

# Ancient and medieval political theory

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Teacher Interpreting the world according to Nicomachean Ethics Aristotle's Virtue or Nicomachean ethics has never been more relevant than today where the world is reduced to tinder box because of the many conflicts that beset us. Particularly is the recent conflict in Iraq and Syria where an extremist group ISIS or ISIL is terrorizing everybody with murder, beheading and rape with anyone who disagrees with them. Both Muslims and non-Muslims are threatened by their ideological extremism that even the terrorist group Al Qaeda distanced itself from them due to its wanton disregard to human life and dignity (\_\_\_\_).

If only ISIS knew Nicomachean Ethics, it may have reexamined its ideological approach and realize that extremism is not the right way to go about in life. Aristotle's discourse on Nicomachean Ethics prescribes moderation and balance on everything. It posits that anything taken to the extreme, including ideology is never good. According to Nicomachean ethics, nature teaches us that excess can destroy us (Kraut). For example, the basic of function of nutrition must be in moderation that we will only eat according to what our body needs that overeating can make us obese while under eating can make us malnourish. This law of nature also applies to morals - that is, we should exercise temperance and endeavor to achieve and preserve the mean which in plain language meant balance or moderation.

Applying this to ideology, it meant that we should exercise moderation in what we believe. If are too extreme or bent or become hardliner, we could commit atrocious acts such as what ISIS is now doing to people. Extremism can also make us intolerant and blind to the perspective of others. This is a very evident in the error of reasoning of ISIS to impose their own brand of

Islam of which Islamic scholars themselves dismiss as un-Islamic for nowhere in the Quran does it preach violence, rape and destruction. In their effort to impose their disagreeable perspective, they will terrorize anyone who would not heed them evident with the hundreds of Iraqis they executed when they refused to convert to their brand of Islam.

Moderation must also be practiced at all times according to Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics. Using the same example of nutrition, one has to nourish the body in moderation all the time to keep it healthy and make it strong.

Obviously ISIS does not do moderation in constancy. What they are consistent about is on their ideology of hate which was borne out of extremism. This explains why terrorism will not just stop easily because the realization that extremism is bad is not enough to eliminate it. Tolerance and moderation which is the antithesis of extremism must be exercised constantly to make it habit. At present, ISIS and similar organizations are nowhere this because they do not even realize they are wrong so we cannot expect them to make moderation a habit.

One of the reason why the world is full of conflict is because of the absence of Nicomachean ethics that many people slid to extremism.

#### Work Cited

Kraut, Richard. "Aristotles Ethics." Stanford University. Stanford University, 1 May 2001. Web. 7 Nov. 2014. .