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A PHILOSOPHICAL INQUIRY INTO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NOTION OF KALOS KAGATHOS FROM HOMER TO ARISTOTLE

Dissertation submitted for the Degree of Master of Philosophy

Geoffrey John Coad

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University of Notre Dame, Australia

December 2006

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ABSTRACT

In this thesis, I shall attempt to show that the Greeks believed in the ideal of a marriage between the beautiful and the good. This important philosophical ideal rests upon the premise that beauty depends upon function, behaviour and the intention of the agent. It is the anti-modernist position. This notion known to the ancient Greeks as *kalos kagathos*, which dates back to the times of Homer, seems to have been forgotten in our times. This study will trace the development of this ideal from Homer to Aristotle. This world view differs from the one we have come to understand under modernism. First, I will cite some examples of how the beauty of anything can be measured by the amount of human goods it contributes to. Following this I shall discuss the marriage of the beautiful and the good within the context of Homeric and Hesiodic literature, and the influence of Solon in the marriage of the beautiful and the good in bringing about increased political stability in the Greece of his times. Finally, I shall comment on the contributions of Plato and Aristotle to the development of this Greek ideal.

DECLARATION

I acknowledge that all the work presented here is my own work. It does not include material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree at any educational establishment. Neither does it include material that has been previously submitted for any of the coursework which I have already completed. To the best of my knowledge, the dissertation contains no previously published material, or any material published by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text of the work.

Signed _____

Date _____

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