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Alain Finkielkraut. *The Wisdom of Love.* Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997. xxvi+ 151 pp. $30.00, cloth, ISBN 978-0-8032-1991-5.

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The influence of Emmanuel Levinas on Alain Finkielkraut's thought is strongly revealed in *The Wisdom of Love*, published in French in 1984 under the title *La sagesse de l'amour*. Levinasian subjects such as the "other," "alterity," "the face-to-face encounter," "turning metaphysics into ethics," and "totality and infinity" are all creatively interpreted and novelly applied. Finkielkraut discourses on literary and philosophical texts, and subjects such as freedom, human experiences, the French Revolution, the Dreyfus Affair and its representation by antisemites such as Barres, antisemitism in general, totalitarianism, the Shoah, the banality of evil, Humanism and its relationship to terror, and the contending positions of right and left in recent culture wars in Europe and the Americas. In this work he is able to masterfully draw on the literary and philosophic texts by Pascal, Condorcet, Stendahl, Flaubert, Proust, Zola, Sartre, Merleau-Ponty, Valery, Barthes, Claudel, Ponge, Claude Levi-Strauss, Derrida, as well as Russian writers such as Dostoyevsky and Tolstoy.

What Levinas analyzes as the face-to-face ethical encounter between self and other stands behind the critical project that is "the Wisdom of Love". Finkielkraut's work allows readers to better discover and appreciate not only the ways in which Levinas' themes, methods, and modes of thought have enlivened the discourse of continental philosophy, but also the gravity and importance of his ethical concern. While it can be argued that Levinas' ethical ideas and his critique of totalitarianism are grounded in the traditional texts of Judaism, as his *Quatre lectures talmudique*, *Cinq lectures talmudique*, and other works make clear, when Finkielkraut does turn his attention to Jewish teachings, like *Shir Ha-Shirim* or *Vayikra* 19:18, he interprets these sources without considering rabbinic and later medieval sources.

In this book Finkielkraut shows himself to be a French intellectual, a part of a sophisticated culture of continental philosophy, and an insightful secular disciple of Levinas. Finkielkraut's other important works include *Essais sur le recit: de Rousseau a Cortazar*, *Au coin de la rue,*

L'aventure, Memoire vaine: du crime contre l'humanite*,* La defaite de la pensee*,* Le juif imaginaire*,* L'avenir d'une negation: reflexion sur la question du genocide *, and many other groundbreaking monographs and essays. These works testify to Finkielkraut's insightful abilities of analysis, cultural critique, and recuperating the ideals of the modern Enlightenment. In* The Wisdom of Love_ Finkielkraut further defends the principles of the modern Enlightenment and gives credence to Levinas' conviction that European culture can lead individuals back to some of the fundamental questions raised by ethical Judaism. Finkielkraut's work belongs to a French Enlightenement tradition extending back to Diderot, Voltaire, and Condorcet, but at the same time offers a reader a window from which to gaze upon the philosophical ethical/political horizon of post-modernity as envisioned by Nietzsche, Foucault, Lyotard, and Derrida.

It can be argued that *The Wisdom of Love* makes a contribution to today's culture wars by examining love as a critical ground for social thought, and more importantly creatively sets Levinas' concept of *the Other* into tension with the critical debate on multiculturalism. One translator of this edition, David Suchoff, writes, "Rather than view multicultural diversity as antithetical to Western ideals or a destructive challenge to cultural tradition, Finkielkraut sees cultural difference as the rightful claim that the Other makes to be included, as different within the tradition of universal rights." (x) The Wisdom of Love examines the seemingly contradictory claims of universalism and partisanship for the ethnic or racial Other.

Finkielkraut further amplifies Levinas' teaching that the other puts limits on one's freedom. The existence of the other's vulnerable naked face within the Levinasian analysis calls one to responsibility. While for Martin Buber the I-Thou relationship is symmetrical, in Levinas the I-Thou relationship is asymmetrical, for the other takes priority over one's own self. Finkielkraut offers a Levinasian reading of Blake's remark that the most sublime act is to set the Other before the self. The wisdom of love for Finkielkraut involves negotiating and reflecting upon the ethics of placing the other before the self. Finkielkraut's skepticism, which derives not from Biblical texts [1] but Hobbesian political philosophy and philosophic realism, remains doubtful about a love of wisdom that expresses itself in radical extreme acts of total altruism. He does not explicitly treat uncovering the Biblical or Rabbinic foundations of the concept of the wisdom of love and its forms of expression in the phenomenal realm, nor in demarcating what ***halakically*** constitutes acting within the limits of the law or going beyond the requirements of the law. Moreover, he does not extensively and systematically draw on Biblical sources or Rabbinic texts to interpret those wellsprings (***die Quellen***); rather, he is interested in how continental philosophy, critical theory, and western literary texts can be drawn upon to confront the question of the wisdom of love.

Finkielkraut brilliantly applies Levinas' analysis of the other (***l'autre***), alterity, and the face-to-face encounter to the Holocaust, whereby he makes the following three points: (1) verminization is the equivalent of otherization, (2) bureaucratization and technologization make for the banality of which Arendt speaks, and (3) Kantian ethics are not adequate with regards to the Shoah.

He shows that it is the Nazis who attempted to erase the trace of the Jews as "the other." Writing that "The Nazis hated Jews because they were `other'," Finkielkraut argues that the infamous *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* and *Mein Kampf* prepared the way for the Holocaust in their concerns with the Jews' invisible otherness by positing that the Jews have occult powers and insinuate themselves into healthy institutions and nation-states in order to sap their blood, weaken them, and precipitate their eventual demise. These works, which support the belief that the

Jews are responsible for natural catastrophes, financial crashes, floods, unemployment, poverty, and wars, therefore belong to a long tradition of scapegoat literature and sentiment whose roots stretch back to the Medieval ages where Jews as ***the other*** were accused of being responsible for the Bubonic Plague, well-poisonings, host-desecrations, and ritual murders. Nazi ideology to make the world ***Judenrein*** stems from passionate hatred that relegates the Jews to exist outside of humanity, the zoological equivalent of bacilli, vampires, spiders, and blood suckers, who must be exterminated by the human population without quarter asked or given. This commitment to extermination is justified by Nazi ideology as an act of defense to save the German *Volk* from the threats posed to it by the Jews as the other which cannot be assimiliated. Finkielkraut writes, "By ridding the world of the Jews, the Nazis promised to annihilate the curse of alterity (p.101)." In this, he is grounded in Levinas' theory of the necessity to respect the rights of the other's non-assimilatable difference. The Nazis reformulated God's law in Social Darwinian terms, so that a moral necessity derived to exterminate ***inferior*** and different groups who did not conform to the supposed Aryan archetype. The logic that the Germanic nation constitutes the entity at the apex of existence, created as such by God, who put it under the Fuehrer's protection, ideologically legitimates the Nazi extermination of ***other*** races struggling for survival. The *Volk* therefore as a supposed act of self defense legitimates its extermination of the unassimilatable Jews who are defined as that which is ***other*** and different to the Nordic races.

Throughout the *Wisdom of Love* Finkielkraut is haunted by a cynical view of man's wolflike behavior unto his fellow man (***homo homini lupus***). While at the same time viewing the Jews as lambs preyed upon by wolflike nations who attempt to eradicate Jewish existence, Finkielkraut asserts the need for resisting thought to wrestle with the ethical questions that arise when confronting the annihilation of European Jewry, as the other eradicated in its difference from the ruling group. The ruling Nazi ideology relegates the Jew as other to a category of evil itself because it is other, and delegates out retribution to combat and destroy the Jews' ***otherness***. The relegation of insider/outsider, us/them, we/other can lead to the perpetrating upon the other crimes of monstrous violence in the name of the supposed salvation of the masterace. Thus, while Levinas says that it is the otherness of the other that makes one ethical, Finkielkraut delimits how the ***otherization*** of the Jews led to the Nazis to act unethically.

Finkielkraut perceptively isolates the extremes of the Nazi genocide against the Jews by juxtaposing (on one hand) the frenzied anti-Semitism of rallies and political demonstrations where poetic cadences, rhetorical appeal to powerful metaphors, and symbols were used to work up masses into orgiastic frenzy, with (on the other hand) the bureaucratic apathy with which large sections of German government employees took up the thousands of little tasks of annihilation. Finkielkraut writes, "In the irrationality of their discourse and in their coldly rational methods. In the senseless rage of their ideology and in the meticulous zeal of their functionaries. This archaic insanity of the word and this ultramodern technological performance are nonetheless based in a single desire: to abolish the neighbor, to erase him by murder, to punish him for his face, and to erase him ***from*** the act of murder in order to escape his face at the critical moment when he is being killed." (109) Finkielkraut offers a damning critique of Nazi bureaucracy that applied the status of modern managements methods of the efficiency of productivity to the murder of Jews, so that the production of corpses in gas chambers became an industry. Finkielkraut writes, "We know that bureaucracy frees human interaction from the risks of direct relationship, and those scruples to which proximity can give rise. Nazism completed this emancipation by turning mass murder into a bureaucratic affair." (112) As is now known, the German bureaucracy applied the

same managerial and administrative skills that were applied to the Reich's industrial-commercial concerns to the problem of exterminating the Jews as the final solution (***Endloesung***) to the Jewish question (***Die Judenfrage***).

Although Finkielkraut explicity refers to Hannah Arendt's ***The Origins of Totalitariansm*** which draws on Kant's theory of ***radical evil*** to confront the evil that was the Shoah (103, 105), Finkielkraut voices Hannah Arendt's description of ***the banality of evil*** which she formulated in her later book ***Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil*** when he asks, "Through what miracle were those in charge of the final solution, mostly good fathers and husbands, able to turn genocide into an ordinary part of their lives and to participate in the slaughter of millions and millions of men, without any feeling of human affinity?". In an unpublished essay delivered at the APA, titled, "Himmler On Moral Duty," Andre Mineau reveals Himmler's amorality as a structure of mechanistic duty that may be seen as a degenerate form of Kantianism. Many Nazis considered decent, ordinary, respectable citizens committed murder or participated in a murderous process by appeal to the necessary ***imperative*** to perform their governmental state duty. Blind obedience to duty, fueled by hateful ideology, allowed the Nazis to convert monstruous cruelty into a supposed ***virtue***. In the Posen speech, Himmler declares that the SS has the right and duty, ***morally*** speaking, to exterminate the Jewish bacilli that threaten the Volk, and praises his officers because they have remained decent (***anstaendig***) through their task. Finkielkraut, however, challenges the modern west's concept of citizen, and calls for a radical re-valuation of the concept of a citizen's duty and obedience to state law, so that civil disobedience not to carry out evil laws (from Nuremberg on) becomes an option should large state government bureaucracies be organized to do evil. It is the inversion of morality across society that allowed the Nazi bureaucrat to turn the carrying out of evil into a virtuous duty.

The influence of Levinas on Finkielkraut's analysis of the Shoah is very strong, especially in Finkielkraut's application of Levinas' theory of the face. For Finkielkraut, when the Nazis stripped the Jews in the camps, rendering their victims to a mass of naked flesh, at some level this was effectively an erasure of the face or the humanity of the Jews as other. This is to say that when the SS stripped the clothes from the Jews they prepared to murder, this reduction of the individual into a mass of naked bodies represented the loss of identity of the victims. Finkielkraut writes, "Beyond any instrumental reason that might be invoked to explain the disrobing of people about to be gassed, their method seeks to mask the person as a moral entity by means of physical presence and thus to forestall a confrontation of the executioners with the face." (111) The stripping of Jews naked, therefore, becomes an attempt to render Jews indistinct from one another, so that they can be bureaucratically processed and rendered over helplessly to the sphere of total administration and domination. The victims were not able to appear as persons with faces the world could see. The Nazis effectively neutralized the Jewish face.

Levinas, in ***Difficile liberte***, asserts that "a crisis in Humanism began with the inhuman events of the Shoah: "The Nazis attempted to erase the humanism of Judaism that posits dignity and respect to each person, and replace it with a Nazi ideology that celebrated ***Blut und Boden*** and `the purity of the Aryan race'." In the same work, Levinas relates the crisis in humanism to antisemitism by commenting, "We as Jews were the first to feel it. For us, the crisis of the human ideal is announced in antisemitism, which is in essence hatred for a man who is other than oneself -- that is to say hatred for the other man (281). [2] Therefore the question after the Shoah is not where was G-d?, but where was man?-man as an ethical being whose face commands, "Thou shalt not mur-

der (*lo tersah*)" Finkielkraut carries Levinas' analysis further by asking, "What does the idea of neighbor really mean? That the other man -- even before he is identifiable, and whatever his origin or qualities -- communicates, in all his defenseless nakedness, and absolute weakness the commandment, "Thou shalt not kill." (108) He asks, "If God is omnipotent why does He allow the Shoah?" (80) The Levinasian response to this oft-asked question is that the Shoah was not the result of G-d's powerlessness, but the failure of man given moral autonomy to choose freely between right and wrong. Finkielkraut offers an insightful meditation that juxtaposes the notion of a Jewish providential G-d who pulls the strings, and runs the game of a divine scheme that only a coherent philosophical conception can trace, and the moral voice of Judaism that demands that man be responsible for his actions, inscribed paradoxically often unnoticed in the master plan. (77) Finkielkraut wrestles with the apparent contradiction found in Pirke Avot, "Everything is foreseen, yet freedom of choice is given", not by drawing on rabbinic or Biblical texts, but on those of western literature and philosophy. Like Immanuel Kant before him, Finkielkraut is arguing that acknowledgment of human moral autonomy is a necessary pre-requisite for the conception of the moral agent. To be a moral agent on the stage of history one must acknowledge that one has responsibility for one's actions. It is morally necessary to accept responsibility for the consequences of one's free will. While the religious man may believe that all is foreseen under the providence (*Hashgihah*) of an all powerful deity, human beings, if they are to act ethically, must act as if they were free, and accept responsibility for the consequence of their will, choices, and actions. Finkielkraut, like Levinas and Kant, is suggesting that moral autonomy remains essential for ethical conduct of the free doer as a responsible moral agent.

Finkielkraut offers a critique of the possibility of renounciation of moral responsibility implicit in the structure of modern Humanism. Humanism, it is argued, can tend to absolve an individual's vile acts as resulting from the social context that Humanism claims forcibly produced them. Nazism is simply seen as resulting from the economic pressures and stresses the Germans faced during their depression. This, however, does not account for why the Nazis diverted money and energy to exterminate Jews towards the end of WWII when such funds could have been directed in the war effort to defeat the allies. Modern humanism has a tendency to ascribe causality to historical, economical, and social factors because it holds that evil is the result of faulty social organization rather than attributing it strong passions such as demonic hatred. Blame thus is transferred from the individual perpetrators of crime to the system, thereby refusing to hold each man, each particular case that comes before the moral law, to the evil actions they may commit. In Humanistic thought man becomes the product of ***social conditioning*** so that moral failures are the result of external forces that control man. Whether treated as victims of the system or as its henchmen, men are no longer directly morally responsible, and they tend to be seen as being possessed and dissolved of moral accountability. To better celebrate man, modern Humanism can tend to strip him of responsibility for his actions, because man's meaning is seen as being derived totally from a contingent social-political totality. [3]

Finkielkraut's critique of Humanism is grounded on Levinas' thought. In ***The Wisdom of Love*** Finkielkraut writes, "give man back his power to rise above his social context, to break with the system that fixes his place and being; oppose, in short, ethical reflection and the exculpation of man that passes for Humanism today: this is certainly one of the most decisively innovative aspects of Emmanuel Levinas' philosophy." (71) Modern Humanism forgives Cain for refusing to be his brother's keeper by relegating his actions to the effect of his environment. Finkielkraut cannot forgive the murder of European Jewry as modern

Abels, by Nazi Cains, and critically questions those assumptions that would attempt to exculpate the murder of 6 million Jews by denying claims of the uniqueness of the Shoah and, as Barbie's lawyers did, divert attention away from Nazi crimes towards other atrocities in general perpetrated against humanity at large. Levinas recognized a crisis in Humanism as a result of Nazism when he wrote that the triumph of Nazism in Germany throws most into question "the very humanity of man". Primo Levi phrases this question as "If this be a man?". Levinas' critique of Humanism manifested in the crisis of Humanism as a result of the rise of Nazism appeared in an essay written in 1934 titled, "Reflections on the Philosophy of Hitlerism" which appeared in *Esprit*. In this essay Levinas set the groundwork for Finkielkraut's critique of Humanism when he demonstrates that Humanism, with the rise of Nazism, has caused the loss of confidence in its own conceptions of the dignity and humanity of the Jew as a human being. Levinas' analysis and critique of Humanism hinges on noting that Nazism is opposed to the freedom of the individual. He charges that with the advent of Nazism modern European Humanism no longer takes seriously its own understanding of the freedom and dignity of persons, and that this is what makes the scene upon which National Socialism has appeared with fury so disastrous.

Finkielkraut's Levinasian critique of modern Humanism is not an indictment to scrap the modern Western Enlightenment project. Finkielkraut, while being familiar with Marxist thought, is not as radical as Adorno and Horkheimer in *The Dialectic of Enlightenment*. Rather, Finkielkraut's *The Wisdom of Love* urges its readers to return to the European Enlightenment and to rethink the questions that motivated the coming into being of texts like Kant's *Was ist Aufklaurung?* and Moses Mendelssohn's *On the Question What Does to Enlighten Mean?* At the same time, it could be argued that the limits of Finkielkraut's call for a return to the values of the eighteenth-century enlightenment traditions come into view by not returning far enough. In Leo Strauss' *Philosophie und Gesetz* the return to the medieval enlightenment is urged. The medieval enlightenment of Jewish NeoPlatonists such as Solomon ibn Gabirol, Bahya ibn Pakuda, and Yehudah HaLevi, and Jewish Aristotelians such as Abraham ibn Daud, Maimonides, Gersonides, and Shem Tov ibn Falquera allows us to return in a fundamental way to the question of the relationship of reason and revelation in which the question of the *Wisdom of Love* has previously originated key insights concerning love. For Strauss, Finkielkraut's secular call to the eighteenth-century Enlightenment does not take us back sufficiently to recover Levinas' Jewish philosophical project of translating the questions of the *topoi* of Jerusalem into the language of the *topoi* of Athens. The reader must ask whether Jewish philosophy can adequately attempt to address the question of *the wisdom of love* within the context of the Jewish philosophical tradition without drawing on classic texts such as Rambam's *Sefer Ahavah* in the *Mishneh Torah*, those sections in the *Moreh Nevukim* that treat the questions, "What is the Love of HaShem?", or Yehudah Abrabanel's fifteenth-century text *Dialoghi di Amore*. The scope of Finkielkraut's book limits itself to defending the principles of the eighteenth-century Enlightenment's engagement with the relationship between wisdom and love against people who blame these ideas for bringing about the end of cultural diversity in Western Europe. Finkielkraut's gaze in his book is not fixed towards the cultural diversity of medieval Jewish thought. While Strauss and Finkielkraut both share the view that philosophy was born in ancient Greece in revolt against *doxa* or public opinion (53), and thus they alert us to a danger of a modernity where no one thinks, everyone recites, where free thinking in quest of the first principles and originary ontologies are systematically eradicated by non-thought, Finkielkraut's proximity to Strauss is not close. While Strauss looked to the antiquity of Plato and

Xenephon's Socrates and medieval Maimonidean rationalism to diagnose modernity that has spawned Judeocide, Finkielkraut's gaze is shaped more by modern and post-modern continental philosophy and European modern Enlightenment culture in general.

Finkielkraut's secular critique of the dangers that threaten to ossify the active intellect in blind submission to revelations whose truth claims remain yet to be demonstrated belongs to the Enlightenment tradition of Diderot, not medieval Jewish philosophy. Finkielkraut's thought, which is at the forefront of intellectual discourses in continental Europe, is firmly grounded in modernity, while Strauss returned to the ancient thought of Plato and offered a demonstration for the superiority of ancient philosophy which originates in wonder over modern philosophy which originates from Descartean radical doubt. Strauss also saw great dangers in a modern ***will to power*** that conceptualizes the self as lord and maker of a technologically-engineered world whereby the self or ego becomes the center of all reference. While ibn Tufel's scenario of a man on a desert island is to contemplate G-d's attributes, the modern equivalent of this setting found in Defoe's ***Robinson Crusoe*** is for modern man to enslave others and master, control, and exploit the island's natural resources via the enframement (***Gestel***) of modern technology. Finkielkraut's greater openness to all cultural groups having the right to exist side by side (rather than Strauss' commitment to viewing the hidden dynamism of the West being constituted by the two axles in the chariot of thought originating from Athens [ancient Greek thought] and Jerusalem [revelation]) sets apart Finkielkraut's modernism from Strauss' return to medieval and ancient sources. Finkielkraut argues for a recognition of "the equality of cultures" and rejects Straussian notions of eternal verities true for all peoples at all times. Finkielkraut further makes a plea for cultural pluralism and multiculturalism when he writes, "Joining with such hostility to difference are a narrow individualism and false universalism: together they comprise the shadowy coalition that an entire movement of European thought- from Montaigne to Levi-Strauss- opposes with the apologetics of cultural pluralism." (98)

As well as the need to return to fundamental philosophic texts that constitute the Jewish philosphical tradition's treatment of the question of the wisdom of love, it can be argued that the modern or post-modern Jewish philosophers would benefit also by seeking guidance from rabbinic Judaism's treatment of the subject of the wisdom of love. Levinas' Talmud teacher Shushani enabled Levinas to forge a new intertextual relationship between modern continental philosophy and Talmudic Judaism. Shushani allowed Levinas to build bridges between his philosophic interest in the work of thinkers such as Husserl, Merleau-Ponty, and Rosenzweig and Lithuanian Talmudic study. Shushani ushered Levinas into the palaces of Rabbinic Judaism, which further enabled Levinas in turn to draw assimilated French Jewish intellectuals back to some of the questions raised by Rabbinic texts. In 1986, when the ***Foundation du judaisme*** presented the young Finkielkraut with an award for his contribution to Jewish letters, Levinas made a speech in Finkielkraut's honor concluding, "***The imaginary Jew***, standing on the threshold of the Talmud has, perhaps not yet knocked at the door, even though he has come very close. Nevertheless, we Jews in the West are happy to note that once again, in the land of Montaigne, Descartes, and Pascal, in the land of Moliere, Hugo, and Proust, in the land of Blanchot, the roads lead where they should." [4] Levinas' allusion to ***knocking at the door*** may evoke a long tradition of Hekhalot literature where ***doorkeepers*** (***archons***) demand passwords required in order to allow entrance to further heavenly halls (see also Moreh Nevukim III, 51) of the seven heavens.

In ***The Wisdom of Love*** Finkielkraut chooses to remain a secular disciple of Levinas, and does not attempt to knock at the doors of recent great

French scholars like Shlomo Munk, Gregory Vajda, and Touiti. Munk's French edition of the Moreh Nevukim (***Les guides des egares***) and Vajda's work offer students of philosophy interested in Levinas' attempt to build bridges between what Straussians call ***Athens and Jerusalem***, a different road than the one Finkielkraut has taken in his ***The Wisdom of Love***. Neither does Finkielkraut actively seek out German Jewish philosophic thought that has raised the question of the wisdom of love, in still different ways. [5] Finkielkraut's interests and commitments remain those of secular French philosophy and literary culture, which authentically gives depth and substance to a Jewish authenticity more committed to a Judaism founded on ethical and moral grounds rather than ceremonial or ritual bases. In this way Finkielkraut is an heir to Spinoza, who also chose a world redeemed by philosophy, science, and culture rather than a world redeemed by ritualistic religion. [6]

In ***The Wisdom of Love*** Finkielkraut does treat the following forms of love: ***agape***, ***eros***, love of neighbor, romantic love, and unrequited love, without for the most part explicit reference to Biblical sources. [7] However, Finkielkraut does treat two particular Biblical passages where a form of the word love is found in the ***Tanakh***. Those uses of a form of the word "love" in the Biblical text are from ***Shir HaShirim*** and the Levitical commandment ***VeAhavta Re-ekah Kamochah*** (And you shall love your neighbor as yourself).

Finkielkraut confronts the erotic sexual love or sexual desire of a man for a woman celebrated in what he calls "glowing colors and passionate words" in ***Shir HaShirim***. Finkielkraut creatively applies Levinas' analysis of the phenomenology of sensual pleasure to negotiate the explicit existence of erotic love metaphorized in ***Shir HaShirim*** in a section that he titled "Eros and Communication." (46-50) The reader may sense an impatience in Finkielkraut's brief acknowledgement of the complicated rabbinic interpretations of the Song of Songs that allegorizes the covenant between G-d and his people, so that the love between the man and the women in Song of Songs symbolically represents the love of G-d for His people Israel. Finkielkraut writes, "Rabbis have succeeded in giving these overwhelmingly sensual verses an irreproachable theological or moral content." (46) For Finkielkraut the rabbinic impulse to establish a crucial link between human love and love of God for His people Israel is seen as a kind of repression by the rabbis into "a fortress of theological armor." Finkielkraut does not search for the reasons why Rabbi Akiba refers to the Song of Songs as "the holy of holies" of the Biblical corpus. Finkielkraut is also not interested in the way commentaries on the Song of Songs, especially reflect the changing ways of Jewish reading that might be perceived by studying those commentaries on ***Shir HaShirim*** offered during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries by R. Isaac Arama, R. Yohanan Alemanno, R. Ovadiah Sforno, and the Kabbalist R. Moshe Alsheikh. Finkielkraut also does not draw on some Jewish mystical beliefs that see in sexual passion between a man and his wife, the model of reintegration of the divine unity, [8] a view which also has some correlations with the ***Holy Letter***, ascribed to Nahamanides, a work that substantiates the holiness of legitimate sexual relations between a husband and wife. [9] Neither does Finkielkraut turn to more normative tendencies towards modesty in Jewish thought when treating eroticism. [10]

Finkielkraut offers a Levinasian application of a phenomenological treatment of ***eros*** as a situation in which the Other's alterity appears for the first time in its pure form. Finkielkraut perceptively shows that Levinas takes the opposite tact of Bataille by finding not ***eros*** in ***agape***, but rather the shape of ***agape*** in ***eros***. Finkielkraut also shows how Levinas' analysis of the erotic encounter also differs from that of Sartre's turning the erotic relationship into a version of war between consciousness and battle maneuvers. He puts Levinas' analysis of the erotic in dialogue

with Sartre, Bataille, and Proust, but to a less extent with Foucault and Freud as one might have expected, and argues for Levinas' founding an unique ethical dimension in a phenomenological analysis of sensual love. Again Levinas' analysis of the facet of ***Otherness*** and ***face*** comes into play. [11] Finkielkraut locates the enigma and evasiveness of the other in sexual encounter by drawing on texts of Proust. For Finkielkraut, sexual passion puts one in contact with the abstraction of the face. An ethical dimension derives from Levinas' phenomenological analysis of eroticism by preventing sexual encounter from resulting in a Hegelian master/slave dialectic or a Buberian I-It relation where the other is degraded to an object of pleasure. Finkielkraut writes, "The Other is not an object I appropriate, not a liberty that I must circumvent to affirm my own: it is a being whose mode of being consists in never completely giving in (to longing, to knowledge, to the gaze) ... Before it is violence or violation, eroticism is the experience of the inviolability of the Other, or better still, of her modesty." (49) Finkielkraut suggests that the other's elusiveness is suggested in the verse from the Song of Songs, "On my bed, throughout the nights, I searched for my soul's loved one, I searched but did not find!" The paradox is that the longing and desire of sexual love turns one into what Levinas calls "the hostage (***l'otage***)" of someone who is absent, someone you cannot locate, nor elude, nor dismiss." (44) Finkielkraut's language suggests that there are ethical limits when he writes, "when embracing it is useless to surrender oneself to the drunken pleasure of the notion that `all is permitted', to flout the laws of propriety in a thousand excessive, licentious ways, to violate each and every taboo, to abolish every last vestige of timidity or reserve, to sacrifice the chaste liturgy of normal conduct for an immodesty without bounds, for an unbridled savagery- it would not do. The discovered does not lose its mystery in the discovery, the hidden is not disclosed, the night is not dispersed." (49) While Finkielkraut may be suggesting some concept of a sex ethic he remains vague as opposed to explicit ethical formulations in Levitical law. [12]

The second Biblical concept of love that Finkielkraut addresses in a philosophic manner is that found in Leviticus 19:18, ***and you shall love your neighbor as yourself***. Finkielkraut does not situate this Levitical injunction within the context of its surrounding verses prohibiting unfair dealing and defrauding, vengeance, and bearing a grudge, nor does he draw upon Rabbi Akiva's view of this verse as the epitome of the Torah. Instead, Finkielkraut's approach to interpretations of Leviticus 19:18 is contemporary and particularly influenced by the recent event(s) of the Holocaust. On page 22 Finkielkraut asks, "What is loving your neighbor?" to which he returns on page 85 in a section titled, "The Test of the Neighbor", where he asks, "What did it mean, what does it mean today, to love humanity, if not to forgive the atrocities humanity has committed by denying that humankind bears any responsibility for the conditioning that has brought it to this pass?" Thus the implication is that one cannot uncritically submit to Humanism's superficial interpretation of Leviticus 19:18 to love humanity, because it can lead to the cheap forgiveness of humanity's inhumanity. Finkielkraut then returns to a critique of Humanism. Humanism can tend to dangerously grant a universal pardon and complete absolution in its universal application of the commandment to love one's neighbor, or what it interprets as humanity at large. Finkielkraut's responses to the question, "what is loving your neighbor?" flows from a philosophic critique of Humanistic project. Finkielkraut struggles to emerge from a skeptical tradition that sees in all acts of giving a predatory instinct motivated by self-interest rather than drawing on well known texts such as Maimonides ***Eight Degrees of Charity***. For a century that has known two world wars, totalitarian governments on the right and left, the genocides of Auschwitz and Cambodia and a dozen other places, the proliferation of nuclear

arsenals, and a modern culture based on elitism that seems to promote ruthless competition where men are pitted wolflike against each other, Finkielkraut's ***The Wisdom of Love*** juxtaposes the tension between idealism and a skeptical Hobbesian realism that regards the original state of nature to be "war of each against each", and Adam Smith's view that self-interest is the essence of all worldly forces and personal motivations. [13]

Yet against the bleak pessimistic view of the radically self- interested nature of humanity, Finkielkraut presents Levinas as a philosopher who dares to affirm, "It is by no means certain that, at the beginning there was war." (12). This possibility of an anti-Hobbesian position does not mean that Levinas is naive. (90) Levinas is anti-Hobbesian in that he sees the dangers of large state governmental bureaucracies not just establishing secular law to prevent civil wars and internecine violence, as Hobbes would have it, but rather in the fact that this century has seen the Nazi state governmental bureaucracies employed to carry out the logistics of Judeocide. The question of the love of others for Finkielkraut is not a ***halakhic*** or legal question. Rather he shows its ethical and political dimension through the application of Levinas' thought. [14] It is the murder of 6 million European Jews that "sobers" Finkielkraut's tendency towards idealistic intepretation of Leviticus 19:18.

Despite Finkielkraut's skeptical and cynical, but realistic musings, he still argues that "the wisdom of love" demands respect for ethnic and racial particularity, but recognition of the other's likeness and right to exist in his irreducible difference. In a less skeptical vein Finkielkraut returns to his theme of interpretation of love of one's neighbor when he writes, "The man emancipated from his background is more difficult to confront than the man who is defined by it. Why? Because suddenly, he has a face, and I as a result have a responsibility. My neighbor is my brother- he encumbers me the moment that nothing protects me from his humanity. He threatens to meet me on the same terms as everyone else, that is to say, as a creditor, unless I can continue to confine him to his status or role. This multifaceted menace to the security of being has provoked a counter attack whose most accomplished (in all meanings of the word) form was anti-Semitism." (106) Finkielkraut then proceeds to analyze Nazi Judeocide as the extreme form of the total betrayal of the commandment to love one's neighbor as oneself. His analysis may suggest that the Holocaust as historical event may influence the way this Levitical injunction must be interpreted today. The Holocaust as historical event therefore may have altered in a significant way how this commandment is to be understood after Auschwitz. The question of the wisdom of love with regards to love for the neighbor is radically transformed by the hatred for the Other during the Shoah. Biblical hermeneutics of Leviticus 19:18 in the aftermath of the Holocaust therefore must incorporate the radical annihilation of this commandment in the Nazi regime's waging of a war of annihilation against the Jews to make the world ***Judenrein***.

It can be argued that no new biblical hermeneutic that re-interprets the ancient Leviticus 19:18 in the context of the aftermath of Auschwitz can be adequate without an understanding of how this commandment has traditionally been interpreted within Judaism. First, one would need to place Leviticus 19:18 in its ancient cultural context. [15] Then one would need to be aware of its interpretation in the well-known negative formulation of Hillel popularly known as "the golden rule." [16] Third, there would be the need to discuss why Rabbi Akiba declares Leviticus 19:18 to be the great fundamental principle of the Torah in opposition to Ben Azzai. [17] One could then turn to mishnaic and Talmudic portions that cite "and you shall love your neighbor as yourself" within the context of marriage and capital punishment. [18] Fifth, one could consult medieval rabbinic Torah commentaries by Rashi, Rambam [19], Ramban, ibn Ezra, Sforno,

Mendelssohn's Biur, Malbim, and so on with regards to how these commentators interpret Leviticus 19:18.

While Finkielkraut's not treating how the concept of love has been addressed within the biblical and rabbinic traditions may be understandable within the scope of his training within the discipline of philosophy, some within the philosophic discipline might have expected a more direct confrontation with the concept of love within Western thought. Stanley Rosen's commentary on Plato's *Symposium* reveals that the discourse of love has many Greek origins. Furthermore, the topic of what is called Platonic love, or more generally friendship, might have been more directly addressed in Finkielkraut's work. Works such as Plato's *Lysis* [20], Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* [21], Cicero's *De amiticia* [22], to more modern works such as Montaigne's *Sur l'amite*, C.S. Lewis' *The Four Loves* [23] or Jacques Maritain's *Amour fou* [24] all raise the question of love within the context of different forms of friendship, the later two being Christian forms of the wisdom of love. [25]

In summary, Finkielkraut's book represents an important addition to the secular appropriation of Levinas' thought to subjects as diverse as discourse on literary texts, freedom, human experiences, the French Revolution, the Dreyfus Affair, antisemitism, the Holocaust, humanism, and the contending positions of right and left in recent culture wars in Europe and America. The book serves as a significant contribution to application of Levinas' thought on the Other, alterity, and ethics. Some readers however, and specially those in the fields of biblical studies and rabbinics, may find Finkielkraut's secular appropriation of Levinas and interpretation of Biblical texts without considering rabbinic and later medieval sources problematic.

Notes

[1]. Finkielkraut seems to reject a radical New Testament ethic that affirms, "Greater love (agape) hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends (John 5:13)." Louis Jacobs has argued that this radical ethic of selfless altruistic love can be found *deoreita* from the cases of: (1) Zebulon and Naphtali (Judges 5:18), (2) Abraham's risking of his life to save Lot (Gen.16:14-16), (3) Lot risking his life to shelter two angels (Gen. 12:10-20), (4) Moshe risking his life by smiting the Egyptian (Ex.2:11-15), (5) Moshe offering his life in prayer as intercession (Ex.32:32), (6) Moshe risking his life by delivering the daughters of Jethro (Ex.2:17-19), (7) Samson killing himself in order to slay Philistines (Judges 16:28-30), (8) David placing his life in jeopardy when accepting the challenge of Goliath (I.Sam.17), or *derabbanan* in Pesahim 25b, Terumot 8:12, and Pesahim 50a. See L. Jacobs, "Greater Love Hath No Man...The Jewish Point of View of Self-Sacrifice", *Judaism* 6.1 (1957).

[2]. E. Levinas, *Difficult Freedom: Essays on Judaism*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 281.

[3]. In *Memoire vaine: du crime contre l'humanite* Finkielkraut exposes the moral failure represented by the Klaus Barbie trial which found the "butcher of Lyons" not guilty of any crimes against the Jewish people, Judaism, and Jewish culture but generally guilty of "crimes against humanity." The Barbie trial attests to the failure of international society, whose morality is based on Humanistic claims and assumptions, to take responsibility for criminals of state. Modern Humanism's tendency to universalize victimization of particular groups, thereby erasing the *uniqueness* of different atrocities and genocides, allowed Barbie's lawyers to divert attention from the murder of European Jewry in which Barbie played a significant role, towards a more general attention to "colonial crimes" of the post World War II era, thereby rejecting the special unique incommensurable significance of the Shoah argued by thinkers such as Emil Fackenheim. Barbie's lawyers drew on Humanistic assumptions to portray everyone as guilty- except Barbie himself. Finkielkraut sug-

gests that Humanism's universalism can tend to trivialize the memory of Nazism and its crimes. (see Finkielkraut, Alain, ***Remembering in Vain: The Klaus Barbie Trial & Crimes Against Humanity***, New York: Columbia University Press, 1992).

[4]. See J. Friedlander, ***Vilna on the Seine: Jewish Intellectuals in France since 1968***, "The Lithuanian Jewish Enlightenment in French Translation: Emmanuel Levinas and His Disciple Alain Finkielkraut", New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968. Friedlander writes, "Occasionally Finkielkraut makes reference to the Torah, but he remains outside the realm of religious scholarship. When he received the award from the ***Fondation du judaisme*** he humbly confessed that he was raised on the debates between Corneille and Racine, not on those between Hillel and Shammai... Recently however, through his reading of Emmanuel Levinas, Finkielkraut has begun to see how the Torah and commentaries might enrich his appreciation of the ethical issues that concerned the great writers and thinkers of his own French tradition. And with this new insight he stands tentatively on the threshold of the Talmud. But he has still not ***knocked at the door***, as some disciples of Levinas have gone on to do. Other students of the generation of 1968 have not only knocked at the door, but have literally moved into the world of Talmudic studies. In the process, they have abandoned Levinas' goal of engaging European philosophy and religious scholarship in a common search for universal ethics. They have closed themselves off in yeshivah communities, modeled on the ones that existed previously in Lithuania." (p.104)

[5]. See H. Cohen, ***Der Religion der Vernunft: Aus den Quellen des Judentums***, "The Discovery of Man as Fellowman (mitmensch), and "The Problem of Religious Love", Leipzig, 1918.; Rosenzweig's discussions of love of God and love of enemies in notes on poems of Yehudah Halevi, love letters to his wife Edith Hahn, the role love plays with regards to Revelation (***Offenbarung***) in ***Die Stern der Erloesung***; Hannah Arendt's dissertation on ***Liebesbegrieff bei Augustin*** (Love and Saint Augustine, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), Scholem's ***Mysticism***, 233-5; Buber's ***Ich und Du***and ***Between Man and Man*** 28-30, 51-58; Leo Baeck's ***Das Wesen des Judentum***, Berlin, 1936, p. 193; For example Cohen writes, "Und der Mensch liebt Gott. Aber dass der Mensch Gott liebt, is praktisch und psychologisch nicht schlechtin die Umkehrung von der Liebe Gottes zum Menschen. Es muss noch eine doppelte Vermittlung hinzukommen, um die Liebe des Menschen zu Gott vermitteln. Der Mensch muss erstlich den Mitmenschen lieben. In dieser Liebe, welche die Sozialpolitik erzeugt, liegt der wahre Grund der Menschenliebe, Und nur von diesem Grunde aus kann der Gedanke enstehen, dass auch der Mensch zur Liebe Gottes sich erheben konne. Er kann ja den Mitmenschen lieben. Und wie konnte er dies, wenn ihm Gott nicht in dem heiligen Geiste in dem Geiste der Heilikeit den Geist der Liebe in Herz gelegt hatte (***Der Religion der Vernunft***, Leipzig, 1918, p.478)."

[6]. See L. Strauss, ***Spinoza's Critique of Religion***, "Preface", New York: Schocken Books, 1965; Strauss writes, for example, "He (Spinoza) thus showed the way toward a new religion or religiousness which was to inspire a wholly new kind of society, a new kind of Church. He became the sole father of that new Church which was to be universal in fact an not merely in claim, like other Churches, because its foundation was no longer any positive revelation. It was a Church whose rulers were not priests or pastors, but philosophers and artists and whose flock were the circles of culture and property... The new Church would transform Jews and Christians into human beings-into human beings of a certain kind: cultured human beings, human beings who because they possessed Science and Art did not need religion in addition. The new society, constituted by the aspiration common to all its members toward the True, the Good, and the Beautiful, emancipated the Jews of Germany. Spinoza became the symbol of that

emancipation which was to be more than emancipation, but secular redemption. In Spinoza, a thinker and a saint who was both a Jew and a Christian and hence neither, all cultured families of the earth, it was hoped, will be blessed." (17)

[7]. Finkielkraut does not explicitly treat the concepts of love found in the *Tanakh* such as: the love of Torah (Psalm 119:97), love of the *mitzvot* (Psalm 119:167), love of the name of God (Isa. 56:6), love of justice (Ps. 45:8,33:5;11:47,48,97,113,119,127,140,159,163,165,167), love of strangers (Deut.10:19), love of musar (Prov. 12:1), love of the pure heart (Prov.22:11), love of wisdom/law (Prov.8:17,21; cf.4:5-6;7:4;29:3, Eccl. 4:11-14), G-d's love of the seed of Abraham forever (II.Chron.20:7), G-d's love of the people Israel (Deut.4:37;7:7-8,13;10:15;23:6), G-d's love of the saintly (Ps.146:8; Prov. 15:9;cf.3:12), love of goodness (Micah 6:11; Amos 5:15), love of the Temple or Jerusalem (Isa.66:10; Ps.26:8;122:9), or the favoritism of human love that can cause human jealousy (Sarah for Isaac over Ishmael, Rebecca for Jacob over Esau (Gen.25:28), Jacob for the Biblical Rachel (Gen.29:18), Jacob for Joseph (Gen. 37:3), Elkanah for Hannah (Sam 1:5), etc.

[8]. See Zohar 1:49b-50a

[9]. See Igeret ha-kodesh ha-meyuhas la-Ramban; an English translation can be found in ***The Holy Letter: a study in medieval Jewish sexual morality, ascribed to Nahmanides***, translated and with an introduction by Seymour J. Cohen, New York: KTAV, 1976.

[10]. Certain Levitical traditions can be seen as viewing sexual intercourse a defiling (Lev. 15:18; I. Sam.21:4-5, II Sam.11:11). Similarly the sin of the golden calf can be seen as the degeneration of the Hebrews into sexual licentiousness coupled with idolatry. Tendencies towards modesty are further found in Rambam's ***Moreh Nevukim*** where the motif that G-d is not a body (Ein Lo Demuth HaGuf Ve-Eino Guf) repeats. Rambam's asceticism with regard to sexual relations might further be seen in ***Hilkot Teshuvah*** where we read that in ***Olam HaBah*** there is nothing corporeal (no eating, drinking, sexual relations, etc), but the righteous sit with crowns on their heads enjoying the presence of the Shekhinah. Rambam is influenced by Aristotle who viewed the sense of touch as a disgrace that drag's man, who has the potential for noetic activity via the active intellect, down to the level of animal senses.

[11]. Finkielkraut writes, "What desire discovers and what pushes it to the verge of ecstasy, is the Other's indomitable proximity: stripped, submissive, swooning, the beloved withdraws more than ever from any relation to us. No escape: nothing about her relieves me of her alterity; under my caresses, her body becomes nothing but face." (Finkielkraut, Alain, Lincoln Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 48)

[12]. Levitical law forbids incest (Lev. 18:17-18,20:10-21), homosexuality (Lev. 18:22), harlotry (Lev.21:7), prostitution (Lev.19:2), adultery, intercourse during a women's period of uncleanness (Lev.18:19;20:18; the laws of niddah), bestiality (Lev.18:23; 20:16), and stipulations such as "priests may only marry virgins (Lev. 21:7,13-15)."

[13]. On page 89 in a section titled "Realism's Objection" Finkielkraut draws on Hobbes and Adam Smith when he skeptically asks, "Men do not feel brotherly love for one another: no natural affinity unites them. Who still believes in the possibility of noble ideals? Who does not see them as a farce, a hypocritical screen behind which each man, even if he does not happen to give in fully to his worst impulses, is always looking out for his own self-interest, guided by nothing but the commands of self-interest? Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself?: a touching exhortation that is powerless in the face of rampant possessiveness and the drive to succeed. Man is not a moral being: now that dreams of total liberation are on the wane or, more accurately, are turning to nightmares, we are less inclined to consider this natural blemish an historical and social vice. An entire

philosophical tradition that spans from Hobbes to Adam Smith, overshadowed by progressivism, once again stirs in our memory. Its guiding impulse: the desire to found social life on a realistic basis. Realistic which is to say, not moralistic: a school of thought responding to what men are, rather than what they ought to be, grounded in our egotistical instincts, rather than in the virtuous injunctions that condemn them. Giving our personal preoccupations and mundane aspirations their due, rather than stigmatizing and seeking to heal us of them. Civilizing our destructive outbursts with other, equally spontaneous drives (the profit motive, the fear of violent death), rather than opposing all human depravity with the hapless religious precepts of devotion and humility. The wisdom of love? Just the reverse: for realism wisdom consists in mourning love and giving up on this indefinable quality by replacing it with less beautiful, but more effective, passions as a way of making peace possible among men." (90)

[14]. The influence of Levinas is seen when Finkielkraut writes, "Love thy neighbor? No, if you understand love as part of an enlightened philosophy of altruism, with its innate sympathy of man for suffering man. Yes, if the unctious and insipid word love can still possibly allow us to perceive the weighty, overwhelming obsessive proximity- the accusatory pressure, the kind of violence, the persecution- that my neighbor exercises over me. I cannot free myself of this Other from whom I am separated and who escapes my power. He makes it impossible for me to exist naively and fully, whether in the hedonistic lifestyle of a self who lives for pleasure, or as a heroic self displaying his power, or as a bourgeois individual dedicated to the pursuit of his own interests. The Other: the barrier to being. Here I am, forced to answer for him, weakened, beset with a moral obligation I do not wish to bare. I do not naturally love my neighbor; it is my neighbor who encumbers me, haunts me, crushes me- in short, who does violence to my nature by demanding my love." (92)

[15]. See I. Efros, ***Ancient Jewish Philosophy***, "Love", Wayne State University Press, 1964; Efros notes that the commandment is located within the Holiness Code and comments, "The priests were also responsible for some spiritual upheavals of the people. Probably the reforms of Hezekiah and certainly those of Josiah were due to them. It may be assumed therefore, that they exercised a great educational influence, and one may regard the command, ***and Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself*** as the priestly contribution to Biblical ethics. This urging of mutual love is in keeping with the general spirt of joy that overwhelmed the people at the time of such sacrifices as thank-offering, peace-offerings, and paschal lamb, and especially during the feast of ingathering. The joy expressed itself in dances accompanied by instrumental music."

[16]. See Shabat 31a, Avot 1:12, Avot de-Rabbi Nathan version B or Schetchter edition (chapter 26, p.53); In these two formulations Hillel links love of neighbor with study of Torah, for true love culminates in***Torah lishmah*** whereby through ***amore intellectivo*** one is drawn closer to HaShem. For commentary on Hillel's negative formulation of the golden rule see R. Jospe, "Hillel's Rule", ***JQR***, 81 (1990); E. Gershfield, "Hillel, Shammai, and the Three Proseltes", in Conservative Judaism 21:3 (Spring, 1967); K. Kohler, "Nachstenliebe in Judenthum", in ***Festschrift Hermann Cohen***, 475; A. Dihle, ***Die golden Regel: Eine Einfuhrung in die Geschichte der Antiken und fruehchristlichen Vulgarethik, Gottingen, 1962; K. Bruno,*** Juedische Lexicon, "Liebe deinen nachsten wie dich Selbst", Juedischer Verlag, Berlin, p. 1104; E. Borowitz, "Love of Neighbor", ***EJ*** 11, 530.

[17]. See Sifra on Vayikra 19:18, Yer. Talm Nedarim 9:3, Genesis Rabbah 24:7.

[18]. Kiddushin 41, Tosefta Sota 5:11, Niddah 17a (cited within context of marriage); Kethuvoth

37b, Sotah 1:6, Sanh.45a, Sanh.52a, Tosefta Sanh. 9:11 (cited in context of capital punishment).

[19]. Also see Introduction to MT and Sefer Ha-Mitzvot (#206) where Rambam interprets Leviticus 19:18 to mean that it is incumbent upon Jews to love every single member of the covenant (Ahavat Yisrael). also see Hilkot Deot 6:3.

[20]. In the *Lysis* Socrates notes that it is common for the many to chase after insubstantial things over friendship. Socrates comments, "All people have their fancies, some desire horses, and others dogs; and some are fond of gold, and others of honour. Now I have no violent desire of any of these things; but I have a passion for friends; and I would rather have a good friend than the best cock or quail in the world: I would even go further, and say the best horse or dog. Yea, by the dog of Egypt, I should greatly prefer a real friend to all the gold of Darius, or even Darius himself: I am such a lover of friends as that." (see Plato, *Lysis, Symposium, Gorgias*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press (Loeb classical Library), volume 4, 1925) Here we see Socrates in all the splendor of Socratic irony disparaging those things held by the many to be good in the utilitarian sense. The many have a lack of experience in things beautiful. The Greeks called vulgarity, *apeirokalia*. Socrates' martyrdom in light of a life lived in pursuit of love of wisdom reveals Socrates' beautiful soul. The Lysis goes on to identify the friend with *the Good* and the good with virtue (arete). The above passage cited from Plato's *Lysis* finds correlations with the following from Xenephon's *Memorabilia* where we read, "Just as others are pleased by a good horse or dog or bird, I myself am pleased to an even higher degree by good friends. And if I have anything good I teach it and recommend them to my friends from whom I believe they will be benefited somehow in regard to virtue" (see Xenophon, *Memorabilia and Oeconomicus*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1992). It is the excellence of intellectual virtue that is presented in the passage cited from Xenephon's *Memorabilia* where Socrates is said to have shared (literally picked out or selected, from ***ek-legein***) enlightening passages from good books. Socrates in the *Memorabilia* continues, "And the treasures of the wise men of old which they left behind by writing them in books, I unfold and go through them together with my friends, and if we see something good, we pick it out and regard it as a great gain if we thus become useful to each other." The man who reports this utterance of Socrates adds the remark, "When I heard this, it seemed to me both that Socrates was blessed and that he was leading those listening to him toward perfect gentlemanship (Kalokagathia)." The greek gentleman posseses the virtues of ***megaloprepeia*** (magnificence), ***megalopsychia*** (greatness of soul), and ***epiekes*** (decent).

[21]. Love between friends, friendship, in Aristotle is the highest of natural goods. Its being a natural good is apparent in Aristotle's comparison of it to water in the ***Politics***. As a good it is said to hold the state together (1155a,1.23). As a good for individuals according to Aristotle "No one would choose to live without friends, even if he possessed all other good things (1155a,5-6). Friendship as a natural good even transcends the good that is justice (***dike***), for "when people are friends they have no need of justice (1155a,1.26). According to Aristotle the highest kind of friendship is friendship of virtue which is devoted to a good that friends have in common, namely knowledge (episteme). Perfect friendship is the friendship of men who are good and who pursue intellectual virtue (1156b7-8). While utility friends conceive of themselves as profit seekers and pleasure friends conceive of themselves as pleasure seekers, virtue friends conceive of themselves as seekers of virtuous activity. True friendship involves befriending the friend in the name of the good. Friends strive to perfect one another through sharing in discussion and thought (1170b, 10-12). When Aristotle notes that "even study is done better with co-workers" he conceives of the

sunergos who is not a friend in the ideal sense. Aristotle notes that the true friend becomes one's other self united in the quest for truth (***aletheia***) which will ultimately have to be ascended towards alone, even though Aristotle rejects Plato's conception of the forms (***eidos***). Nonetheless the good man is related to his friend as to himself, his friend being a second self or ***allos autos*** (1166a29-32). Aristotelian friends strengthen one another through mutual care and love in the name of the good which is wisdom, understanding, and knowledge. In that the ***eudaemon*** life is self-sufficient, the philosopher must leave the magic circle of his truth friends and contemplate the truth in solitude (1177132-4). (see Aristotle, ***The Nicomachean Ethics***, Harvard, Mass.: Harvard University Press (Loeb classical Library), 1956). Translations by Martin Ostwald, Richard McKeon, Terence Irwin, and Sir David Ross can also be found.

[22]. Unlike Aristotle friendship for Cicero is an adequate resting place that need not be surpassed. Cicero finds a ***stabilitas*** in the friendship of virtue (arete/virtus). When Cicero remarks that ***est enim is qui est tamquam alter idem*** (for he is, as it were another self) he clearly has Aristotle in mind who refers to the self as the ***allos autos***. Laelius asks, "In the first place, how can life be what Ennius calls the life worth living if it does not repose on the mutual goodwill of a friend? What is sweeter than to have someone with whom you may dare discuss anything as if you were communicating with yourself." Cicero makes the analogy that just as good wines improve with age, the oldest friendships ought to be the most delightful.

[23]. For C.S. Lewis in ***The Four Loves***, affection, friendship, and eros must be converted into charity by surpassing their limits as natural goods and becoming assumed in the gift love of the gospel as divine gift. Lewis refers to Emerson when suggesting that the question, "Do you love me (as a friend)" means "Do you see or care about the the same truth." Friendship is born when man says to another, "What! You too? I thought no one but myself..." Yet the true Christian must put the love of G-d, ***agape*** over love for the friend. Thus Lewis calls for the Christian wisdom of love to order his loves and convert his natural loves into charity. Divine gift love in man enables the Christian to love what is not naturally lovable such as the leper, animals, enemies, morons, and the sulky, the sneering. Lewis comments, "We are all receiving charity. There is something in each of us that cannot naturally be loved." (182). Lewis continues, "the natural loves can hope for eternity only in so far as they have allowed themselves to be taken into the eternity of charity." (187) (in Lewis, C.S., ***The Four Loves***, New York: Harcourt Brace, 1960)

[24]. For Maritain the mad boundless love, ***amour fou*** involves giving oneself over totally to God rather rather than the friend. The wisdom of the love of friendship has passed into the realm of amour fou when the desire for the good of one's friend is so boundlessly mad as to involve sacrificing oneself totally for her. According to Maritain when the limits of sexual passion are surpassed and the soul passes under the regime of mad, boundless love for God, then the soul has passed to the mystical state. Maritain writes, "the perfection of human life or the perfection of charity considered in the pure and simple sense, or under all relations, clearly presupposes the passage to the predominant regime of mad boundless love for God, or the mystical life." (231) ***Amour fou*** for Maritain renounces the lusts of the flesh.

[25]. In the NT Christians are enjoined to love their neighbors by writers who appeal to the golden rule as the summation of the Mosaic Law (Mt. 7:12, Gal.5:14; Rom 13:9; Jas.2:8. James claims that the commandment to love the neighbor is "the royal (basilikon) law laid down in scripture (2:8). Such valorization and privileging of neighborly love can be seen leading to John proclaiming "god is love (4:16)". Practitioners of idealized universal

love are commanded, "let us attend to arousing each other to lover (Hebrews 10:24)". In the book of Hebrews we find the admonition for the continuance of philadelphia or brotherly affection. The double commandment to love the Lord with one's whole being and the neighbor as oneself appears in Luke 10:25-28, Matt. 22:37-4 0, and Mark 12:29-37. The Lukan Jesus on the plain insists on the love of one's enemies (6:27-35). In Matt. 5:44 we also find the NT teaching agapate tous echthrous hymon.