

Value Is Anthropocentric

*The Humanities are
the core of our public culture
- Martha C. Nussbaum*

Value is anthropocentric The Philosopher said,
the practical decision-maker from him on down
doesn't think the bare thought that someone prefers
something gives us any reason at all to believe
it's the best choice of the lot at the time

especially not if the thumb on the scale or bottom line
is an abstract ideal of the Platonic sort,
a rational generality true in all cases
that doesn't exist in the real world of things and people
except as technical intellect in a deific mind.

In any case, good choices depend on who
makes them and where when why what have you and how
the ranking came about and to whose benefit.
Circumstance and contingency transform ideals
sometimes into hideous injustices.

A better way to make good choices he said
is to reflect on and respect each special contribution,
to make understanding of that intrinsic diversity
central to deliberation about the subject in question,
to consider the ultimate human community.

Practical wisdom, The Philosopher said, participates
in what he called the *Nous*, which is of the ultimate
first principle universal mind-stuff
for which there is no external justification;
God's eye Christians later thought of it.

Practical Wisdom is also he said of the ultimate
particular, our real world of time, things,
people, instincts, accidents, perceptions, emotions,
imagination, memories, change, death,
the body's commonsense perception of reality.

Of course we must use our calibrated intellect too,
adept as it is at applications of time-proven
concepts, logic, benchmarks, systematic
scientific/quantitative information,
the hyper-rational faculty of the mind to fashion

timely intelligent choices, cut through when need be
all the human stuff, but we ought to temper
judiciousness in mindfulness, experience,
hone sharp reason with the stone of humility,
give a finer edge to perception of social equity.