

Corruption

Corruption is the disintegration of the wholeness of a life organism, a condition to be found everywhere in nature—where the metabolic pulses of life and death interact constantly with one another. Corruption, of course, is the disintegrating component of the metabolic process. It is the foundation of the moral corruption which figures so prominently in the social life of human beings. The individual, like the society he helps construct, manifests a constant display of good and corrupt interwoven.

What, then is to be said about that element in the human condition that rises, either in its virtue or its venality, outside of the self-repeating cyclical sphere, where the cycle of corruption sets the dominant tone? What grounds sanctity? Or diabolic behavior? A more exceptionalist explanation, than we can offer in terms of corruption, seems needed here. Transcendent good, and pure evil rise or fall to unprecedented latitudes.

For this note-taker two figures rise upward above the circular orbit of the human condition. They of course do not over stand that condition—we are not fantasizing but doing history, picking individuals that stand out against the human condition. When I come out with suggestions like Marcus Aurelius and Simone Weil I know that I am too grossly revealing my sympathies for virtue that is seasoned in intense historical experience of others, in all the awareness of my limit even to honor them. My choice this is, in any case, for individuals who have kept to the human condition but broken its back and gone beyond with their precision and courage..