the remark “*in public life* citizens respect one another’s ends and adjudicate their political claims in ways that also support their self-esteem” (p. 388) qualify this form of democracy in a significant way?
  2. Why does Rawls discuss the connection between self-respect and shame? What is natural shame? What is moral shame? how is our liability to it connected to the Kantian interpretation and the Aristotelian principle? (HINT: read the last paragraph on p. 391 in conjunction with the last paragraph on p. 225.)
  3. Rawls seems to imply that a well brought up person will feel shame if she acts against her sense of justice. Since shame is something we want to avoid, preserving and acting from her sense of justice will be part of her rational plan. Does this imply that she will find it good to be just? Why might this be important?

1. Explain the three contrasts Rawls draws between the right and the good.
   1. Explain the “indeterminacy in the full theory of the good” to which Rawls refers on p. 395. Why isn’t this indeterminacy a concern for the contract view?