The 'Ought' of Flourishing

in Elizabeth Anscombe's 'Modern Moral Philosophy'

and Philippa Foot's *Natural Goodness*

by

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Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Presented to:

Maynooth University
National University of Ireland Maynooth
Department of Philosophy

29th February, 2016

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ABSTRACT

Elizabeth Anscombe embarked on arguably one of her first forays into moral philosophy in a landmark article, published in 1958 at age thirty-nine, entitled 'Modern Moral Philosophy'. The work can be read as the writing of a devout Catholic seeking (sceptically), for those with no religion, a coherent and practicable idea of how one ought to be so as to be fit to flourish—to, essentially, live well—as a human being. Her shift in focus away from the prevailing, yet (what she deemed) faulty, ethical theories of her day towards a virtue-based ethical naturalism (which, I argue, can be extrapolated from her notion of 'brute facts') is the starting point of what has come to be known as the Aretaic Turn. Philippa Foot, a friend and colleague of Anscombe, embarked on arguably one of her finest forays into moral philosophy in a milestone book, published in 2001 at age eighty (a month after Anscombe's death), entitled *Natural Goodness*. The work can be seen as the writing of a card-carrying atheist seeking (determinedly), for those with no religion, a coherent and practicable idea of how one ought to be so as to be capable of flourishing as a human being. Her shift in focus away from the prevalent, yet (what she saw as) flawed, ethical theories of her time towards a virtue-based ethical naturalism (which, I contend, can also be extrapolated from Anscombe's notion of 'brute facts') is a highpoint of the Aretaic Turn. This thesis argues that, in terms of developing her ethical naturalsim, Foot's *Natural Goodness*, although a work justifying much merit in its own right, owes a great deal to Anscombe's 'Modern Moral Philosophy' and that, in terms of her developed ethical naturalism, an examination of the concepts of belonging and vulnerability, which I provide, would be beneficial.

[300 words]

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

INTRODUCTION

*Many say 'I owe everything to [Elizabeth Anscombe]' and I [Philippa Foot]
say it too on my own account.*[1]

ELIZABETH ANSCOMBE AND PHILIPPA FOOT

In 1956, Oxford University planned to confer upon former President of the United
States of America, Harry Truman, an honorary degree eleven years after he had
effectively brought the final stage of the Second World War to an end with the ordering
of nuclear bombings on the populated cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Proponents
of the accolade were in the overwhelming majority. But, there were some dissenting
voices. Elizabeth Anscombe and Philippa Foot, the then teachers of Philosophy at
Somerville College, Oxford, were two of just four academics who objected on the
grounds that they believed Truman had blood on his hands. They felt that, regardless
of the fact that he was instrumental in bringing the war to a close, he was also
responsible for the mass murder of innocent Japanese civilians and, so, he should not
be celebrated. And, with so few having expressed concern over the award—two
philosophers, a classicist, and a historian[2]—one wonders, as Jonathan Glover wonders
in his *Humanity: A Moral History of the 20th Century*, 'Apart from Philippa Foot [and
Elizabeth Anscombe], where were the [other] philosophers?'[3]

Anscombe was particularly critical of other philosophers from the period of
the Truman conferring for whom an action is determined right by optimal outcome. A
main concern of hers with respect to the wartime actions of Truman, for example, and

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[1] Philippa Foot, 'Obituary: Elizabeth Anscombe (1919–2001)', *Somerville College Record*, (2001), pp. 119–20.
[2] The classicist was Margaret Hubbard. The historian was M. R. D. Foot, Philippa's husband at the time.
[3] Jonathan Glover, *Humanity: A Moral History of the 20th Century* (London: Pimlico, 1999).

any exalting by others of what Truman had done, was likely that, in so acting and exalting, she felt they held a prevailing, but ill-conceived, position: that a positive outcome from the atomic attacks was adequate to determine that it was the right thing to do, that it was what ought to have been done, irrespective of the killing of the civilians in the atomic attacks. It deeply annoyed her that the cost of innocent life could ultimately be discounted by such an ethical standpoint. In contrast, so, she was committed to advocating a moral philosophy according to which an action is not necessarily determined right, to be what one ought to do, by optimal outcome. Anscombe writes,

> I determined to oppose the proposal to give Mr Truman an honorary degree here at Oxford [. . .] I look round to see if any explanation is available why so many Oxford people should be willing to flatter such a man. I get some small light on the subject when I consider the productions of Oxford moral philosophy since the First World War, which I have lately had occasion to read. Its character can easily be briefly demonstrated. Up to the Second World War the prevailing moral philosophy in Oxford taught that an action can be 'morally good' no matter how objectionable the thing done may be. An instance would be Himmler's efforts at exterminating the Jews: he did it from the 'motive of duty' which has 'supreme value'. In the same philosophy—which has much pretence of moral seriousness, claiming that 'rightness' is an objective character in acts, that can be discerned by a moral sense—it is also held that it might be right to kill the innocent for the good of the people, since the 'prima facie duty' of securing some advantage might outweigh the 'prima facie duty' of not killing the innocent. This sort of philosophy is less prevalent now, and in its place I find another, whose cardinal principle is that 'good' is not a 'descriptive' term, but one expressive of a favourable attitude on the part of the speaker. Hand in hand with this, though I do not know if there is any logical connection, goes a doctrine that it is impossible to have any quite general moral laws [. . .].[4]

Anscombe embarked on arguably one of her first forays into moral philosophy a little later in a landmark article, published in 1958 at age thirty-nine, entitled 'Modern Moral Philosophy'[5], in which she stresses the importance of having a virtue-based ethics

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[4] G. E. M. Anscombe, 'Mr Truman's Degree', in *Ethics, Religion and Politics: Collected Philosophical Papers of G. E. M. Anscombe*, III (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1981), pp. 64 and 70–71.
[5] From 1939, see, G. E. M. Anscombe, 'The Justice of the Present War Examined', in *Ethics, Religion and Politics: Collected Philosophical Papers of G. E. M. Anscombe*, III, pp. 72–81. From 1956, see, G. E. M. Anscombe, 'Mr Truman's Degree', pp. 62–71. From 1958, see, G. E. M. Anscombe, 'Modern

over, among others, one based on optimal outcome (more of which below). The work can be seen, I think, as the writing of a devout theist seeking (sceptically), for those with no religion, a coherent and practicable idea of how one ought to be so as to be fit to flourish—to, essentially, live well—as a human being. Foot elsewhere describes her (Anscombe's) conviction as that of someone who was 'more rigorously Catholic than the Pope'[6]; of someone who 'wore trousers, smoked a cigar and occasionally used foul language—but [. . .] was also a very high-minded Catholic, so you could be caught both ways.'[7]

Despite her mother, Gertrude Elizabeth Anscombe (née Thomas), who was a teacher of classics, being an Anglican and her father, Allen Wells Anscombe, who was an officer of the British Army and, later, a teacher of science at Dulwich College in London, being an atheist, Limerick-born Anscombe (1919–2001), under instruction in her youth from a Dominican, determinedly became a Roman Catholic. After attending Sydenham High School, London, she studied classics and philosophy at St Hugh's College, Oxford, going on to become Research Fellow at Somerville College, Oxford, from 1946 (during which time she opposed the university's conferring of the honorary degree on Truman and during which time she wrote 'Modern Moral Philosophy'), Teaching Fellow there until 1970, and Professor of Philosophy at Cambridge University until her retirement in 1986.

On the one hand, she notes that some of her articles are written 'for the general public, for ordinary philosophical meetings or for philosophical journals.'[8] Some of

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Moral Philosophy', in *Ethics, Religion and Politics: Collected Philosophical Papers of G. E. M. Anscombe*, III, pp. 26–42.

[6] Philippa Foot, interviewed by Alex Voorhoeve, 'The Grammar of Goodness', in *The Harvard Review of Philosophy*, XI, (2003). p. 35.

[7] 'Professor Philippa Foot', *The Telegraph*, 5th Ocotber 2010, Obituaries section <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/obituaries/8044589/Professor-Philippa-Foot.html> [accessed 10th April 2014].

[8] G. E. M. Anscombe, *Ethics, Religion and Politics: Collected Philosophical Papers of G. E. M Anscombe*, III, Introduction.

these will be relevant to this thesis. On the other hand, she notes that some of her articles are written 'to express an explicitly Catholic view'[. . .].[9] None of these will be relevant to this thesis. I will, at different times and to varying degrees, draw from one of three volumes of her work published in 1981, entitled *Ethics, Religion and Politics: Collected Philosophical Papers of G. E. M. Anscombe*, III[10], and I will, at different times and to varying degrees, draw from three of three volumes of her work published in 2005, 2008, and 2011, entitled *Human Life, Action and Ethics: Essays by G. E. M. Anscombe*[11], *Faith in a Hard Ground: Essays on Religion, Philosophy and Ethics by G. E. M. Anscombe*[12], and *From Plato to Wittgenstein: Essays by G. E. M. Anscombe*[13].

Foot was also principally hostile to other philosophers from the period of the Truman conferring for whom an action is determined right by subjective sentiment. A main concern of hers with respect to the wartime actions of a Truman, or a Nazi in particular, and any extoling by others of what a Truman, or a Nazi in particular, had done was also likely that, in so acting and extoling, she felt they held a prevalent, yet ill-considered, position: that a positive sentiment towards, for example, gassing operations or atomic attacks was sufficient to establish that it was the right thing to do, that it was what ought to have been done, regardless of the killing of the civilians in, for example, gassing operations or atomic attacks. It greatly bothered her that the loss

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[9] Ibid.

[10] G. E. M. Anscombe, *Ethics, Religion and Politics: Collected Philosophical Papers of G. E. M. Anscombe*, III.

[11] G. E. M. Anscombe, *Human Life, Action and Ethics: Essays by G. E. M. Anscombe*, ed. by Mary Geach and Luke Gormally (St Andrew's Studies in Philosophy and Public Affairs; Exeter: Imprint Academic, 2005).

[12] G. E. M. Anscombe, *Faith in a Hard Ground: Essays on Religion, Philosophy and Ethics by G. E. M. Anscombe*, ed. by Mary Geach and Luke Gormally (St Andrew's Studies in Philosophy and Public Affairs; Exeter: Imprint Academic, 2008).

[13] G. E. M. Anscombe, *From Plato to Wittgenstein: Essays by G. E. M. Anscombe*, ed. by Mary Geach and Luke Gormally (St Andrew's Studies in Philosophy and Public Affairs; Exeter: Imprint Academic, 2011).

of innocent life could ultimately be disregarded by such an ethical viewpoint. In contrast, so, she was dedicated to championing a moral philosophy according to which an action is not determined right, to be what one ought to do, by subjective sentiment. Foot writes,

> [I]n 1945 [. . .] the news of the concentration camps was coming out. This news was shattering in a fashion that no one now can easily understand. We had thought that something like this could not happen. This is what got me interested in moral philosophy in particular [. . .] [I]n the face of the news of the concentration camps, I thought 'it just can't be [. . .] that morality in the end is just the expression of an attitude', and the subject haunted me. What these theorists tried to do was construe the conditions of use of sentences like 'it is morally wrong to kill innocent people' in terms of a speaker's feelings or attitudes, or of his or her commitment to acting in a certain way. And this meant that, according to these theories, there is a gap between the facts, or grounds, for a moral judgement and that judgement itself. For whatever reasons might be given for a moral judgement, people might without error refuse to assent to it, not finding the relevant feelings or attitudes in themselves. And this is what I thought was wrong. For, fundamentally, there is no way, if one takes this line, that one could imagine oneself saying to a Nazi, 'but we are right, and you are wrong' with there being any substance to the statement. Faced with the Nazis, who felt they had been justified in doing what they did, there could simply be a stand-off. And I thought: 'Morality just cannot be subjective in the way that different attitudes, like some aesthetic ones, or likes and dislikes, are subjective.' The separation of descriptions from attitudes, or facts from values, that characterized the current moral philosophy had to be bad philosophy.[14]

Foot embarked on arguably one of her finest forays into moral philosophy a lot later in a milestone book, published in 2001 at age eighty, entitled *Natural Goodness*[15], in which she stresses the importance of having a virtue-based ethics over, among others, one based on subjective sentiment (more of which below). It can be seen, I think, as the writing of a devout atheist seeking (determinedly), for those with no religion, a coherent and practicable idea of how one ought to be so as to be fit to flourish—to, essentially, live well—as a human being. Foot elsewhere describes her (Foot's) conviction as that of someone who was a 'card-carrying atheist'[16]; of someone who

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[14] Philippa Foot, interviewed by Alex Voorhoeve, 'The Grammar of Goodness', pp. 33–34.
[15] Philippa Foot, *Natural Goodness* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2001).
[16] Philippa Foot, interviewed by Alex Voorhoeve, 'The Grammar of Goodness', p. 35.

remained with Anscombe 'close friends in spite of my atheism and her intransigent Catholicism.'[17]

Despite her mother, Esther Bosanquet (née Cleveland), being a White House-born daughter of President of the United States of America, Grover Cleveland, and her father, William Bosanquet being a Captain of the Coldstream Guards of the British Army and, later, an Industrialist at Kirkleatham, Yorkshire, Durham-born Foot (1920–2010), under instruction in her youth from a governess, determinedly became an Oxford student. After attending St George's School, Ascot, she studied PPE (Politics, Philosophy, and Economics) at Somerville College, Oxford, going on to become Tutorial Fellow in Philosophy there from 1947 (during which time she opposed the university's conferring of the honorary degree on Truman), Vice-Principal there from 1967, Senior Research Fellow there from 1969, and Griffin Professor of Philosophy at University of California, Los Angeles, until her retirement in 1991 (after which time she wrote *Natural Goodness*).

Foot, although a philosopher justifying much merit in her own right, is indebted significantly to Anscombe[18] and *Natural Goodness*, although a work deserving of much merit in its own right, owes a great deal to 'Modern Moral Philosophy'.[19] For Foot, furthermore, it is perhaps apposite to say that the progression of thought throughout her career 'is healthy in any philosopher who has so long walked hand in hand with Time.'[20] For me, moreover, it is perhaps fitting to say that the

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[17] Philippa Foot, 'Obituary: Elizabeth Anscombe (1919–2001)', *Somerville College Record*, (2001), p. 119.

[18] That Foot is indebted significantly to Anscombe is something I discovered from reading Patrick Gorevan's article, 'Philippa Foot's "Natural Goodness"'. See, Patrick Gorevan, 'Philippa Foot's "Natural Goodness"', in *Maynooth Philosophical Papers*, Issue 5 (2008), ed. by Simon Nolan (Maynooth: Department of Philosophy, National University of Ireland Maynooth, 2009), pp. 9–15.

[19] That *Natural Goodness* owes a great deal to 'Modern Moral Philosophy' is something I developed from reading Patrick Gorevan's article, 'Philippa Foot's "Natural Goodness"'.

[20] Philippa Foot, *Moral Dilemmas and Other Topics in Moral Philosophy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002), p. 2. The words 'so long walked hand in hand with Time' are from Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida*, Act IV, Scene V.

progression of thought throughout her career is healthy in any philosopher who has so long walked hand in hand with Anscombe. In an obituary of Anscombe, Foot writes, 'Many say "I owe everything to her" and I say it too on my own account.'[21] In the Preface to *Virtues and Vices and Other Essays in Moral Philosophy*, a volume of papers encompassing work from the early period of Foot's career (c. 1957–1976), she notes how 'I was most fortunate to have Elizabeth Anscombe as my colleague at Somerville, and I know that some of the ideas for these essays came out of our lunchtime discussions in the Senior Common Room.'[22] In the Introduction to *Moral Dilemmas and Other Topics in Moral Philosophy*, a volume of papers encompassing work from the later period of Foot's career (c. 1978–2001), she notes how 'with the help of my colleague at Somerville, Elizabeth Anscombe, I was early able to query the idea of a logical gulf between "is" and "ought", and the supposed distinction between "evaluative" and "descriptive language".'[23] In the Preface to *Natural Goodness*, a momentous monograph that draws on arguably the best work of her former collection and that draws on arguably the best work of her latter collection, Foot writes how '[i]t will be obvious that I owe most to the work of Elizabeth Anscombe, and to early discussions with her.'[24]

'MODERN MORAL PHILOSOPHY' AND *NATURAL GOODNESS*

Anscombe's targets in 'Modern Moral Philosophy' and Foot's targets in *Natural Goodness* are primarily normative ethical theories. Normative ethical theories engage with both the notion of goodness and guidance. And, so, theorists of normative ethics

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[21] Philippa Foot, 'Obituary: Elizabeth Anscombe (1919–2001)', pp. 119–20.
[22] Philippa Foot, *Virtues and Vices and Other Essays in Moral Philosophy* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1978), Preface.
[23] Philippa Foot, *Moral Dilemmas and Other Topics in Moral Philosophy*, Introduction.
[24] Philippa Foot, *Natural Goodness*, Preface.

answer questions like 'What is good?' and 'How ought I to act?', respectively. Anscombe's own philosophy in 'Modern Moral Philosophy' and Foot's own philosophy in *Natural Goodness* is primarily metaethical theory. Metaethical theory engages with the claims of ethical knowledge in normative ethical theories and the use of ethical terminology in normative ethical theories. And, so, theorists of metaethics ask questions like 'What is this particular normative ethical theory's claim about what is good (or bad, right or wrong) and how we ought to act?' and 'How does this particular normative ethical theory use ethical terms like good (or bad, right or wrong) and ought?'.

The only ethics that can come close to being coherent and practicable outside a religious context, for Anscombe, at the time of writing 'Modern Moral Philosophy', is an Aristotelian virtue-based one. And, so, she sees value in reintroducing to contemporary philosophy what she considers to be a salient aspect of Aristotelian virtue ethics: its language of virtue and vice. She writes, '[A]s is shown by the example of Aristotle [. . .] [i]t would be a great improvement if, instead of "morally wrong", one always named a genus such as "untruthful", "unchaste", "unjust".'[25] But, before she can return to its language—or grammar—she has to, at the start, remove from the philosophical landscape of her time unhelpfully influential ideas that somewhat obscure the path back to it. After Chapter I of this thesis, where origins of such obscurity will be looked at, Chapter II will deal with the obscurity and how Anscombe justifiably takes issue with what she (rather characteristically less politely than Foot) calls Joseph Butler's 'ignorant'[26] philosophy, Immanuel Kant's 'absurd' and 'useless'[27] philosophy, John Stuart Mill's 'stupid'[28] philosophy, G. E. Moore's

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[25] G. E. M. Anscombe, 'Modern Moral Philosophy', pp. 32–33.
[26] Ibid., p. 27.
[27] Ibid.
[28] Ibid., p. 33.

'incoherent'[29] philosophy, and Henry Sidgwick's 'dull', 'vulgar'[30], and 'corrupt'[31] philosophy. And, from her criticism of these ethical theories, one will, I think, get the sense that, for Anscombe, modern moral philosophy is quite the dark ocean strewn with many a philosophic wreck.[32] Overall, I will be looking at how she questions, and ultimately rejects, their use of the terms 'ought' and 'ought not'. In Chapter III, I will be looking at whether the David Hume-influenced and somewhat Aristotelian alternative she suggests (the basis of which, as I argue, can be extrapolated from Anscombe's idea of 'brute facts'[33]) is suitable. Essentially, she writes about (what I would like to call) the 'ought' of flourishing—about the language, or grammar, that is and is not the basis for a coherent and practicable ethics. Anscombe's shift in focus away from (what we will come to know as) the deontological ethics of Butler and Kant and (what we will come to know as) the utilitarian ethics of Bentham, Mill, Moore, and Sidgwick towards an Aristotelian virtue-based ethics is the starting point of what has come to be known as the Aretaic Turn (the Greek word '*arete*' translates to the English word 'virtue' or 'excellence'). Samuel Gregg writes about 'Modern Moral Philosophy' as follows,

> It is difficult to imagine that one essay could, virtually singlehandedly and simultaneously, (1) illustrate that the emperor (in this case, modern moral philosophy) had no clothes, (2) facilitate a revival of virtue ethics in philosophical circles, and (3) begin establishing a formidable counterweight to the utilitarianism then rampant in much of the academy and starting to seep into the teaching of moral theology in Catholic and Protestant seminaries throughout the West by the late 1950s. Yet, this is precisely what many believe this one essay by Anscombe managed to achieve.[34]

Simon Blackburn writes about the article in this way,

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[29] Ibid., p. 26.
[30] Ibid., p. 34.
[31] Ibid., p. 28.
[32] This is a variation of Kant's famous line about metaphysics: that it is a dark ocean without shores or lighthouse, strewn with many a philosophic wreck.
[33] See, Chapter III of this thesis.
[34] Samuel Gregg, *Journal of Markets and Morality*, Vol. 8, N. 2, (2005), p. 538.

> [It] initiated the return to the idea of virtues as the central concepts needed by moral thought. It was enormously influential, turning firstly most of her Oxford generation, and then probably a majority of philosophers worldwide, against utilitarianism as a moral and political theory, but also against the then-prevailing view that ethics is at bottom a matter of personal commitment or choice, a tool for voicing persuasions or exchanging social pressures.[35]

Anscombe believes that in place of the prevailing, yet faulty, moral philosophy of the time of her writing 'Modern Moral Philosophy', a more coherent and practicable virtue-based ethics capable of housing the ethical term 'ought' and the concept of flourishing needs to be formed. To aid this effort, she suggests that an examination of needs and norms in nature might prove a fruitful first step in this direction; that is to say, an examination of commonalties between the needs and norms of human biology and human virtue, for example. This naturalism and ethical naturalism, respectively, is (definitely intentionally from Anscombe) one that contributes to a more accurate, rather Aristotelian, account of (what is called for in 'Modern Moral Philosophy' by Anscombe to replace what she believed to be said erring ethics of modernity) human nature, human action, the type of characteristic a virtue is, and human flourishing.[36] But, unfortunately, she does not really develop the idea beyond the following.

Firstly, she notes how it is that in the area of human biology, the proposition 'It is the case that human beings have the full complement of teeth' is an interesting one. It is interesting because it does not mean that all human beings have the full complement of teeth, as fewer than all human beings do. And, it does not mean that the average number of teeth that human beings have is the full complement, as human beings on average have fewer than all. But, a complete set of teeth is still the *norm*. Human beings *need* the full complement of teeth to actualise their potential in this particular respect; to live up to the norm, if you like. It is the ideal. She alludes that it

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[35] Simon Blackburn, 'Simply Wrong', in *Times Literary Supplement*, 30 September 2005, pp. 11–12.
[36] G. E. M. Anscombe, 'Modern Moral Philosophy', p. 41.

is good for a man's flourishing if he has this many teeth; that a man *ought* to be equipped with this many teeth.

Secondly, she notes how it is that with regard to human virtue, it is good for a man's flourishing if he has the full complement of virtues; that a man ought to have the full complement of virtues. It is not that all men have the full set of virtues, for fewer than all men have. Nor is it that the average number of virtues men have is the full set, for most men have fewer. But, it is what he *needs* to actualise his potential in this particular respect. A complete set of virtues is the *norm*. Again, it is the ideal, if you will.

The only ethics that can come close to being coherent and practicable outside a religious context, for Foot, at the time of writing *Natural Goodness*, as it was for Anscombe, at the time of writing 'Modern Moral Philosophy', is a virtue-based one. And, so, she sees value in reintroducing to modern philosophy what she considers to be a significant feature of virtue ethics: its language of virtue and vice. She writes, 'I agree [. . .] that we have an understanding of the word 'happiness' that is close to Aristotle's *eudaimonia* in that operation in conformity with the virtues belongs to its meaning.'[37] But, before she can return to its language—or grammar—she has to, at the start, remove from the philosophical landscape of her time unhelpfully influential ideas that rather complicate the route back to it. After Chapter IV of this thesis, where origins of such complication will be looked at, Chapter V will deal with the complication and how Foot justifiably takes issue with A. J. Ayer's philosophy, C. L. Stevenson's philosophy, and R. M. Hare's philosophy, which she (rather characteristically more politely than Anscombe) says are 'based on a mistake'[38] and

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[37] Philippa Foot, *Natural Goodness*, p. 97.
[38] Ibid., p. 6.

'all wrong'[39]. But, from her criticism of these ethical theories, one will, I think, get the sense that, for Foot, modern moral philosophy is not quite the dark ocean strewn with many a philosophic wreck. Overall, I will be looking at how she questions, and ultimately rejects by way of her ethical naturalism (the foundation of which, as I argue, can be extrapolated from Anscombe's notion of 'brute facts'[40]), their use of the terms 'ought' and 'good'. In Chapter VI, I will be looking at whether the David Hume-influenced and somewhat Aristotelian alternative she suggests is suitable. Essentially, she writes about (what I call) the 'ought' of flourishing—about the language, or grammar, that is and is not the basis for a coherent and practicable ethics. Foot's shift in focus away from (what we will come to know as) the emotivism of Ayer and Stevenson and (what we will come to know as) the prescriptivism of Hare towards a virtue-based ethics is a highpoint of the Aretaic Turn.

Michael Dummett sums up *Natural Goodness* as being 'by a long way the best modern book [. . .] on moral philosophy. Lucid, original and balanced, it should be a starting-point for all future discussion of the subject.'[41] Roger Crisp describes the book as 'a work of great integrity. Beautifully and economically written, and powerfully argued, it will become a classic of modern moral philosophy.'[42]

Foot believes, as Anscombe believed, that in place of the prevalent, yet flawed, moral philosophy of the time of her writing *Natural Goodness*, a more coherent and practicable virtue-based ethics capable of housing the ethical term 'ought' and the concept of flourishing needs to be formed. To assist this endeavour, she suggests, as Anscombe suggested, that an exploration of needs and norms in nature might prove a fruitful first step in this direction; that is to say, an exploration of the commonalties

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[39] Ibid., p. 8.
[40] See, Chapter IV of this thesis.
[41] Philippa Foot, *Natural Goodness*, back cover.
[42] Ibid.

between the needs and norms of plant biology and non-human animal biology, and human biology on the one hand and human virtue on the other hand. This naturalism and ethical naturalism, respectively, is, maybe incidentally from Foot, one that contributes to (what is called for in 'Modern Moral Philosophy' by Anscombe to replace what she considered to be said erring ethics of modernity) a more correct, somewhat Aristotelian, account of human nature, human action, the type of characteristic a virtue is, and human flourishing.[43] And, fortunately, she does really develop the idea beyond the following.

Firstly, she notes how it is that the *norms* of which Anscombe writes are embodied in what are called logically unquantifiable natural-history propositions that apply exclusively to living things—in contrast with logically quantifiable propositions like 'All' propositions or 'Some' propositions that apply equally to living things and to non-living things[44]—and state how a particular species at a particular time in a particular environment ought to be in terms of its *normal* function or teleology (i.e., so that it is fit to flourish). Echoing some work of Michael Thompson[45], she also names them Aristotelian categoricals: that which 'speak[s] of the life cycle of individuals of a given species.'[46] Secondly, she notes how it is that the *needs* of which Anscombe writes are that with/without which living things do/do not fulfil their *normal* function or teleology (i.e., are/are not fit to flourish) and are, then, naturally good/deficient (or intrinsically good/deficient, or autonomously good/deficient). Echoing some work of

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[43] G. E. M. Anscombe, 'Modern Moral Philosophy', p. 41.
[44] They take the form 'All S is P' and 'Some S is P', for example.
[45] The man: Foot's 'absolutely excellent undergraduate at UCLA [. . .] [who had] been influenced by Elizabeth Anscombe, even at a distance, because he had very good taste in philosophy. He had this super idea that he had picked up from her writing, where she had talked about the proposition 'human beings have 32 teeth'. See, Philippa Foot, interviewed by Alex Voorhoeve, 'The Grammar of Goodness', p. 36. The work: Michael Thompson, 'The Representation of Life', in *Virtues and Reasons: Philippa Foot and Moral Theory: Essays in Honour of Philippa Foot*, ed. by Rosalind Hursthouse, Gavin Lawrence and Warren Quinn (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), pp. 267, 281, and 284.
[46] Philippa Foot, *Natural Goodness*, p. 29.

Anscombe[47], she also names them Aristotelian necessities: that which 'is necessary because and in so far as good hangs on it.'[48]

NATURAL NORMATIVITY AND NATURAL NECESSITY

From Anscombe's philosophy here and Foot's philosophy here, we can, I argue, generate a template: natural normativity and natural necessity, *mutatis mutandis*, in the world of plants, in the world of non-human animals, and in the world of human beings. And, the appropriate time to discuss the *specific* dissimilarities between living things in the sub-rational world and the rational world (e.g., rationality) will be later. But, the appropriate time to discuss the *general* similarities between living things in the sub-rational world and the rational world (i.e., teleology) will be now.

From a logically unquantifiable natural-history proposition, or Aristotelian categorical, of the type S has P (that a particular species has a particular part), S is C (that a particular species is a particular characteristic), or S does O (that a particular species does a particular operation), where P, C, and O are Aristotelian necessities, the following follows. If a member of S, which should have P, should be C, or should do O, has P, is C, or does O, then, in this specific way, it is as it functionally, or teleologically, ought to be normally and, so, in this specific way, it is naturally good (or intrinsically good, or autonomously good). Barring any other lack of Aristotelian necessities, it is fit to flourish. If a member of S, which should have P, should be C, or should do O, has not P, is not C, or does not O (however likely this might be), then, in

[47] See, G. E. M. Anscombe, 'On Promising and its Justice, and Whether it Need be Respected *in Foro Interno*', in *Ethics, Religion and Politics: Collected Philosophical Papers of G. E. M. Anscombe*, III, pp. 15 and 18–19; G. E. M. Anscombe, 'Rules, Rights and Promises', in *Ethics, Religion and Politics: Collected Philosophical Papers of G. E. M. Anscombe*, III, pp. 100–101; G. E. M. Anscombe, 'On the Source of the Authority of the State', in *Ethics, Religion and Politics: Collected Philosophical Papers of G. E. M. Anscombe*, III, p. 139.
[48] Philippa Foot, *Natural Goodness*, p. 15.

a general sense too, it is not as it functionally, or teleologically, ought to be normally and, so, in a general sense too, it is naturally deficient (or intrinsically deficient, or autonomously deficient) and it is not fit to flourish.

Consider these examples from the area of plant biology, the domain of non-human animal biology, the realm of human biology, and the sphere of human virtue. From the logically unquantifiable natural-history proposition, or Aristotelian categorical, 'Trees have strong roots', or 'Owls see in the dark', or 'Human beings are linguistic', or 'Human beings are social animals', where having strong roots is an Aristotelian necessity for trees, seeing in the dark is an Aristotelian necessity for owls, being linguistic is an Aristotelian necessity for human beings, and being social is an Aristotelian necessity for human beings, the following follows.

If a particular tree which should have strong roots does have strong roots, or if a particular owl which should see in the dark does see in the dark, or if a particular human being who should be linguistic is linguistic, or if a particular human being who should be social is social, then, in this specific way, the tree, the owl, the first human being, and the second human being are as they functionally, or teleologically, ought to be normally and, so, in this specific way, they are naturally good (or intrinsically good, or autonomously good). Barring any other lack of Aristotelian necessities, they are fit to flourish.

If a particular tree which should have strong roots does not have strong roots, or if a particular owl which should see in the dark does not see in the dark, or if a particular human being who should be linguistic is not linguistic, or if a particular human being who should be social is not social (however likely any of this might be), then, in a general sense too, they are not as they functionally or teleologically ought

to be normally and, so, in a general sense too, they are naturally deficient (or intrinsically deficient, or autonomously deficient) and are not fit to flourish.

However, Anscombe and Foot were aware of coincidences of being bad, being what one ought not to be, and (apparent) flourishing (e.g., as in cases of evil), which raise questions about what is actually conducive to flourishing and, therefore, about the strength of the relationship between flourishing and virtue—on which Aristotle wrote, as we shall see—as it is conveyed, in particular, in the above blueprint of natural normativity and necessity that I have drawn from 'Modern Moral Philosophy' and *Natural Goodness*. Moreover, Anscombe and Foot were aware of concurrences of being good, being what one ought to be, and (apparent) not flourishing (e.g., as in cases of self-sacrifice), which also look to be damaging to the template of natural normativity and necessity I described from their work and to how they use the terms 'good' and 'ought' and the concept of flourishing. On flourishing, virtue, and vice, Anscombe writes,

> [H]uman 'flourishing' [. . .] appears the most doubtful [of concepts to account for]. For [. . .] someone might say that one at least needed to stay alive to flourish. Another man unimpressed by all that will say in a hard case "What we need is such-and-such, which we won't get without doing this (which is unjust)—so this is what we ought to do.[49]

On flourishing, vice, and virtue, Foot writes,

> [T]here is a [. . .] sad truth to be recognised in the saying about the wicked who flourish like the bay tree [. . .]. [And] we must [also] understand someone who [is] sacrificing his life for the sake of justice.'[50]

And, in an attempt to fortify and build on Anscombe's and Foot's idea of natural normativity and necessity and to ultimately contribute to a better understanding of the relationship between flourishing and virtue, I will try to examine, in the Conclusion

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[49] G. E. M. Anscombe, 'Modern Moral Philosophy', p. 41.
[50] Philippa Foot, *Natural Goodness*, p. 97.

(drawing on work chiefly from Catriona Mackenzie, Wendy Rogers, and Susan Dodds[51], and Alasdair MacIntyre[52]) the concepts of belonging and vulnerability in the world of plants, in the world of non-human animals, and in the world of human beings. In the end, I will argue that human beings, unlike plants and non-human animals, cannot flourish without having a sense of belonging; and that it is a sense of belonging of a particular kind (what I call an authentic sense of belonging) to a community of a particular kind (what MacIntyre calls a community that acknowledges the vulnerability and dependence of human beings[53]). Also, because there has been, as Mackenzie, Rogers, and Dodds note, 'little systematic analysis'[54], or 'a general undertheorisation'[55], of the concept of vulnerability, I would like to think that the exploration of the concepts of belonging and vulnerability I offer will serve as a contribution, as their work is, to addressing this gap; specifically, a contribution, as their work is, to the theoretical work of understanding and disentangling the conceptual connections between the concept of vulnerability and concepts usually associated with it in everyday ethical discourse and ethical theorising such as harm, need, dependency, care, and exploitation[56]; a contribution, as their work is, to 'a more precise theoretical vocabulary for analysing vulnerability.'[57]

Furthermore, I hope that this will provide (i) a key *acknowledgement* of what Anscombe suspects in her article and what Foot confirms in her book: 'that it is important not to underestimate the degree to which human communication and

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[51] Catriona Mackenzie, Wendy Rogers, and Susan Dodds, eds., *Vulnerability: New Essays in Ethics and Feminist Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

[52] Alasdair MacIntyre, *Dependent Rational Animals* (London: Duckworth, 1999).

[53] Ibid., p. 8.

[54] Catriona Mackenzie, Wendy Rogers, and Susan Dodds, eds., *Vulnerability: New Essays in Ethics and Feminist Philosophy*, p. 1.

[55] Ibid.

[56] Ibid., pp. 1–2.

[57] Ibid., p. 8.

reasoning change the scene'[58] (specifically, for us, in this thesis, it will be the scene of natural normativity and necessity) and (ii) a key *supplement* to what Anscombe explicitly calls for in her article to go some way in establishing a coherent and practicable ethics alternative to (what she felt were) the lacking ethical theories of her time and what Foot implicitly responds to in her book to support a coherent and practicable ethics other than the ethical theories (that she felt were) found wanting in her time: 'an account of human nature, human action, the type of characteristic a virtue is, and above all of human flourishing'[59] (specifically, for us, in this thesis, it will be an account for natural normativity and necessity).

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[58] Philippa Foot, *Natural Goodness*, p. 16.
[59] G. E. M. Anscombe, 'Modern Moral Philosophy', p. 41.

CHAPTER I

ANSCOMBE ON THE TERM 'MORAL' IN ARISTOTELIAN ETHICS AND CHRISTIANITY

Anyone who has read Aristotle's Ethics and has also read modern moral philosophy must have been struck by the great contrasts between them. The concepts which are prominent among the moderns seem to be lacking, or at any rate buried or far in the background, in Aristotle. Most noticeably, the term 'moral' itself, which we have by direct inheritance from Aristotle, just doesn't seem to fit, in its modern sense, into an account of Aristotelian ethics [. . .]. If someone professes to be expounding Aristotle and talks in a modern fashion about 'moral' such-and-such, he must be very imperceptive if he does not constantly feel like someone whose jaws have somehow got out of alignment: the teeth don't come together in a proper bite.[1]

The only ethics that can come close to being coherent and practicable outside a religious context, for Anscombe at the time of writing 'Modern Moral Philosophy', is a rather Aristotelian virtue-based one. She considers it the optimum candidate for housing the important ethical notion of how one ought to be so as to be fit to flourish. But, before she can return to its language—or grammar—she has to first turn away from the philosophical environment of her time and its unhelpfully influential ideas that confuse the path back to said virtue ethics (i.e., those of Joseph Butler, Immanuel Kant, Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill, and G. E. Moore and Henry Sidgwick). Prior to looking at those, however, it will be constructive to consider the root of such confusion, which is what we will do in the present chapter.

§1.1 ANSCOMBE ON THE TERM 'MORAL' IN ARISTOTELIAN ETHICS

Let us look at the language—or the grammar—of the Aristotelian ethics relevant to Anscombe's article 'Modern Moral Philosophy'. Aristotle (384–322 BC), born in

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[1] G. E. M. Anscombe, 'Modern Moral Philosophy', p. 26.

Stagira, Greece, had been taught philosophy by Plato at his (Plato's) Academy in Athens. And, there, he learned about Plato's worldview; what we might now call Platonic metaphysics. One of the main ideas that influenced Plato's students, and readers of his work for generations thereafter, was dualism. Plato had proposed that there are two worlds; one of form and one of matter. In the former world—the intelligible world—there were perfect, unchanging *ideas* like the Good. In the latter world—the visible world—there were imperfect, changing *things* like good things. The world of form was, for Plato, absolute and pure, in contrast with the world of changing and ephemeral matter. The world of matter was, for Plato, particular and impure, in contrast with the world of unchanging and eternal form. Aristotle had taught Plato's philosophy at his (Aristotle's) Lyceum in Athens. But, there, he presented an anti-Platonic worldview; what we might now call Aristotelian metaphysics. One of the main ideas that influenced Aristotle's students, and readers of his work for generations thereafter, was pluralism. Aristotle had proposed that there is one world; one of a plurality of objects with form and matter; one of a plurality of objects with substance. In this world, an object like an acorn is composed of both form and matter—of substance—and has a self-contained and self-directed end-goal (a *telos*), which it has the potential to actually become (i.e., an oak tree). In this world, an object like a human being is composed of both form and matter—of substance—and has a self-contained and self-directed end-goal (a *telos*), which it has the potential to actually become (i.e., a rational animal). What is most real, for the Platonist, is the sphere of non-teleological actuality, where Good *is*. What is most real, for the Aristotelian, is the sphere of teleological potentiality and actuality, where good *becomes*. Consequently, the most fundamental *metaphysical* question we can ask, with respect to man, is, according to Aristotle, 'What is the function of man?'

Subsequently, the most fundamental *ethical* question we can ask, with respect to man, is, according to Aristotle, 'What is the function of man?' Aristotle distinguishes between intellectual virtues such as philosophical knowledge and practical knowledge[2], which are within a sphere of reason and action, and moral virtues such as courage and temperance[3], which are within a sphere of passion and action. Virtue (*arete*), a good of man, is an excellence and both intellectual virtues and moral virtues are excellences. Intellectual virtues are, at the level of potentiality (*dunamis*), natural dispositions. They are, at the level of actuality (*energeia*), natural dispositions made functionally (or teleologically) excellent by education. Moral virtues are, at the level of potentiality, natural dispositions. They are, at the level of actuality, natural dispositions made functionally (or teleologically) excellent by habit. Philosophical knowledge, which has to do with the complete purity of reason without passion, is related to the universal principles of logic (e.g., the principles of identity, non-contradiction, and the excluded middle)—it is excellent contemplative activity disinterestedly functional without moral virtue. Practical knowledge, which has to do with the 'complete harmony'[4] of reason with passion, is related to the particular circumstances of life (e.g., how to be courageous and temperate to the right degree in the right place at the right time)—it is excellent practical activity interestedly functional with moral virtue. Aristotle writes in *The Nicomachean Ethics*, 'That is why people call Anaxagoras and Thales and men like them wise but not prudent when they observe them to be ignorant of their own advantage; and say that their knowledge is

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[2] There is philosophical knowledge (*episteme*, *nous*, *sophia*), practical knowledge (*phronesis*) *and* productive knowledge (*techne*).

[3] The virtues of courage (*andreia*), justice (*dikaiosyne*), prudence (*phronesis*), and temperance (*sophrosyne*) make up the cardinal virtues. The virtuous life hinges upon the cardinal virtues (the English word 'hinge' comes from the Latin word *cardo*).

[4] Aristotle, *The Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. by Hugh Tredennick (London: Penguin Group, 2004), p. 30.

exceptional and marvellous and profound and supernatural, but useless, because the objects of their search are not human goods.'[5]

A practical syllogism, which Anscombe quite rightly sees as one of Aristotle's finest findings[6] and Foot quite rightly sees as one of Aristotle's inspiring insights, has (as Alasdair MacIntyre notes in his *After Virtue*[7]) the following four essential elements. Firstly, there are 'the wants and goals of the agent, presupposed by but not expressed in, his reasoning[, without which] there would be no context for the reasoning, and the major and minor premises could not adequately determine what kind of thing the agent is to do.'[8] Secondly, there is 'the major premise, an assertion to the effect that doing or having or seeking such-and-such is the type of thing that is good for or needed by a so-and-so (where the agent uttering the syllogism falls under the latter description).'[9] The example of this that Anscombe offers in *Intention* is: 'Vitamin X is good for all men over 60'[10]. Thirdly, there is 'the minor premise wherein the agent, relying on a perceptual judgement, asserts that this is an instance of the requisite kind.'[11] The example of this that Anscombe offers in *Intention* is: 'Here's some pigs' tripes [(which are full of Vitamin X)]'[12]. Fourthly, there is '[t]he conclusion, [which] . . . is the action.'[13] The example of this that Anscombe gives in *Intention* is: 'So, I'll have some'[14]. Therefore, Anscombe's example of a practical syllogism runs like so:

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[5] Ibid., pp. 153–154.
[6] See, G. E. M. Anscombe, *Intention*, 2nd edn. (Cambridge, Massachusetts; London, England: Harvard University Press, 2000), p. 58. She writes, 'The notion of "practical knowledge" can only be understood if we first understand 'practical reasoning'. 'Practical reasoning', or 'practical syllogism', which means the same thing, was one of Aristotle's best discoveries.'
[7] Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 3rd edn., (London: Duckworth, 1982), pp. 161-162.
[8] Ibid., p. 160.
[9] Ibid., p. 162.
[10] G. E. M. Anscombe, *Intention*, 2nd edn., p. 60.
[11] Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 3rd edn., p. 162.
[12] G. E. M. Anscombe, *Intention*, 2nd edn., p. 60.
[13] Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 3rd edn., p. 162.
[14] G. E. M. Anscombe, *Intention*, 2nd edn., p. 60.

Vitamin X is good for all men over 60

Here's some pigs' tripes (which are full of Vitamin X)

So, I'll have some

Moreover, another example of a practical syllogism runs like this:

Courage and temperance are of benefit for when undertaking a doctoral thesis

Here's a mindfulness practice (which is conducive to cultivating courage and temperance)

So, I'll do it

These conclusions are the essence of the Doctrine of the Golden Mean: the right, reasonably passionate, disposition between the wrong, unreasonably passionate, disposition of deficient vice and the wrong, unreasonably passionate, disposition of excessive vice. In an Appendix to Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, it is noted that the practical syllogism

> differs from the familiar demonstrative syllogism in that (1) the major premise is a judgement of value, 'all dry food is wholesome', or an imperative, 'all dry food ought to be eaten'; and (2) the conclusion following from the combination of such a major premise with a minor such as 'this is dry food' is not merely a statement but an action: the subject eats the food.[15]

And here, as in general syllogisms like these, what I *want* is implicit in my reasoning (e.g., in the desirability characterisation of the first proposition 'Vitamin X is good for all men over 60') will be achieved on a demand of virtue (e.g., prudence), where what I want might not coincide with what I *wish* for, let us say (e.g., I want to be healthy but I might not wish to taste these pigs' tripes). But here, as in general syllogisms like these, what I *want* is implicit in my reasoning (e.g., in the desirability characterisation of the first proposition 'Courage and temperance are of benefit for when undertaking a doctoral thesis') but will not be achieved on a demand of pleasure, where what I

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[15] Aristotle, *The Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. by Hugh Tredennick, Appendix 8.

want must coincide with what I *wish* for, let us say (e.g., I wish for an easy life, so I must not do this mindfulness practice). (For the virtue ethicist, pleasure is seen not as the point of, or reason for, action but as a by-product of action and, so, in some way as being different from and as being identical with the pleasurable activity—in some way as being internal to the agent and as being external from the agent, respectively. For the hedonist, pleasure is seen as the point of, or reason for, action and as the product of action and, so, in some way as being different from but not as being identical with the pleasurable activity—in some way as being internal to the agent but not as being external from the agent). Flourishing (*eudaimonia*), the good for man, involves a complete lifetime of both excellent philosophical activity and excellent practical activity. Aristotle writes in *The Nicomachean Ethics*, '[T]he good for man is an activity of the soul in accordance with virtue [. . .]. There is a further qualification: in a complete lifetime. One swallow does not make a summer; neither does one day. Similarly neither can one day, or a brief space of time, make a man blessed and happy.'[16]

Anscombe notes that in Aristotelian ethics, as we have seen, the term 'moral' is used when referring to what is virtuous or what is vicious in the sphere of passion and action (e.g., that of courage and temperance) but not when referring to what is virtuous or what is vicious in the sphere of reason and/or action (e.g., that of philosophical knowledge and practical knowledge), which, according to Aristotle, is the intellectual sphere and not the moral sphere. And, this seems a most straightforward observation. She writes,

> In Aristotle's sense of the term 'moral' [. . .], [terms like 'should' and 'ought'] are being used in connection with a *moral* subject-matter: namely that of passions and (non-technical) actions.[17]

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[16] Ibid., p. 16.
[17] G. E. M. Anscombe, 'Modern Moral Philosophy', p. 29.

So, with respect to the terms 'ought' and 'ought not' in Aristotelian philosophy—where the focus is more on how one ought to *be*, as opposed to in modern philosophy, where the focus is much more on how one ought to *act*—it appears appropriate, Anscombe intimates, to say that one ought to be virtuous (in that being so is conducive to flourishing) and ought not to be vicious (in that being so is detrimental to flourishing) in these spheres of life: what Aristotle calls moral virtue and intellectual virtue. And, here, the 'ought' is, it seems, supported (in a contextually and temporally appropriate way, as I will get to later) by the force of what Anscombe calls an Aristotelian—and not an absolute—necessity.[18] One ought to be virtuous because, in terms of one's function, or teleology, as a rational animal, one needs to be virtuous.

Saying that in Aristotelian ethics the focus is more on how one ought to *be* can give the impression that it does not provide adequate action-guidance. Yet, it seems to me that, with its large number of virtue terms and vice terms (and with those terms being underpinned by what Anscombe considers to be a contextually and temporally justifiable force of Aristotelian necessity) context-specificity is its strong suit where action-guidance is concerned. Rosalind Hursthouse makes this point well in her 'Virtue Ethics', while referring to an example of the pervading influence of Anscombe on contemporary philosophy. She writes,

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[18] In a 1969 article entitled 'On Promising and its Justice, and Whether it Need be Respected *in Foro Interno*', she writes, 'Aristotle in his dictionary says that in one sense of "necessary" the necessary is that without which good cannot be or come to be [. . .]. Shall we say, then, that when a man gives an undertaking he typically tends to restrict his (absolute) possibility of acting well, and so he typically tends to impose a (derivative) necessity on himself? [. . .]. [I]t is the necessity that Aristotle spoke of, by which something is called necessary if without it good cannot be attained.' See, G. E. M. Anscombe, 'On Promising and its Justice, and Whether it Need be Respected *in Foro Interno*', pp. 15 and 18-19. In a 1978 article entitled 'Rules, Rights and Promises', she writes, 'Aristotle indeed made a little noted observation that one sense of "necessary" is: "that without which some good will not be attained or some evil avoided"; and in our time there have been developments of deontic logic, which shows a consciousness of kinds of modality beyond what used to be attended to.' See, G. E. M. Anscombe, 'Rules, Rights and Promises', p. 100. In a 1978 article entitled 'Source of the Authority of the State', she writes, 'In ancient times, Aristotle in his *Metaphysica*, made the pregnant remark that one sense of "necessary" is that without which some good will not be obtained or some evil averted.' See, G. E. M. Anscombe, 'Source of the Authority of the State', p. 139.

[We should] take note of Anscombe's hint that a great deal of specific action guidance could be found in rules employing the virtue and vice terms ("v-rules") such as "Do what is honest/charitable; do not do what is dishonest/uncharitable" [. . .]. (It is a noteworthy feature of our virtue and vice vocabulary that, although our list of generally recognised virtue terms is comparatively short, our list of vice terms is remarkably, and usefully, long, far exceeding anything that anyone who thinks in terms of standard deontological rules has ever come up with. Much invaluable action guidance comes from avoiding courses of action that would be irresponsible, feckless, lazy, inconsiderate, uncooperative, harsh, intolerant, selfish, mercenary, indiscreet, tactless, arrogant, unsympathetic, cold, incautious, unenterprising, pusillanimous, feeble, presumptuous, rude, hypocritical, self-indulgent, materialistic, grasping, short-sighted, vindictive, calculating, ungrateful, grudging, brutal, profligate, disloyal, and on and on.)[19]

The following table outlines how the terms 'ought' and 'ought not' can be used in Aristotle's moral and intellectual spheres in Aristotelian ethics.

How the terms 'ought' and 'ought not' can be used in Aristotelian ethics*	
Moral virtues	*Sphere of Action and Passion*
	One ought to be, for example. courageous, just, prudent, and temperate. One ought not to be, for instance, cowardly, unjust, imprudent, and intemperate.
Intellectual virtues	*Sphere of Action and/or Reason*
	One ought to have, for example, good philosophical knowledge and good practical knowledge. One ought not to have, for instance, bad philosophical knowledge and bad practical knowledge.
*The term 'ought' is supported (appropriately) by the force of an Aristotelian necessity.	

Consider my example of one being courageous and temperate when undertaking a doctorate, say, which, because of the virtues in question, would be related to Aristotle's moral sphere. In Aristotelian philosophy, it appears appropriate to say that

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[19] Rosalind Hursthouse, 'Virtue Ethics', in *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Fall, (2013) <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2013/entries/ethics-virtue/> [Accessed 13th January 2016].

one ought to be courageous and temperate (in that being so is conducive to one's flourishing) and one ought not to be cowardly and intemperate (in that being so is detrimental to one's flourishing). And, here, the terms 'ought' and 'ought not', which are ethical in nature, are supported by the force of an Aristotelian necessity. One ought to be courageous and temperate because, in terms of one's function, or teleology, as a practically rational animal, one needs to be virtuous. And, one ought not to be cowardly and intemperate because, for the same reason, one needs not to be vicious. Consider further Anscombe's example of having good practical knowledge when calculating how to bring about something useful in municipal government, say[20], which, because of the virtues in question, would be related to Aristotle's intellectual sphere. In Aristotelian philosophy, it appears appropriate to say that one ought to have good practical knowledge (in that having it is conducive to one's flourishing) and one ought not to have bad practical knowledge (in that having it is detrimental to one's flourishing). And, here, the terms 'ought' and 'ought not', which are ethical in nature, are supported by the force of an Aristotelian necessity. One ought to have good practical knowledge because, in terms of one's function, or teleology, as a practically rational animal, one needs to be virtuous. And, one ought not to have bad practical knowledge because, for the same reason, one needs not to be vicious.

Anscombe notes that in the modern ethics of her time, as we shall see below, the term 'moral' can be used when referring to what one *morally* ought to do and *morally* ought not to do, in the Aristotelian sphere of passion and action (e.g., that of courage and temperance) and when referring to what one *morally* ought to do and *morally* ought not to do in the Aristotelian sphere of reason and action (e.g., that of practical knowledge), which, according to Aristotle, is the intellectual sphere and not

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[20] This example appears at: G. E. M. Anscombe, 'Modern Moral Philosophy', p. 26.

the moral sphere. But, this seems a less straightforward observation. She writes,

> But [the terms like 'should' and 'ought'] have now acquired a special so-called 'moral' sense—i.e. a sense in which they imply some absolute verdict (like one of guilty / not guilty on a man) on what is described in the 'ought' sentences used in certain types of context: not merely the contexts that *Aristotle* would call 'moral'—passions and actions—but also some of the contexts that he would call 'intellectual'.[21]

So, in modern philosophy—where the focus is much more on how one ought to *act*, as opposed to in Aristotelian philosophy, where the focus is more on how one ought to *be*—it can appear appropriate, Anscombe intimates, to say that one *morally* ought to do X and that one *morally* ought not to do Y in these spheres of life: what Aristotle calls moral virtue and intellectual virtue. And, here, the *moral* 'ought' is, it seems, supported (in a contextually and temporally inappropriate way, as I will get to later) by a force *suggestive* of what Anscombe calls an absolute—and not an Aristotelian—necessity[22]: one *morally* ought to do P because one *morally* must adhere to principle Q and one *morally* ought not to do R because one *morally* must adhere to principle Q.

Saying that in modern ethics the focus is more on how one ought to *act* can give the impression that it does provide adequate action-guidance. Yet, it seems to me that, with its small number of *moral* terms (e.g., *morally* right, *morally* wrong, *morally* ought, and *morally* ought not) and with those terms being underpinned by what Anscombe considers to be a contextually and temporally unjustifiable force suggestive of an absolute necessity, context-specificity is not its strong suit where action-guidance is concerned. John Haldane makes this point well in his 'Putting Ethics Back Together Again: A British Perspective', while referring to examples of the pervading influence of religion on contemporary philosophy. He writes,

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[21] Ibid., p. 29.
[22] She writes, 'The ordinary (and quite indispensable) terms "should", "needs", "ought", "must" – acquired this special sense by being equated in the relevant contexts with "is obliged", or "is bound", or "is required to", in the sense in which one can be obliged or bound by law, or something can be required by law.' See, ibid., pp. 29–30.

We continue to use concepts and language that have their origins in a religious outlook, but we now lack the single coherent source for that use. We speak of 'universal rights' and of the 'equality of all people' but by any natural measure human beings are evidently unequal, so whence comes this elevated status and inviolability? We speak of the obligation to clothe the naked, and feed the hungry but whence comes that duty, if not from some broad notion of common membership in an all-inclusive moral community? And what can be a natural basis for this that can substitute for the religious idea of brotherhood?[23]

The following table outlines how the terms *morally* 'ought' and *morally* 'ought not' can be used in Aristotle's moral and intellectual spheres in the modern ethics of Anscombe's time.

How the terms *morally* 'ought' and *morally* 'ought not' can be used in the modern ethics of Anscombe's time*	
Aristotle's moral sphere of virtue	*Action* and Passion
	One *morally* ought to be, for example, courageous, just, prudent, or temperate. One *morally* ought not to be, for instance, cowardly, unjust, imprudent, or intemperate.
Aristotle's intellectual sphere of virtue	*Action and Reason*
	One *morally* ought to have, for example, good practical knowledge. One *morally* ought not to have, for instance, bad practical knowledge.
*The term *morally* 'ought' is supported (inappropriately) by a force suggestive of an absolute necessity.	

Take the example of one acting with courage and temperance in certain circumstances, which, because of the virtues in question, would be related to Aristotle's moral sphere. In modern philosophy, Anscombe appears to propose, it could be appropriate to say that one *morally* ought to act with courage and temperance and one *morally* ought not

[23] John Haldane, 'Putting Ethics Back Together Again: A British Perspective', *Public Discourse*, 3, (2010) <http://www.thepublicdiscourse.com/2010/03/1211/> [accessed 7th January 2016]. Haldane questions, here, whether or not there can be a natural basis for a broad notion of common membership in an all-inclusive moral community. I answer, later, that there can be (see the Conclusion of this thesis and my discussion of the concept of belonging and my discussion of the concept of vulnerability).

to act with courage and temperance. And, here, the terms 'ought' and 'ought not', which are ethical in nature, are supported by a force *suggestive* of an absolute necessity. One *morally* ought to act with courage and temperance because one must adhere to principle Q. And, one *morally* ought not to act with cowardice and intemperance for the same reason.

Take further the example of one acting with good practical knowledge in certain circumstances, which, because of the virtues in question, would be related to Aristotle's intellectual sphere. In modern philosophy, Anscombe appears to propose, it could be appropriate to say that one *morally* ought to act with good practical knowledge and one *morally* ought not to act with bad practical knowledge. And, here, the terms 'ought' and 'ought not', which are ethical in nature, are supported by a force *suggestive* of an absolute necessity. One *morally* ought to act with good practical knowledge because one must adhere to principle Q. And, one *morally* ought not to act with bad practical knowledge for the same reason.

Such misappropriation, outlined by Anscombe, in the modern ethics of her time of the Aristotelian term 'moral' should interest us, she seems to say, not just because of what we might call its *form* of language, or grammar (i.e., how it appears *in* the notion of *moral* obligation, for example, as has been shown above). It appears to be not just the explicit form of an ethical term like this that, for her, needs to be jettisoned from ethical discourse so as to clear the path back to the language, or grammar, of Aristotelian virtue ethics. However, the origin of said form will soon require our attention. Such misappropriation, outlined by Anscombe, in the modern ethics of her time of the Aristotelian term 'moral' should interest us, she seems to say, particularly because of what we might call its *force* of language, or grammar (i.e., how it authorises *with* the notion of *moral* obligation, for example, as shall be shown

below). It appears to be also the implicit force of an ethical term like this, that, for her, needs to be jettisoned from ethical discourse so as to clear the path back to the language, or grammar, of Aristotelian virtue ethics. Moreover, the source of said force will soon require our attention. To jettison from ethical discourse terms like 'ought' and 'ought not' that do not assume the *moral* form and that do not carry the *moral* force would seem quite impractical. Anscombe cannot be advocating this. They are terms that are such a common and indispensable part of ethical terminology that one would imagine it being, if not impossible, then difficult to get on without them. To jettison from ethical discourse terms like 'ought' and 'ought not' that do assume the *moral* form and that do carry the *moral* force would seem quite practical. Anscombe must be advocating this. They are terms that are such a common but dispensable part of ethical terminology that one would imagine it being, if not easy, then possible to get on without them.

On this point, in *The Philosophy of Elizabeth Anscombe*, Roger Teichmann quite accurately notes how, for Anscombe,

> [it is not the case] that 'ought' [. . .] 'right', and 'wrong' are all terms without a proper use within ethical discourse. Her point is rather that within that discourse, those terms do not have a special ('moral') meaning; and that ethical discourse is not to be characterised as discourse employing those terms with such a special meaning. Ethics is to be characterised by its subject matter: roughly, human flourishing, or various aspects of human flourishing.[24]

For Anscombe, generally, ethical terms with such special *moral* meaning (i.e., with *moral* force) 'are survivals, or derivatives from survivals, from an earlier conception of ethics, which no longer generally survives, and are only harmful without it.'[25] For Anscombe, specifically, ethical terms with such *moral* meaning (i.e., with *moral* force) are survivals, or derivatives from survivals, from a Christian conception of ethics,

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[24] Roger Teichmann, *The Philosophy of Elizabeth Anscombe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 103.
[25] G. E. M. Anscombe, 'Modern Moral Philosophy', p. 26.

which no longer generally survives, and are only harmful without it.[26]

§1.2 ANSCOMBE ON THE TERM 'MORAL' IN CHRISTIANITY

One reading of Anscombe when she writes of an earlier conception of ethics which no longer generally survives is that she is defending the Hebrew-Christian ethic and the communities who hold it. David Solomon notes this interpretation of Anscombe's text well, writing how it is that those who hold such a view argue as follows:

'1. Our deepest moral commitments can only be expressed using the language of categorical moral obligation.

2. Such language is coherent only if one believes in God as a lawgiver.

3. Therefore, moral commitment requires that one believe in God.'[27]

Firstly, it is proposed that an action is *morally* forbidden (i.e., that it is *morally* wrong for one to do) because it is the case that God has commanded, or might command, that it not be performed (i.e., according to the divine law it *cannot* be performed). Secondly, it is proposed that an action is *morally* permitted (i.e., that it is *morally* right

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[26] Arthur Schopenhauer writes something similar, 'Every ought is [. . .] necessarily conditioned by punishment or reward. [. . .]. But if those conditions are thought away, the concept of ought or obligation is left without any meaning: and so *absolute obligation* is certainly a *contradictio in adjecto*. [. . .]. Putting ethics in an *imperative* form as a *doctrine of duties*, and thinking of the moral worth of worthlessness of human actions as the fulfilment or violation of *duties*, undeniably spring, together with the *obligation*, solely from theological morals, and accordingly from the decalogue.' Ludwig Wittgenstein writes something similar, '[W]hat does the word "ought" mean? A child ought to do such-and-such means that if he does not do it something unpleasant will happen to him. Reward and punishment. The essential thing is that the other person is brought to do something. "Ought" makes sense only if there is something lending force and support to it – a power that punishes and rewards. Ought in itself is nonsensical.' See, Arthur Schopenhauer, *On the Basis of Morality*, trans. by E. Payne (Providence, RI: Berghahan Books, 1995), pp. 55–56. See, Friedrich Waismann, *Ludwig Wittgenstein and the Vienna Circle*, ed. by Brian McGuinness and trans. by Joachim Schulte and Brian McGuinness (Oxford: Blackwell, 1979), p. 118. Both quotes appear in: Duncan Richter, *Anscombe's Moral Philosophy* (Plymouth: Lexington Books, 2011), pp. 86 and 88, respectively.

[27] David Solomon, 'Elizabeth Anscombe's "Modern Moral Philosophy": Fifty Years Later', in *Christian Bioethics*, 14.2, (2008), p. 114.

for one to do) because it is the case, or might be the case, that God has not commanded that it not be performed (according to the divine law it *may* be performed). Thirdly, it is proposed that an action is *morally* obligatory (i.e., that one *morally* ought to do it) because it is the case that God has commanded, or might command, that it be performed (i.e., according to the divine law it *must* be performed). And, it is implied that the *moral* forbidding, the *moral* permitting, and the *moral* obliging do hold so long as the existence of God is held. But, it is implied that if the existence of God is not held, then the *moral* forbidding, the *moral* permitting, and the *moral* obliging do not hold.

An example of the abovementioned divine commands can be found in the absolutism of the Decalogue in the books of Exodus and Deuteronomy from The Old Testament of sacred scripture: 'You shall have no other gods before me', 'You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the Lord your God [. . .]', 'Observe the sabbath day and keep it holy', 'Honour your father and your mother [. . .]', 'You shall not murder', 'Neither shall you commit adultery', 'Neither shall you steal', 'Neither shall you bear false witness against your neighbour', 'Neither shall you covet [your neighbour's wife], 'Neither shall you covet [your neighbour's house, field, servants, animals, or anything else]'.[28] Another example of the abovementioned divine commands can be found in the absolutism of Jesus Christ's ethics of love (originally from Deuteronomy 6:5 and originally from Leviticus 19:18) in the Gospel of Matthew from The New Testament of sacred scripture,

> "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind." This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: "You shall love your neighbour as yourself." On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.[29]

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[28] The English Standard Version Bible (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), Exodus 20: 3–17 and Deuteronomy 5: 7–21.
[29] Ibid., Matthew 22: 37–40.

Another reading of Anscombe when she writes of an earlier conception of ethics which no longer generally survives is that she is diagnosing the communities who hold the Hebrew-Christian ethic. David Solomon notes this interpretation of Anscombe's text as well, writing how it is that those who hold such a view argue as follows:

'1. Most people since the 17th century have not believed in God as divine lawgiver.

2. The language of categorical moral obligation is only coherent in language communities sustained by persons who believe in God as a divine lawgiver.

3. Therefore, the language of moral obligation has lost its coherence in modern culture and should be jettisoned.'[30]

For Anscombe, once the Hebrew-Christian ethic was taken up as common ethical currency, use of the *moral* forbidding, *moral* permitting, and *moral* obliging commands—and the concepts of what is *morally* wrong, what is *morally* right, and what one *morally* ought to do and *morally* ought not to do—were contextually and temporally appropriate, she rightly reasons, because the prevailing belief was that there is a commander in place to do the commanding (i.e., God). As a result, Anscombe suggests, whenever these commands were then expressed, it was with an authoritative force that had justifiable conviction. And, this justifiable use of these *moral* concepts is, she asserts, characteristic of the Christianity she accepts. She writes,

> In consequence of the dominance of Christianity for many centuries, the concepts of being bound, permitted, or excused became deeply embedded in our language and thought [. . .]. To have a *law* conception of ethics is to hold that what is needed for conformity with the virtues failure in which is the mark of being bad *qua* man [. . .] is required by divine law. Naturally it is not possible

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[30] David Solomon, 'Elizabeth Anscombe's "Modern Moral Philosophy": Fifty Years Later', in *Christian Bioethics*, 14.2, (2008), p. 114.

to have such a [law] conception of ethics unless you believe in God as a law-giver; like Jews, Stoics and Christians.[31]

For Anscombe, once the Hebrew-Christian ethic was given up as common ethical currency, use of the *moral* forbidding, *moral* permitting, and *moral* obliging commands—and the concepts of what is *morally* wrong, what is *morally* right, and what one *morally* ought to do and *morally* ought not to do—were contextually and temporally inappropriate, she rightly reasons, because the prevailing belief was that there is no commander in place to do the commanding (i.e., God). As a result, Anscombe suggests, whenever these commands are now expressed, it is with an authoritative force that has unjustifiable conviction. And, this unjustifiable use of these *moral* concepts is, she asserts, characteristic of the modern moral philosophy she rejects. She writes,

> [I]f such a [law] conception is dominant for many centuries, and then is given up, it is a natural result that the concepts of 'obligation', of being bound or required as by law, should remain though they had lost their root; and if the word 'ought' has become invested in certain contexts with the sense of 'obligation', it too will remain to be spoken with a special emphasis and a special feeling in these contexts [. . .]. [O]ur present-day ethicists [. . .] try to retain the psychological force of the term. It would be most reasonable to drop it. It has no reasonable sense outside a law conception of ethics; they are not going to maintain such a conception; and you can do ethics without it, as is shown by the example of Aristotle.[32]

On this point, in *Anscombe's Moral Philosophy*, Duncan Richter quite correctly notes how, for Anscombe,

> [. . .] most modern moral philosophy incoherently tries to rely on theism (for the concepts it uses) and to reject it (for methodological reasons of assuming as little as possible, or else from simple atheism).[33]

Consider this first argument. Outside the framework of X, it is not sound to conclude 'Plagiarism is X' from the major premise 'All stealing is X' and the minor premise

[31] G. E. M. Anscombe, 'Modern Moral Philosophy', p. 30.
[32] Ibid., pp. 30 and 32.
[33] Duncan Richter, *Anscombe's Moral Philosophy*, p. 2.

'Plagiarism is stealing' because X is a dummy predicate. That is to say, it is a term with no intelligible thought. As a result, the major premise and the conclusion cannot be true.

Look at this second argument. By the same token, outside the framework of criminal law, it is not sound to conclude 'Plagiarism is criminal' from the major premise 'All stealing is criminal' and the minor premise 'Plagiarism is stealing' because 'criminal' is, in such a context, a sort of dummy predicate. That is to say, a term with no real intelligible thought. Again, as a result, the major premise and the conclusion cannot be true.[34] Anscombe would argue that in the second argument, here, just as in the arguments of most modern moral philosophy that adopt a contextually and temporally inappropriate authoritative weight when using their ethical terms like 'ought' and 'ought not', the situation is one of 'a word retaining the suggestion of force, and apt to have a strong psychological effect, but which no longer signifies a real concept at all'[35]: i.e., 'criminal'.

Take this third argument. In the same way, outside the framework of divine law, it is not sound to conclude 'Plagiarism is *morally* wrong' from the major premise 'All stealing is *morally* wrong' and the minor premise 'Plagiarism is stealing' because '*morally* wrong' is, in such a context, a sort of dummy predicate. That is to say, it is a term with no real intelligible thought. Also, as a result, the major premise and the conclusion cannot be true.[36] (In a different way, inside or outside the framework of divine law, it is not valid to conclude 'One *morally* ought not to plagiarise' from the major premise 'All stealing is *morally* wrong' and the minor premise 'Plagiarism is

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[34] This argument, which Anscombe is invoking, is valid. But, it is not sound. See, G. E. M. Anscombe, 'Modern Moral Philosophy', p. 30. She writes, 'It is as if the notion 'criminal' were to remain when criminal law and criminal courts had been abolished and forgotten.'
[35] Ibid., p. 32.
[36] This argument, which I am invoking, is valid. But, it is not sound.

stealing' because there is non-logical content in the conclusion that is not in the non-logical content of the premises). Anscombe would argue that in the third argument, here, just as in the arguments of most modern moral philosophy that adopt a contextually and temporally inappropriate authoritative weight when using their ethical terms 'ought' and 'ought not', the situation is one of 'the survival of a concept outside the framework of thought that made it a really intelligible one'[37]: i.e., 'moral'.

On this point, in 'Elizabeth Anscombe's "Modern Moral Philosophy": Fifty Years Later', David Solomon quite fittingly notes how, for Anscombe,

> [most modern moral philosophy was] inadequately prepared to do real ethics, that its history was one of simple acquiescence in the ethical trends of the time, and that its conception of its central task was shot through with a lack of historical awareness and a deep self-deception.[38]

The Dostoevsky line, 'Without God [. . .] everything is permitted'[39], might resonate here with some for whom a coherent and practicable ethical guide beyond the Hebrew-Christian ethic is not possible. When encountering the Euthyphro-like dilemma, 'Is what is right or wrong (a) commanded by God because it is right or wrong? or (b) right or wrong because it is commanded by God?'[40], they would certainly accept the latter option, and also think it impossible to have a coherent and practicable secular ethics. The Dostoevsky line might not resonate here with Anscombe for whom a coherent and practicable ethical guide beyond the Hebrew-Christian ethic is necessary. When encountering the Euthyphro-like dilemma she would certainly accept the latter option, but also think it necessary to have a coherent and practicable secular ethics. One way

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[37] See, G. E. M. Anscombe, 'Modern Moral Philosophy', p. 31.
[38] David Solomon, 'Elizabeth Anscombe's "Modern Moral Philosophy": Fifty Years Later', in *Christian Bioethics*, 14.2, (2008), pp. 109–122.
[39] Fyodor Dostoevsky. *The Brothers Karamazov*, trans. by Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky (San Francisco, CA: North Point Press, 1990), p. 589.
[40] In Plato's *Euthyphro* Socrates asks: 'Is that which is pious pious because the gods love it, or do the gods love that which is pious because it is pious?'. See, Plato, *Euthyphro*, in *The Last Days of Socrates*, trans. by Hugh Tredennick and Harold Tarrant, and intro. by Harold Tarrant (London: The Penguin Group, 2003), 10a–11a.

of reading Anscombe's argumentation, here, is in *modus ponens* form, to the effect that (i) if the Hebrew-Christian ethic is considered false, then a coherent and practicable secular ethic ought to be developed; (ii) the Hebrew-Christian ethic is considered false; (iii) therefore, a coherent and practicable secular ethic ought to be developed. This *modus ponens* take, which one finds a lot argumentatively in her article, sees Anscombe as the seeker of a coherent and practicable secular ethic getting off the ground. Another way of reading Anscombe's argumentation, here, is in *modus tollens* form, to the effect that (i) if the Hebrew-Christian ethic is considered false, then a coherent and practicable secular ethic ought to be developed; (ii) a coherent and practicable secular ethic ought not to be developed; (iii) the Hebrew-Christian ethic is not false. This *modus tollens* take, which one finds lurking ambivalently in her article, sees Anscombe as the sceptic of a coherent and practicable ethic getting off the ground.

In the present chapter, we have seen how Anscombe draws attention to what she considers to be the root of those ethical theories prevalent in her day (more of which in the next chapter) that she thinks confuse the path back to what is for her the only coherent and practicable ethics outside a religious context: an Aristotelian virtue-based one. She highlights an important dissimilarity in how the term 'moral' is used in Aristotelian ethics and in how it is used, as we shall see, in said (secular-friendly) modern ethics of her time. Rather than employing the term in the way that it is used in Aristotelian ethics (i.e., in relation to virtues like courage, justice, prudence, and temperance, which are called moral virtues, and not in relation to virtues like philosophical knowledge and practical knowledge, which are called intellectual virtues), the modern ethics of her time, as we shall see, (wittingly or unwittingly) employ the ethical terms 'ought' and 'ought not', with a *moral* force that is only contextually and temporally justifiable where and when God is deemed the absolute

source of ethics, as we have seen. In the next chapter, I shall look at how Anscombe removes from the philosophical environment of her day the unhelpfully influential ideas that rather confuse the path back to the virtue ethics that she identifies as the optimum candidate for a coherent and practicable secular ethics. I will consider her take on the relevant philosophy of Joseph Butler and what he has to say about conscience being a *moral* authority, Immanuel Kant and what he has to say about reason being a *moral* authority, Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill and what they have to say about pleasure being a *moral* authority, and G. E. Moore and Henry Sidgwick and what they have to say about consequences being a *moral* authority. Overall, I will be looking at how Anscombe questions, and ultimately (and quite appropriately as we shall see) rejects, their use of the ethical concepts 'ought' and 'ought not', before checking to see, in Chapter III, whether, ultimately, the David Hume-influenced and somewhat Aristotelian alternative she suggests is suitable. Essentially, she writes about (what I would like to entitle) the 'ought' of flourishing— about the language, or grammar, that is and is not the basis for a coherent and practicable ethics.

CHAPTER II

MORAL 'OUGHT' IN THE PREVAILING MORAL PHILOSOPHY OF ANSCOMBE'S DAY

We cannot, then, look to Aristotle for any elucidation of the modern way of talking about 'moral' goodness, obligation, etc. And all the best-known writers on ethics in modern times, from Butler to Mill, appear to me to have faults as thinkers on the subject which make it impossible to hope for any direct light on it from them [. . .]. [*We can also*] *see the superiority of the term 'unjust' over the terms 'morally right' and 'morally wrong'. For in the context of English moral philosophy since Sidgwick it appears legitimate to discuss whether it might be 'morally right' in some circumstances to adopt* [*a procedure of judicially punishing a man for what he is clearly understood not to have done*]; *but it cannot be argued that the procedure would in any circumstances be just.*[1]

§2.1 ANSCOMBE ON JOSEPH BUTLER AND CONSCIENCE ALONE BEING A *MORAL* AUTHORITY

In reaction to Anscombe's aforementioned comments about Aristotelian ethics and the Hebrew-Christian ethic, one might wonder why conscience alone could not be the source of a secular (what Anscombe calls) *moral* 'ought'—that is, one with a force suggestive of an absolute necessity—in matters ethical. If it could be convincingly shown that it can, then the authoritative *moral* force of this ethical term still might not yet have to be—as Anscombe suggests it needs to be for coherency and practicability purposes—jettisoned from ethics outside the Hebrew-Christian ethic. If it could not be convincingly shown that conscience can be the source of such a secular *moral* 'ought' in matters ethical, then the authoritative *moral* force of this ethical terms might have to be left as a falling victim to Anscombe's wielding of Ockham's razor and stay shaven from the face of non-religious ethics. She looks to Joseph Butler for

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[1] G. E. M. Anscombe, 'Modern Moral Philosophy', pp. 26-27 and 39.

(presumably what she considers) the most influential offering on this question of conscience.

Let us look at the language—or the grammar—of Butler's relevant philosophy. Joseph Butler (1692–1752), born in Wantage, England, became preacher to the Rolls Chapel in Chancery Lane, London, near the start of the eighteenth-century, became Bishop of Durham in the middle of the eighteenth-century, and his celebrated writing of fifteen sermons on the nature of humans and on the nature of obligation, capable of appealing to both the novice and the expert religious philosopher and capable of appealing to both the novice and the expert non-religious philosopher, became celebrated reading of universities in nineteenth-century England. There is, for Butler, a threefold distinction in human nature: not unlike in the nature of non-human animals, there is in human nature low-level passions and principles (i.e., particular affections and appetites); and not unlike in the nature of non-human animals, there is in human nature high-level passions and principles (i.e., benevolence and self-love); and not like in the nature of non-human animals, there is in human nature a supreme principle (i.e., reflective conscience). The low-level passions and principles (i.e., particular affections and appetites) are, it is proposed, subservient to the high-level passions and principles (i.e., benevolence and self-love) and are an authority over nothing. The high-level passions and principles (i.e., benevolence and self-love) are, it is proposed, subservient to the supreme principle (i.e., reflective conscience) and are an authority over the low-level passions and principles (i.e., particular affections and appetites). The supreme principle (reflective conscience), which is sometimes referred to by him as the voice of God and is sometimes referred to by him as the voice of man, is, it is proposed, subservient to nothing and is an authority over the high-level passions and principles (i.e., benevolence and self-love) and an authority over the low-level passions and

principles (i.e., particular affections and appetites). This is, for Butler, therefore, a hierarchy of human nature.

Supreme Principle (i.e., Reflective Conscience)
Primary Authority to . . .
High-Level Passions and Principles (i.e., Benevolence and Self-Love)
Secondary Authority to . . .
Low-Level Passions and Principles (i.e., Particular Affections and Appetites)

This is, for Butler, moreover, a somewhat Aristotelian system of human nature: adapted to virtue through reflective conscience. In *Five Sermons*, an analogy runs like so,

> Let us instance in a watch—suppose the several parts of it taken to pieces and placed apart from each other: let a man have ever so exact a notion of these several parts, unless he considers the respects and relations which they have to each other, he will not have anything like the idea of a watch [. . .]. Thus it is with regard to the inward frame of man [. . .]. It is from considering the relations which the several appetites and passions in the inward frame have to each other, and, above all, the supremacy of reflection or conscience, that we get the idea of the system or constitution of human nature. And from the idea itself it will as fully appear that this our nature, that is, constitution, is adapted to virtue, as from the idea of a watch it appears that its nature, that is, constitution or system, is adapted to measure time.[2]

For Butler, one's judgments (about what one ought to do or ought not to do) that come from a reflective conscience are infallible (i.e., incapable of error). And, one's judgments (about what one ought to do or ought not to do) that do not come from a reflective conscience are fallible (i.e., capable of error). Thus, it is proposed, by Butler, that there is no such thing as a false reflective conscience. And, for him, because of its infallibility, reflective conscience does bind the will (i.e., one is obliged to act according to one's reflective conscience) and cannot excuse the will (i.e., one is

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[2] Joseph Butler, *Five Sermons*, ed. by Stephen L. Darwall (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 1983), pp. 14-15.

responsible for acting according to, and one is responsible for acting against, one's reflective conscience). According to Butler, in acting according to one's reflective conscience, one is doing what one ought to do and one is doing what one thinks one ought to do. In acting against one's reflective conscience, one is doing what one ought not to do and one is doing what one thinks one ought not to do. Overall, so, an authoritative *moral* force of the ethical terms 'ought' and 'ought not'—one suggestive of an absolute necessity—appears apt, here, in Butlerian ethics. But, is Butler's conscience-based ethics a secular-friendly *moral* authority?

For Anscombe, one's judgements (about what one ought to do or ought not to do) that come from a reflective conscience unaided from, say, the Hebrew-Christian ethic or another's counsel, just like one's judgments that come from a memory unaided from, say, public record or another's counsel, are fallible (i.e., capable of error). And, one's judgments (about what one ought to do or ought not to do) that do not come from a reflective conscience aided by, say, the Hebrew-Christian ethic or another's counsel, just like one's judgments that come not from a memory aided by, say, public record or another's counsel, are fallible (i.e., capable of error).[3] Thus, it is proposed, by Anscombe, that there is such a thing as a false reflective conscience. And, for her, because of its fallibility, reflective conscience does bind the will (i.e., one is obliged to act according to one's reflective conscience) but can excuse the will (i.e., one might or might not be responsible for acting according to, but is responsible for acting against, one's reflective conscience). According to Anscombe, in acting according to one's false reflective conscience, one is doing what one thinks one ought to do but one is not doing what one ought to do. And, excusing can come in, here, as shall be shown

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[3] This analogy between conscience and memory is from G. E. M. Anscombe, 'Authority in Morals', in *Ethics, Religion and Politics: Collected Philosophical Papers of G. E. M. Anscombe*, III, p. 46.

below. In acting against one's false reflective conscience, one is doing what one thinks one ought not to do. And, excusing cannot come in, here, as shall be shown below. And, so, an authoritative *moral* force of the ethical terms 'ought' and 'ought not'—one suggestive of an absolute necessity—appears inapt, here, in Butlerian ethics. She writes, 'Butler exalts conscience, but appears ignorant that a man's conscience may tell him to do the vilest things.'[4]

Looking at vile, blameable cases, like that of Heinrich Himmler who endeavoured to execute millions of Jews[5], where a judgment about what ought to be done comes from a false reflective conscience, conscience does bind the will and cannot excuse the will, according to Anscombe. This is so, she thinks, since if someone like Himmler is acting according to his false reflective conscience, then he is doing what he thinks is right but he is actually doing what is wrong. And, excusing, therefore, cannot be deemed appropriate, here. If he is acting against his false reflective conscience, then he is doing what he thinks is wrong. And, excusing, moreover, cannot be deemed appropriate, here. So, in vile, blameable cases, perhaps counter-intuitively, Anscombe seems to be proposing that one ought to obey one's conscience. What is more, one cannot be excused for obeying it and one cannot be excused for disobeying it, she appears to be suggesting.

Looking at non-vile, blameable cases, like that of a mother who enters her child into a beauty pageant, where a judgment about what ought to be do done comes from a false reflective conscience, conscience does bind the will and cannot excuse the will, according to Anscombe. This is so, she thinks, since if someone like the mother is acting according to her false reflective conscience, then she is doing what she thinks

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[4] G. E. M. Anscombe, 'Modern Moral Philosophy', p. 27.
[5] This example of Himmler is from G. E. M. Anscombe, 'Must One Obey One's Conscience?', in *Human Life, Action and Ethics: Essays by G. E. M. Anscombe*, ed. by Mary Geach and Luke Gormally, p. 240 and G. E. M. Anscombe, 'Mr Truman's Degree', p. 71.

is right but she is actually doing what is wrong. And, excusing, therefore, cannot be deemed appropriate, here. If she is acting against her false reflective conscience, then she is doing what she thinks wrong. And, excusing, moreover, cannot be deemed appropriate, here. So, in non-vile, blameable cases, perhaps counter-intuitively, Anscombe seems to be proposing that one ought to obey one's conscience. What is more, one cannot be excused for obeying it and one cannot be excused for disobeying it, she appears to be suggesting.

Looking at blameless cases, like that of a suspicious spouse who confronts what is seemingly a swindling partner but what is truly a trustworthy partner, where a judgment about what ought to be done comes from a false reflective conscience, conscience does bind the will but can excuse the will, according to Anscombe. This is so, she thinks, since if someone like the suspicious spouse is acting according to his false reflective conscience, then he is doing what he thinks is right but he is actually doing what is wrong. And, excusing, therefore, can be deemed appropriate, here. If he is acting against his false reflective conscience, then he is doing what he thinks is wrong. And, excusing, moreover, cannot be deemed appropriate, here. So, in blameless cases, perhaps intuitively, Anscombe seems to be proposing that one ought to obey one's conscience. What is more, one can be excused for obeying it but one cannot be excused for disobeying it, she appears to be suggesting.

She proposes that, generally, a single defect in one's conscience or in one's action is enough for badness of action, while goodness of action must be goodness in all respects.[6] She suggests, specifically, that 'for Butler to have written disregarding this does not open up any new topics for us.'[7]

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[6] This proposal originates from Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, trans. by Fathers of the English Dominican Province (New York: Benziger Brothers, 1947), First Part of the Second Part, Question XVIII, article 4.
[7] This proposal originates from G. E. M. Anscombe, 'Modern Moral Philosophy', p. 28.

In response, so, to what Butler has to say about the possibility of conscience alone being the source of (what Anscombe calls) a *moral* 'ought' in matters ethical, Anscombe disagrees with him and thinks that it cannot be. For her, in accordance with her undeveloped, and somewhat Aristotelian natural normativity and necessity (as we have seen in the Introduction to this thesis and as we shall see in more detail in Chapter III) one ought to be conscientious because being in possession of this virtue is conducive to one's flourishing and one ought not to be unconscientious because being in possession of this vice is detrimental to one's flourishing. And, here, the terms 'ought' and 'ought not', which are ethical in nature, are supported by the force of an Aristotelian—but not an absolute—necessity. One ought to be virtuous because, in terms of one's function, or teleology, as a practically rational animal, it is normally necessary to be virtuous. But, it is not absolutely necessary for one to be functionally, or teleologically, as one ought to be. For, such absolute necessities require a contextually and temporally justifiable ethical arbiter to impose them. Ultimately, at this point, after the rejection of the idea that conscience can be the source of a secular *moral* 'ought' in matters ethical by Anscombe, the authoritative *moral* force of the ethical term remains incoherent and impracticable outside the Hebrew-Christian ethic. It still has no place in secular ethics.

§2.2 ANSCOMBE ON IMMANUEL KANT AND REASON ALONE BEING A *MORAL* AUTHORITY

In reaction to Anscombe's aforementioned comments about Butlerian ethics, one might wonder why reason alone could not be the source of a secular (what Anscombe calls) *moral* 'ought'—that is, one with a force suggestive of an absolute necessity—in matters ethical. If it could be convincingly shown that it can, then the authoritative *moral* force of the ethical term still might not yet have to be—as Anscombe suggests

it needs to be for coherency and practicability purposes—jettisoned from ethics outside the Hebrew-Christian ethic. If it could not be convincingly shown that reason alone can be the source of such a secular *moral* 'ought' in matters ethical, then the authoritative *moral* force of this ethical term still might have to be left as a falling victim to Anscombe's wielding of Ockham's razor and stay shaven from the face of non-religious ethics. She looks to Immanuel Kant for (presumably what she considers) the most influential offering on this question of reason.

Let us look at the language—or the grammar—of Kant's relevant philosophy. Immanuel Kant (1724–1804), born in Königsberg, Prussia (now Kaliningrad, Russia), had three distinct periods throughout his career: the pre-critical era influenced by the metaphysics of Christian von Wolff, which was from 1747; the 'silent decade', which was from 1771; and the critical era influenced by the anti-metaphysics of David Hume, which was from 1781.[8] He asked three distinct questions throughout his career: What can I know?, What may I hope for?, and What ought I to do?

Touching on the question 'What can I know?', motivation-giving concepts like freedom, God, and immortality, Kant proposes, cannot be *known* to exist from the phenomenal world—a sort of secondary reality of, what he calls, appearances. That is to say, they cannot be known to exist through the faculty of perception (*Wahrnehumng*) and through the faculty of understanding (*Verstand*). For him, though, we can, through these faculties, know that the phenomenal world exists—a view that quenches the thirst for empiricism of his day and that is consistent with the empirical idea that one cannot have knowledge exclusive of sense experience. And,

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[8] Hume's *Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding* 'first interrupted [Kant's] dogmatic slumber and gave [Kant's] investigations in the field of speculative philosophy a completely different direction.' For Hume's book, see, *Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, in *Enquiries Concerning Human Understanding and Concerning the Principles of Morals*, ed. by L. A. Selby-Bigge and P. H. Nidditch (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975). For Kant's quote, see, Immanuel Kant, *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merril [The Library of Liberal Arts], 1950), Preface.

we can, he states, through these faculties, *know* what the phenomenal world is comprised of. For, we can perceive the phenomenal world in terms of space and time and understand the phenomenal world in terms of causality, for example. Anscombe entertains the interesting thought that Kant could replace Aristotle in Raphael's *The School of Athens*.[9] For, it is Aristotle, and not Plato, that is pointing downwards to the phenomenal earth, to a material world that, for Kant, is causally deterministic. For him, the concepts of freedom, God, and immortality do not exist physically. We cannot perceive or understand them.

Touching on the question, 'What may I hope for?', motivation-giving concepts like freedom, God, and immortality, Kant proposes, can be *believed* to exist in a noumenal world—a sort of primary reality of, what he calls, the thing-in-itself (*das Ding an sich*). That is to say, they can be believed to exist through the faculty of reason (*Vernunft*). For him, though, we can, through this faculty, know that the noumenal world exists—a view that satisfied the thirst for rationalism of his day and that was consistent with the rationalistic idea that one cannot have knowledge exclusively from sense experience. But, we cannot, through this faculty, know what the noumenal world is comprised of, he states. For, we cannot perceive the noumenal world in terms of space and time or understand the noumenal world in terms of causality, for example. Anscombe entertains the interesting thought that Kant could replace Plato in Raphael's *The School of Athens*.[10] For, it is Plato, and not Aristotle, that is pointing upwards to a noumenal heaven, to an immaterial world that, for Kant, is not causally deterministic. For him, the concepts of freedom, God, and immortality do exist mentally. We can reason about them.

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[9] See, G. E. M. Anscombe, 'Good and Bad Human Action', in *Human Life, Action and Ethics: Essays by G. E. M. Anscombe*, p. 200.
[10] Ibid.

Touching on the question, 'What ought I to do?', Ought-statements of a hypothetical nature are proposed by Kant and Ought-statements of a categorical nature are proposed by Kant. The former—the hypothetical ought-statements—are not necessarily of an ethical kind, for him, as they are dominantly based on a drive of desire and state, *conditionally*, how one ought to act. So, if I desire X, then I ought to do A; if I desire to perfect a Chopin nocturne, then I ought to practise a Chopin nocturne, for example. This is not what Anscombe calls a *moral* ought. The latter— the categorical ought-statements—are necessarily of an ethical kind, for him, as they are dominantly based on a duty to reason and state, *unconditionally*, how one ought to act. This is what Anscombe calls a *moral* ought. So, I *morally* ought not to do A, regardless of whether or not I desire to do A; I *morally* ought not to lie, regardless of whether or not I desire to lie, for instance.

And, in a way, Kant can again be seen, here, as the Platonic figure from Raphael's painting, for Anscombe[11], pointing upwards to what he saw as the pure practical will of the intelligible, or noumenal, world, for which he thinks there is no need for a guiding principle—a *moral* ought—but, nevertheless, where it can be formulated through reason. And, in a way, Kant can again be seen, here, as the Aristotelian figure from Raphael's painting, for Anscombe[12], pointing downwards to what he saw as the impure practical will of the unintelligible, or phenomenal, world, for which he thinks there is a need for a guiding principle—a *moral* ought—but, nevertheless, where it cannot be formulated through perception or understanding.

We can say that, for Kant, actions are *morally* right if their related maxims (like 'One *morally* ought not to kill to achieve one's goals', 'One *morally* ought not to

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[11] Ibid.
[12] Ibid.

lie to achieve one's goals', and 'One *morally* ought not to steal to achieve one's goals')

can be rationally willed, without contradiction, by oneself—and not by God—to be a

universal law. We can say that, for Kant, actions are *morally* wrong if their related

maxims (like 'One *morally* ought to kill to achieve one's goals', 'One *morally* ought

to lie to achieve one's goals', and 'One *morally* ought to steal to achieve one's goals')

cannot be rationally willed, without contradiction, by oneself—and not by God—to be

a universal law.

A main formulation of the self-legislative categorical imperative is stated in

Kant's *The Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals*: 'Act only according to that

maxim by which you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law.'[13]

If everyone were to comply with the universal law 'One *morally* ought to kill

to achieve one's goals', then there would be no one left for one to comply with that

universal law; there would, therefore, be a contradiction in doing so and, so, for Kant,

we would be duty-bound to the reasoned conclusion that we *morally* ought not to kill

to achieve our goals. If everyone were to comply with the universal law 'One *morally*

ought to lie to achieve one's goals', then there would be no truth left for one to comply

with that universal law; there would, therefore, be a contradiction in doing so and, so,

for Kant, we would be duty-bound to the reasoned conclusion that we *morally* ought

not to lie to achieve our goals. If everyone were to comply with the universal law 'One

morally ought to steal to achieve one's goals', then there would be no property left for

one to comply with that universal law; there would, therefore, be a contradiction in

doing so and, so, for Kant, we would be duty-bound to the reasoned conclusion that

we *morally* ought not to steal to achieve our goals.

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[13] Immanuel Kant, *The Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals*, trans. by Lewis White Beck (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1976), p. 39.

Another formulation of the self-legislative categorical imperative, which echoes Jesus Christ's ethics of love, is stated in Kant's *The Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals*: 'Act so that you treat humanity, whether in your own person or in that of another, always as an end and never as a means only.'[14] Christ appealed to desire. Kant appealed to reason. But, is Kant's reason-based deontology a convincing secular-friendly *moral* authority?

Anscombe criticises Kant on two matters: action-description and self-legislation. On the issue of Kant's action-description, she writes,

> [Kant's] own rigoristic convictions on the subject of lying were so intense that it never occurred to him that a lie could be relevantly described as anything but just a lie (e.g. as 'a lie in such-and-such circumstances'). His rule about universalisable maxims is useless without stipulations as to what shall count as a relevant description of an action with a view to constructing a maxim about it.[15]

For Anscombe, Kant believes that an action such as lying is adequately described in its (Kantian) maxim-form and, so, it ought to be absolutely prohibited; that is to say, it *morally* ought not to be done. For Anscombe, Kant does not stress (what is for her) the importance of adequate action-description in maxims. In other words, there is no mention of relevant contextual stipulations that might change the associated description of the act in the maxim. For example, lying in such-and-such circumstances.

Anscombe believes that actions such as killing and lying are inadequately described in their (Kantian) maxim-form but, still, they ought to be absolutely prohibited; that is to say, they *morally* ought not to be done. She does stress (what is for her) the importance of adequate action-description in maxims. In other words, there is a mention of relevant contextual stipulations that might change the associated

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[14] Ibid. p. 47.
[15] G. E. M. Anscombe, 'Modern Moral Philosophy', p. 27.

description of the act in the maxim. For example, there are those actions, she says, that distinctly describe the hard core of the concepts of killing and lying (like intentionally killing a family by arson and great cases of lying, respectively) and there are those actions, she says, that indistinctly fall within the penumbra that surrounds the hard core of the concepts of killing and lying (like unintentionally killing a family by arson and small cases of lying, respectively).[16] Consider a daredevil who, while losing the will to live, lets go of a cliff face and falls to his death. This act is intentional. His is an act of suicide. Consider a daredevil who, while losing the will to live, loses grip of a cliff face and falls to his death. This act is not intentional. His is an act not of suicide. Intentionally, these actions are different. Observably, these actions are the same. And, a maxim to the effect of 'One ought not to kill oneself' may, without action-description of the *intentional* and *unintentional* actions in the above cases, appear (incorrectly) related to both cases above. But, a maxim to the effect of 'One ought not to kill oneself' would, with action-description of the *intentional* and the *unintentional* actions in the above cases, appear (correctly) related to both cases above. Anscombe's 'class of intentional actions is a sub-class [of] the class of things known without observation.[17] Kant lacks this classification of intentional actions. On the issue of Kant's self-legislation, she writes,

> Kant introduces the idea of 'legislating for oneself', which is as absurd as if in these days, when majority votes command great respect, one were to call each reflective decision a man made a *vote* resulting in a majority, which as a matter of proportion is overwhelming for it is always 1-0.[18]

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[16] This distinction between actions that distinctly describe the hard core of concepts, which are absolutely prohibited, and actions that indistinctly fall within the penumbra that surrounds the hard core of concepts, which are absolutely prohibited, appears at: G. E. M. Anscombe, 'Action, Intention and "Double Effect"', in *Human Life, Action and Ethics: Essays by G. E. M. Anscombe*, p. 219. There are, according to her, slightly obscure borderline cases when describing the actions of something like killing and lying. There are, according to her, no slightly obscure borderline cases when describing the action of something like sodomy.

[17] G. E. M. Anscombe, *Intention*, 2nd edn., p. 14.

[18] G. E. M. Anscombe, 'Modern Moral Philosophy', p. 27.

First, Anscombe proposes that Kant's idea of the minority involved in self-legislation—a law from a minority—being an individual is absurd. The self-legislation about which Kant writes looks as if it involves, in theory at least, the authorising and the enforcing of a law to oneself and to all others. And, if the legislator is to be the legislatee, as Kant seems to imply, then, for Anscombe, there is a question of why there *morally* ought to be adherence to maxims like 'Do not kill', 'Do not lie', or 'Do not steal'. We need to ask, she reasonably thinks: who could authorise and enforce such maxims? Could one person authorise and enforce a law universally? It is unlikely. For, as we have seen in discussing the Hebrew-Christian ethic, the concept of legislation, says Anscombe, presupposes superior power in the legislator. Within the context of the Hebrew-Christian ethic, God is a contextually and temporally justifiable authoriser and an enforcer of laws, such as those of the Decalogue. But, Kant's focus is not on heteronomous categorical imperatives. He is promoting autonomous ones.

Second, Anscombe proposes that Kant's idea of the majority involved in self-legislation—a law for the majority—being a universal is absurd. The self-legislation about which Kant writes looks as if it involves, in theory at least, the promulgating of a law to oneself and to all others. And, if the legislated are to obey the legislator, as Kant seems to imply, then, for Anscombe, there is a question of how *all* individuals (and their adherence to maxims like 'Do not kill', 'Do not lie', or 'Do not steal') obey *an* individual (from his/her adherence to maxims like 'Do not kill', 'Do not lie', or 'Do not steal'). We need to ask, she reasonably thinks: who can promulgate these maxims? Can one person promulgate a law universally? It is unlikely. For, again, as we have seen in discussing the Hebrew-Christian ethic, the concept of legislation, says Anscombe, presupposes superior power in the legislator. Within, again, the context of the Hebrew-Christian ethic, God is also a contextually and temporally justifiable

promulgator of laws, such as those of the Decalogue. But, again, Kant's focus is not on heteronomous categorical imperatives. He is promoting autonomous ones.

Those who tend to embrace (from, say, Butlerian ethics) the idea of an autonomous conscience are, Anscombe proposes, those who tend to endorse (from, say, Kantian ethics) the idea of an autonomous will. Those who tend to endorse (from Kantian ethics) the idea of an autonomous will are, Anscombe suggests, those who tend to evade (from, say, the Hebrew-Christian ethic) the idea of heteronomous ethics. Those who tend to evade (from the Hebrew-Christian ethic) the idea of heteronomous ethics are, Anscombe writes, those who tend to consider morals somehow less teachable than chemistry or history or religious dogma.[19]

In response, so, to what Kant has to say about the possibility of reason alone being the source of (what Anscombe calls) a *moral* 'ought' in matters ethical, Anscombe disagrees with him and thinks that it cannot be. For her, in accordance with her undeveloped, and somewhat Aristotelian natural normativity and necessity (as we have seen in the Introduction to this thesis and as we shall see in more detail in Chapter III) one ought to be rational because being in possession of this virtue is conducive to one's flourishing and one ought not to be irrational because being in possession of this vice is detrimental to one's flourishing. And, here, the terms 'ought' and 'ought not', which are ethical in nature, are supported by the force of an Aristotelian—but not an absolute—necessity. One ought to be virtuous because, in terms of one's function, or teleology, as a practical rational animal, it is normally necessary to be rational. But, it is not absolutely necessary for one to be functionally, or teleologically, as one ought

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[19] This point is made in a 1960 paper and a 1962 publication entitled 'Authority in Morals'. See, G. E. M. Anscombe, 'Authority in Morals', p. 45. She writes, 'But is there something essentially less teachable about morals than, say, chemistry or history or mathematics – or, again, religious dogma? This view might be maintained in connection with that *autonomy of the will* about which Kant wrote. To take one's morality from someone else – that, it might be held, would make it not morality at all; if one takes it from someone else, that turns it into a bastard sort of morality, marked by heteronomy.

to be. For, such absolute necessities require a contextually and temporally justifiable ethical arbiter to impose them. Ultimately, at this point, after the rejection of the idea that reason alone can be the source of a secular *moral* 'ought' in matters ethical by Anscombe, the authoritative *moral* force of the ethical term remains incoherent and impracticable outside the Hebrew-Christian ethic. It still has no place in secular ethics.

§2.3 ANSCOMBE ON JEREMY BENTHAM AND JOHN STUART MILL AND PLEASURE ALONE BEING A *MORAL* AUTHORITY

In reaction to Anscombe's aforementioned comments about Kantian ethics, one might wonder why pleasure alone could not be the source of a secular (what Anscombe calls) *moral* 'ought'—that is, one with a force suggestive of an absolute necessity—in matters ethical. If it could be convincingly shown that it can, then the authoritative *moral* force of this ethical term still might not yet have to be—as Anscombe suggests it needs to be for coherency and practicability purposes—jettisoned from ethics outside the Hebrew-Christian ethic. If it could not be convincingly shown that pleasure alone can be the source of such a secular *moral* 'ought' in matters ethical, then the authoritative *moral* force of this ethical term still might have to be left as a falling victim to Anscombe's wielding of Ockham's razor and stay shaven from the face of non-religious ethics. She looks to Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill for (presumably what she considers) the most influential offering on this question of pleasure.

Let us look first at the language—or the grammar—of Bentham's relevant philosophy. Jeremy Bentham (1748–1832), born in London, England, became, early in his youth, like his father and grandfather, delighted by English law as it was and doing legal studies, and looked forward to making a living from working at law but became, late in his youth, unlike his father and grandfather, disgusted by English law

and doing legal studies, and looked forward to making a living from writing on law as it could be. He, therefore, grew into a social reformer. He, moreover, grew into a utilitarian philosopher. He thought that moral and political theory had to be based on an empirical principle of utility: that humans *are* motivated by a desire for pleasure and a desire against pain on an individual level. This is the view known as psychological hedonism. He also thought that moral and political theory had to be based on a kind of non-egoistic calculus of felicity. For, he also held that humans *should* be motivated by a desire for pleasure and a desire against pain on a social level. This is the view known as ethical hedonism.

He advocates 'the greatest happiness principle': that '[i]t is the greatest happiness of the greatest number that is the measure of right and wrong'.[20] It encapsulates the notion of *general* hedonistic happiness. And, *general* hedonistic happiness, says Bentham, is to be calculated by anyone in terms of the intensity of the pleasure, the duration of the pleasure, the certainty of the pleasure, the proximity of the pleasure, the fecundity of the pleasure, the purity of the pleasure, and the extent of the pleasure. Moreover, a somewhat democratic application from each person of each category to each action is posited by Bentham as a way of distinguishing between the most satisfying pleasures and the least satisfying pleasures.

For example, look at the dilemma of preparing for one's final undergraduate examinations or socialising with one's friends. The former action will often register highly in the least amount of categories: the duration of pleasure, the fecundity of pleasure, and the extent of pleasure. The latter action will often register highly in the most amount of categories: the intensity of pleasure, the certainty of pleasure, the

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[20] Jeremy Bentham, 'A Fragment of Government', in *A Bentham Reader*, ed. by Mary Peter Mack (New York: Pegasus, 1969), p. 45.

proximity of pleasure and the purity of pleasure.

This is the idea of his Calculus of Felicity and it is an element of his act-utilitarianism, according to which it is the value of the consequences of performing a particular act that determines whether it is what one (*morally*) ought to do or what one (*morally*) ought not to do.

In his *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation* a mnemonic doggerel, 'on which the whole fabric of morals and legislation may be seen to rest', states,

> Intense, long, certain, speedy, fruitful, pure—such marks in pleasures and in pains endure. Such pleasures seek if private be thy end: if it be public, wide let them extend. Such pains avoid, whichever be thy view: If pains must come let them extend to few.[21]

Overall, for Bentham, actions are what one (as Anscombe would say) *morally* ought to do if their consequences look likely to promote *general* hedonistic happiness both on an individual level and on a social level and actions are what one (as Anscombe would say) *morally* ought not to do, if their consequences look likely to demote *general* hedonistic happiness both on an individual level and on a social level.

Let us look second at the language—or the grammar—of Mill's relevant philosophy. John Stuart Mill (1806–1873), born in London, England, was educated by his philosopher father, James, and was educated in the philosophy of Bentham. At the age of three, he was learned in Greek and he was learning Latin. At the age of twelve, he was learned in logic. At the age of sixteen, he was learned in economics. At the age of twenty, due to too much academic exposure, to the likes of Bentham, Greek and Latin, logic, and economics, and due to too little aesthetic exposure, to the likes of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, and William Wordsworth,

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[21] Jeremy Bentham, *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation*, ed. by J. H. Burns and H. L. A. Hart (London: Oxford University Press, 1982), footnote to Chapter IV.

he had a nervous breakdown. He was, during the rest of his life, keen to champion the importance of academic experience and he was keen to champion the importance of aesthetic experience. He was, throughout the rest of his life, interested in promoting the insights of enlightenment and he was interested in promoting the insights of romanticism. And, like Bentham, he thought that moral and political theory had to be based on an empirical principle of utility: that humans *are* motivated by a desire for pleasure and a desire against pain on an individual level. But, like Bentham, he also thought that moral and political theory had to be based on a kind of non-egoistic calculus of felicity. For, he also held that humans *should* be motivated by a desire for pleasure and a desire against pain on a social level. And, at this point, Mill's philosophy is quite like Bentham's. However, a somewhat undemocratic weighing up of consequences of an action from only competent judges of an action is posited by Mill as a way of distinguishing between so-called higher pleasures and so-called lower pleasures.

For example, look at the dilemma of preparing for one's final undergraduate examinations or socialising with one's friends. The competent judge, who necessarily has experience of both, would choose the former, for it is a higher pleasure, according to Mill. The competent judge, who necessarily has experience of both, would not choose the latter, for it is a lower pleasure, according to Mill.

This is the idea of his Competent Judge and it is an element of his rule-utilitarianism, according to which it is the value of the consequences of following a particular rule that determines whether an action is what one (*morally*) ought to do or what one (*morally*) ought not to do.

In his *Utilitarianism*, he states that '[o]f two pleasures, if there be one to which all or almost all who have experience of both give a decided preference, irrespective

of any feeling of moral obligation to prefer it, that is the more desirable pleasure.'[22] Contra Bentham, happiness in the greatest happiness principle is, for Mill, not measured in terms of its quantity. Contra Bentham, happiness in the greatest happiness principle is, for Mill, measured in terms of its quality. It is not better to be a fool satisfied. It is better to be Socrates dissatisfied.[23]

Mill also highlights a public sphere of action, where other-regarding actions— e.g., those related to the virtue of justice—have large bearing on obligations to others, duties to others, and rights of others. He deemed this sphere relevant to morality. The public acts of murder and theft, for example, are considered 'properly immoral'[24], for him. They 'are fit objects of moral reprobation'[25], according to Mill. The state, he thought, had business intervening in such public acts. In relation to these actions, the state could not leave them be; in relation to the agents of the actions, the state could not let them do. Mill also highlights a private sphere of action, where self-regarding actions—e.g., those related to the virtues of courage, prudence, and temperance—have little bearing on obligations to others, duties to others, and rights of others. He deemed this sphere relevant to non-morality. The private acts of obstinacy, rashness, and self-conceit, for example, are considered 'not properly immoralities'[26], for him. They 'are only a subject of moral reprobation when they involve a breach of duty to others'[27], according to Mill. The state, he thought, had no business intervening in such private acts. In relation to these actions, the state could leave them be; in relation to the agents of the actions, the state could let them do. Colloquially, this *laissez-faire* approach can

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[22] John Stuart Mill, *Utilitarianism*, ed. by M. Warnock (London: Collins, 1962), p. 258.
[23] Ibid. p. 260.
[24] John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty*, in *Utilitarianism, On Liberty and Considerations on Representative Government*, ed. by H. B. Acton (London: J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd, 1972), p. 135.
[25] Ibid.
[26] Ibid.
[27] Ibid.

be translated as the 'leave it be' principle. Literally, this *laissez-faire* approach can be translated as the 'let them do' principle. In his *On Liberty*, he states that '[. . .] the only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilised community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others.'[28]

Overall, for Mill, actions are (as Anscombe would note) what *morally* ought to be done if their consequences look likely to promote *specific* hedonistic happiness both on an individual level and on a social level and actions are (as Anscombe would note) what *morally* ought not to be done if their consequences look likely to demote *specific* hedonistic happiness both on an individual level and on a social level. And, at this point, Mill's philosophy is quite unlike Bentham's. But, is Bentham's and/or Mill's pleasure-based utilitarianism a convincing secular-friendly *moral* authority?

Anscombe firstly identifies in the work of Bentham and Mill a problem in relation to pleasure. Anscombe secondly identifies in the work of Mill a problem in relation to action-description. On the issue of pleasure in Bentham's and Mill's work, she writes,

> [Their] point—about pleasure—seems to me a fatal objection from the very outset [. . .]. [The concept of pleasure] reduced Aristotle to sheer babble about 'the bloom on the cheek of youth' because, for good reasons, he wanted to make it out both identical with and different from the pleasurable activity [. . .]. One might adapt something Wittgenstein said about 'meaning' and say 'Pleasure cannot be an internal impression for no internal impression could have the consequences of pleasure.'[29]

Bentham and Mill, partly influenced by the epistemology of John Locke and David Hume Anscombe believes[30], consider pleasure just as some sort of internal impression and the reason for acting, but do not take pleasure as ever being identical with the action that one reasons ought to be done. So, for them, pleasure is primarily something

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28 Ibid., p. 73.
29 G. E. M. Anscombe, 'Modern Moral Philosophy', p. 27.
30 See, G. E. M. Anscombe, *Intention*, 2nd edn., p. 77.

going on internally in the subject that wants but is merely secondarily associated externally with the action that needs to be performed to get what is wanted. There is, therefore, in their work, a blindness to (what she sees as) the necessary inseparability of the concept of pleasure and the pleasurable act. Their writing is, moreover, without an account of the acts from which pleasure can be derived, which she says it essentially *does* need if it is to be considered credible. For, in their role as utilitarian, their work is dependent on an adequate analysis of what they, Bentham and Mill, define happiness in terms of: pleasure. And if, as Bentham and Mill think, pleasure is understood as being internal and private in this way, as being not identical with the pleasurable act, then, according to Anscombe, anything could be deemed pleasurable. Man would be portrayed as a living thing with blind animalistic responses to sensual promptings. And, as a result, conventional consensus on what is rationally pleasurable would be more difficultly achieved.

Anscombe, partly influenced by the ethics of Aristotle I believe[31], does not take pleasure just as some sort of internal impression and the reason for acting, but considers pleasure as ever being identical with the action that one reasons ought to be done. So, for her, pleasure is merely secondarily something going on internally in the subject that wants but is primarily associated externally with the action that needs to be performed to get what is wanted. There is, therefore, in her work, no blindness to (what she sees as) the necessary inseparability of the concept of pleasure and the pleasurable act. Her writing is, however, without an account of the acts from which pleasure can be derived, which it essentially *does not* need if it is to be considered credible. For, in her role as diagnostician, her work is not dependant on an adequate analysis of what they, Bentham and Mill, define happiness in terms of: pleasure. And

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[31] See, Chapter I, Section 1 of this thesis.

if, as Anscombe thinks, pleasure is understood as being external and public in this way, as being identical with the pleasurable act, then, according to Anscombe, anything could not be deemed pleasurable. Man would be portrayed as a living thing with right and reasonable responses to sensual promptings.[32] And, as a result, conventional consensus on what is rationally pleasurable would be more easily achieved. On the issue of action-description in Mill's work, she writes,

> Mill also, like Kant, fails to realise the necessity for stipulation as to relevant descriptions, if his theory is to have content. It did not occur to him that acts of murder and theft could be otherwise described. He holds that where a proposed action is of such a kind as to fall under some one principle established on grounds of utility, one must go by that; where it falls under none or several, the several suggesting contrary views of the action, the thing to do is to calculate particular consequences. But pretty well any action can be so described as to make it fall under a variety of principles of utility (as I shall say for short) if it falls under any.[33]

> Mill assumes, as we saw, that there is no question of calculating particular consequences of an action such as murder and theft; and we saw too that his position is stupid, because it is not at all clear how an action *can* fall under just one principle of utility.[34]

Anscombe, as we have previously seen, thought that Kant overlooked in his work the importance of adequate action-description. Anscombe, as we shall presently see, thinks that Mill overlooks in his work the importance of adequate action-description.

According to Kant, as Anscombe reads him, ethical actions can be so described as to make them fall under one principle established on grounds of duty. Anscombe correctly believes, however, that Kant's deontological principle (i.e., the categorical imperative) is a vague autonomous instruction that does not have, but does need, clarification on action-description if it is to be taken seriously. So, 'Lying is what one

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[32] This point about the difference between blind animalistic responses to sensual promptings from a part of man and right and reasonable responses to sensual promptings from the whole of man is made in relation to sexual intercourse appears at: G. E. M. Anscombe, 'You Can have Sex without Children: Christianity and the New Offer', in *Ethics, Religion and Politics: Collected Philosophical Papers of G. E. M. Anscombe*, III, p. 89.

[33] G. E. M. Anscombe, 'Modern Moral Philosophy', pp. 27-28.

[34] Ibid., p. 33.

morally ought not to do', for instance, is considered not sufficient. But, 'Lying in such-and-such circumstances is unjust' is considered necessary. The act of lying, furthermore, needed to be described within a setting (as: lying in such-and-such circumstances) and not as just 'lying', and Anscombe thought that Kantian ethics, because it does not have descriptions like this, lacked content and she rightly criticised him for this. According to Mill, as Anscombe reads him, moral actions, bar murder and bar theft, can be so described as to make them fall under one principle established on grounds of utility. Anscombe correctly believes, however, that Mill's utilitarian principle (i.e., his greatest happiness principle) is a vague autonomous instruction that does not have, but does need, clarification on action-description if it is to be taken seriously. So, 'Action X is what one *morally* ought not to do', for example, and 'Action Y is what one *morally* ought not to do', for instance, is considered not sufficient. But, 'Action X in such-and-such circumstances is unjust' and 'Action Y in such-and-such circumstances is unjust' is considered necessary. The acts of murder and theft, moreover, need to be described within a setting (as: murder in such-and-such circumstances and theft in such-and-such circumstances), and not as just 'murder' and 'theft', and Anscombe thinks that Millian ethics, because it does not have descriptions like this, lacks content and she rightly criticises him for this.

In response, so, to what Bentham and Mill have to say about the possibility of pleasure alone being the source of (what Anscombe calls) a *moral* 'ought' in matters ethical, Anscombe disagrees with them and thinks that it cannot be. For her, in accordance with her undeveloped natural normativity and necessity (as we have seen in the Introduction to this thesis and as we shall see in more detail in Chapter III) one ought to be virtuous (because being so is conducive to one's flourishing) regardless of the pleasure from being so and one ought not to be vicious (because being so is

detrimental to one's flourishing) regardless of the pleasure from being so. And, here, the terms 'ought' and 'ought not', which are ethical in nature, are supported by the force of an Aristotelian—but not an absolute—necessity. One ought to be virtuous because, in terms of one's function, or teleology, as a practically rational animal, it is normally necessary to be virtuous regardless of the pleasure from being so. But, it is not absolutely necessary for one to be functionally, or teleologically, as one ought to be. For, such absolute necessities require a contextually and temporally justifiable ethical arbiter to impose them. Ultimately, at this point, after the rejection of the idea that pleasure can be the source of a secular *moral* 'ought' in matters ethical by Anscombe, the authoritative *moral* force of the ethical term remains incoherent and impracticable outside the Hebrew-Christian ethic. It still has no place in secular ethics.

§2.4 ANSCOMBE ON G. E. MOORE AND HENRY SIDGWICK AND CONSEQUENCES ALONE BEING A *MORAL* AUTHORITY

In reaction to Anscombe's aforementioned comments about Benthamite ethics and Millian ethics, one might wonder why consequences alone could not be the source of a secular (what Anscombe calls) *moral* 'ought'—that is, one with a force suggestive of an absolute necessity—in matters ethical. If it could be convincingly shown that it can, then the authoritative *moral* force of this ethical term still might not yet have to be—as Anscombe suggests it needs to be for coherency and practicability purposes— jettisoned from ethics outside the Hebrew-Christian ethic. If it could not be convincingly shown that consequences alone can be the source of such a secular *moral* 'ought' in matters ethical, then the authoritative *moral* force of this ethical term still might have to be left as a falling victim to Anscombe's wielding of Ockham's razor and stay shaven from the face of non-religious ethics. She looks to G. E. Moore and

Henry Sidgwick for (presumably what she considers) the most influential offering on this question of consequences.

Let us look at the language—or the grammar—of Moore's relevant philosophy. G. E. Moore (1873–1958), born in London, England, was, like Sidgwick, a Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge (from 1898 until 1904), was, like Sidgwick, a teacher at Cambridge (from 1911 until 1939), and was, like Sidgwick, a Professor of Philosophy at Cambridge (from 1925). The importance of his work, inside academia, resulted in him being editor of the philosophical journal *Mind* (from 1921 until 1947) and resulted in him being appointed to the British Order of Merit (in 1951). The influence of his work, outside academia, resulted in The Bloomsbury Group—a collective of artists, philosophers, and writers, like E. M. Forster, Lytton Strachey, Clive Bell, Vanessa Bell, Duncan Grant, John Maynard Keynes, Leonard Woolf, and Virginia Woolf, all connected by the simplicity of Moore's idea in his *Principia Ethica* that the pleasures of human intercourse are intrinsically good and by the simplicity of Moore's idea in his *Principia Ethica* that the enjoyment of beautiful things is intrinsically good. He was also a student of Sidgwick, whom we shall look at below. On Moore, Anscombe writes,

> Bentham and Mill do not notice the difficulty of the concept 'pleasure'. They are often said to have gone wrong through committing [Moore's] [. . .] naturalistic fallacy; but this charge does not impress me, because I do not find accounts of it coherent.[35]

> There is a startling change that seems to have taken place between Mill and Moore [. . .]. In Moore and in subsequent academic moralists of England we find it taken to be pretty obvious that 'the right action' means the one that produces the best possible consequences [. . .].[36]

Moore thought that, linguistically, there are what can be called Is-statements of identity; for example, 'Bachelors are unmarried men'. In relation to this statement,

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[35] Ibid., p. 27.
[36] Ibid., p. 33.

'Bachelors' is identified with 'unmarried men' and 'Bachelors' and 'unmarried men' are, therefore, definitively associated. Moore also thought that, linguistically, there are what can be called Is-statements of predication; for example, 'Grass is green'. In relation to this statement, 'green' is predicated of (as opposed to being identified with) 'Grass' and, therefore, 'Grass' and 'green' are coincidentally (as opposed to being definitively) associated.

Moore held that if it is proposed by someone (like Bentham and Mill) that an Is-statement like 'Pleasure is good' is an Is-statement of identity, then that someone is committing the naturalistic fallacy by doing so. For, they are ignoring the fact that it is open to question 'Is "Pleasure" *really* identical with "good"?' in a way that 'Is "Bachelors" *really* identical with "unmarried men"?' is not. They incorrectly define, or identify, a non-natural property—e.g., good—as a natural thing—e.g., pleasure—according to him.

Moore also held that if it is proposed by someone (unlike Bentham and Mill) that an Is-statement like 'Pleasure is good' is an Is-statement of predication, then that someone is not committing the naturalistic fallacy by doing so. For, they are noticing the fact that it is open to question 'Is "Pleasure" *really* identical with "good"?' in a way that 'Is "Grass" *really* identical with "green"?' is. They correctly coincide or predicate (as opposed to define or identify) a non-natural property—e.g., good—with, or of, a natural thing—e.g., pleasure—according to him.

Thus, for Moore, goodness has to be considered an indefinable and unidentifiable non-natural property. Though, for Moore, goodness has to be considered a coincidental and predicative property of natural things. He states,

> Ethics aims at discovering what are those other properties belonging to all things which are good. But far too many philosophers have thought that when they named those other properties they were actually defining good; that these

properties, in fact, were simply not 'other', but absolutely and entirely the same with goodness. This view I propose to call the 'naturalistic fallacy'.[37]

Objects and states of affairs are, for Moore, ends in themselves. Their value is, therefore, intrinsical. Actions are, for Moore, means to ends. Their value is, therefore, instrumental. The concept of Good, for him, is intuited and has to do with objects and states of affairs. The concept of Duty, for him, is a disposition to act and has to do with the action that produces more good than any alternative. The concept of Right, for him, is a disposition to act and has to do with the action that produces no less good than any alternative. The concept of Virtue, for him, is a disposition to act and has to do with duty to do what is unpleasant and what is unpleasantly right to do. Duty and Right, here, do imply, for Moore, degrees of Good. Good, here, is intuited, for Moore.

And, aesthetic experiences (that is, experiences of beauty) and affectionate relationships (that is, relationships of love) are the highest degree of Good, he writes. And, on the highest degree of Good, he states,

> [I]t is the ultimate and fundamental truth of Moral Philosophy [. . .] [t]hat it is only for the sake of these things—in order that as much of them as possible may at some time exist—that any one can be justified in performing any public or private duty; that they are the *raison d'être* of virtue; that it is they [. . .] that form the rational ultimate end of human action and the sole criterion of social progress.'[38]

Hedonistic consequentialism is not the focus of his utilitarianism in moral philosophy. Non-hedonistic consequentialism is the focus of his utilitarianism in moral philosophy.

Overall, for Moore, one (as Anscombe would note) *morally* ought to seek and promote said ideal consequences and one (as Anscombe would note) *morally* ought not to shun and demote said ideal consequences. But, is Moore's consequentialism a

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[37] G. E. Moore, *Principia Ethica* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1903), section 10.
[38] Ibid. section 113.

convincing secular-friendly *moral* authority?

For Anscombe, as we have seen from the first quotation at the outset of this section, Moore's naturalistic fallacy is incoherent and unimpressive. But, unfortunately, there is no elaboration from her on this point. For Anscombe, as we have seen from the second quotation at the outset of this section, the startling change that seems to have taken place between Mill and Moore is that since Moore 'the right action' means the one that produces the best possible consequences. Fortunately, there is some elaboration from her on this point.

In Mill's writing, according to Anscombe, we see that the right action is the one that produces the best possible consequences but that there must be no question of calculating the consequences of *every* action to determine its value. For Mill, that is to say, it is necessary that some actions (e.g., murder and theft) must be absolutely prohibited; it is necessary that the value of some actions must not be determined by their consequences. In Moore's writing, according to Anscombe, we find that the right action is the one that produces the best possible consequences and that there must be a question of calculating the consequences of *every* action to determine its value. For Moore, that is to say, it is not possible that some actions (e.g., murder and theft) can be absolutely prohibited; it is not possible that the value of some actions cannot be determined by their consequences.

Moore argues that when those who are absolute prohibitors—like Mill, say— prohibit something absolutely, they are really alluding that no consequences of the action could have value that can outweigh the disvalue of its supposed intrinsic wrongness. And, here, he believes, they are weighing up consequences. Hence, they are necessarily consequentialists, for him. And, he contends that when those who are not absolute prohibitors—like Moore, say—prohibit nothing absolutely, they are

really alluding that consequences of any action could have value that can outweigh the disvalue of its supposed intrinsic wrongness. And, here, he believes, they are weighing up consequences. Hence, they are necessarily consequentialists, for him. Moore writes,

> [T]hose who say 'that the end will never justify the means', though they certainly imply that certain ways of acting would be always wrong, *whatever* advantages might be secured by them, yet, I think, would be inclined to deny that the advantages to be obtained by acting wrongly ever do *really* outweigh those to be obtained by acting rightly, if we take into account absolutely *all* the consequences of each course. Those, therefore, who hold that certain specific ways of acting are absolutely right, and others absolutely always wrong, do, I think, generally hold that the former do also, as a matter of fact, absolutely always produce the best results, and the latter never.[39]

And, this, it has to be said, really does challenge, in a compelling way, the absolutism that non-consequentialist Anscombe proposes. Indeed, Moore tries to show us that it is not possible that consequentialism can be off the table for us. And, it is easy to see how this position could test the resolve of the Anscombean insistent on her or his absolutistic non-consequentialism.

Anscombe argues that in non-consequentialism—like that of Aristotelian ethics, the Hebrew-Christian ethic, Butlerian ethics, Kantian ethics, and Millian ethics—there is present a distinction between duty and consequences; a distinction which non-consequentialists, like her, believe is important to ethics. The Aristotelian ethicist, as we have seen, can *feel* duty-bound to not do certain actions. The Hebrew-Christian ethicist, as we have seen, is duty-bound to not do certain actions. The Butlerian ethicist, as we have seen, is duty-bound to act conscientiously. The Kantian ethicist, as we have seen, is duty-bound to not lie, for example. The Millian ethicist, as we have seen, is duty-bound to not murder or steal, for example. And, she contends that in consequentialism—like that of Moorean ethics and Sidgwickean ethics—there

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[39] G. E. Moore, *Ethics*, ed. by William H. Shaw (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 92.

is absent a distinction between duty and consequences; a distinction which consequentialists, unlike her, believe is unimportant to ethics. Anscombe writes,

> Moore argued that everyone has to be a consequentialist—has to accept his analysis of rightness and wrongness of action—who has a moral view at all. For, he says, your action must have consequences, and if you say: they don't matter, such and such an action is wrong, what you *have* to mean is that the sum of their value is never such as to outweigh the sum of disvalue when this includes the intrinsic evil of the act. Moore says that anyone who thinks of ethics at all must think this [. . .]. If Moore were right, then the difference between a 'deontologist' and a 'teleologist' would be ill-expressed by contrasting the views so labelled: it would be a matter of including or not including the value or disvalue of consequences. Or, more seriously, the difference might be between people who think that the disvalue of an intrinsically wrong act is *eo ipso* so great that it could not be outweighed, and those who think no kind of act is in that sense intrinsically wrong.[40]

But, this, it has to be said, does not really challenge, in a compelling way, the non-absolutism that consequentialist Moore proposes. Indeed, Anscombe tries to show us that it is necessary that consequentialism must be off the table for us. But, it is not easy to see how this position could test the resolve of the Moorean insistent on her or his consequentialistic non-absolutism.

Let us look at the language—or the grammar—of Sidgwick's relevant philosophy. Henry Sidgwick (1838–1900), born in Yorkshire, England, received, in 1859, a fellowship from Trinity College, Cambridge, because of scholarly distinction that he had had whilst a student and resigned, in 1869, the fellowship from Trinity College, Cambridge, because of religious doubts that he had had whilst a teacher. He felt that he could not espouse a code of ethics with religious elements required for the

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[40] G. E. M. Anscombe, 'Two Moral Theologians', in *Faith in a Hard Ground: Essays on Religion, Philosophy and Ethics by G. E. M. Anscombe*, pp. 165-166. Anscombe prefers to use, here on this point, the terms 'deontologist' and 'teleologist'. I prefer to use, here on this point, the terms 'duty' and 'consequence'. The term 'teleologist', and the notion of teleology, strikes me as being more recognisable with Aristotelian virtue ethics and, so, it is not appropriate for the point that Anscombe is making. If one is born with the unhoned inclination to be courageous, then one has the potential to be courageous. If one has honed that inclination to be courageous, then one has actually become courageous. The movement from potentiality to actuality is teleological. The term 'consequence', and the notion of consequentialism, strikes me as being more recognisable with consequentialistic ethics and, so, it is appropriate for the point that Anscombe is making.

fellowship. He felt that he should establish the required foundation for a code of ethics without religious elements. The pinnacle of his project came, in 1874, with the first edition of *The Methods of Ethics*. The pinnacle of his profession came, in 1883, with the first secular Knightbridge Professorship of Philosophy. He was also a teacher of G. E. Moore, whom we have looked at above. On Sidgwick, Anscombe writes,

> If you notice the transition [between Mill and Moore] you will suspect that [the transition between the non-consequentialism of the former and the consequentialism of the latter] was made somewhere by someone; Sidgwick will come to mind as a likely name; and you will in fact find it going on, almost casually, in him. He is a rather dull author; and the important things in him occur in asides and footnotes and small bits of argument which are not concerned with his grand classification of the 'method of ethics'.[41]

> [T]he most important thing about Sidgwick was his definition of intention. He defines intention in such a way that one must be said to intend any foreseen consequences of one's voluntary action. This definition is obviously incorrect, and I dare say that no one would be found to defend it now. He uses it to put forward an ethical thesis which would now be accepted by many people: the thesis that it does not make any difference to a man's responsibility for something that he foresaw, that he felt no desire for it, either as an end or as a means to an end. Using the language of intention more correctly, and avoiding Sidgwick's faulty conception, we may state the thesis thus: it does not make any difference to a man's responsibility for an effect of his action which he can foresee, that he does not intend it.[42]

As far as responsibility for one's actions goes, Anscombe, contra Sidgwick, advocates a distinction between intended consequences and foreseen consequences and, so, holds the Principle of Side-Effects.[43] According to this principle, it cannot be permissible (and, so, it must be wrong) to do bad actions intending (and foreseeing) good effects. According to this principle, it can be permissible (and, so, it may or may not be right) to do good actions foreseeing (yet unintending) bad side-effects. As far as

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[41] Ibid., p. 34.
[42] Ibid., pp. 34-35.
[43] It is more accurate to say 'the Principle of Side-Effects' than it is to say 'the Doctrine of Double Effect', as Anscombe notes. It is more common to say 'the Doctrine of Double Effect' than it is to say 'the Principle of Side-Effects', as Anscombe notes. She writes how it is that 'Double Effect' is 'an unfortunate Latinism'. See, G. E. M. Anscombe, 'Action, Intention and "Double Effect"', in *Human Life, Action and Ethics: Essays by G. E. M. Anscombe*, p. 220. And, she writes how it is that 'Double Effect' is 'needlessly mystifying'. See, G. E. M. Anscombe, 'Murder and the Morality of Euthanasia', in *Human Life, Action and Ethics: Essays by G. E. M. Anscombe*, p. 274.

responsibility for one's actions goes, Sidgwick, contra Anscombe, snubs the distinction between intended consequences and foreseen consequences and, so, holds not the Principle of Side-Effects. Anscombe's focus is on the intrinsic value of action. Sidgwick's focus is on the consequences of action. He writes,

> [T]he distinction between 'motive' and 'intention' on ordinary language is not very precise: since we apply the term 'motive' to foreseen consequences of an act, so far as they are conceived to be objects of desire of the agent, or to the desire of such consequences: and when we speak of the intention of an act we usually, no doubt, have desired consequences in view. I think, however, that for the purposes of exact moral or jural discussion, it is best to include under the term 'intention' all the consequences of an act that are foreseen as certain or probable; since it will be admitted that we cannot evade responsibility for any foreseen bad consequences of our acts by the plea that we felt no desire for them, either for their own sake or as means to ulterior ends: such undesired accompaniments of the desired results of our volitions are clearly chosen or willed by us.[44]

Consider the various permutations of Anscombe's example of the withdrawal of financial support from family.[45] Firstly, intended and foreseen as a means to an end, I want to withdraw the financial support so as to prompt some other person to pay. Secondly, intended and foreseen as an end in itself, I simply want to withdraw the financial support. Thirdly, unintended yet foreseen, the withdrawal of financial support happens as a result of me going to prison. For Sidgwick, according to Anscombe, there would be no difference in my responsibility for the withdrawal of financial support between the first and second instance, which involve intention, and the third instance, which involves only foresight. For Anscombe, there is a difference.

As far as responsibility goes, Sidgwick would hold that I am responsible for what I intend and for what I unintend yet foresee. But, he would hold that I am not

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[44] Sidgwick, Henry, *The Methods of Ethics*, 7th edition (Indiana: Hackett Publishing Company, 1981), p. 202.
[45] This example of the withdrawal of financial support from my family appears in G. E. M. Anscombe, 'Modern Moral Philosophy', p. 35 and G. E. M. Anscombe, 'Glanville Williams' The Sanctity of Life and the Criminal Law: A Review', in *Human Life, Action and Ethics: Essays by G. E. M. Anscombe*, p. 247.

responsible for what I unintend and unforesee. As long as a case can be made that the consequence of my action is foreseen (i.e., expected) by me—whether it is, in the first instance, the prompting of some other person to pay or, in the second and third instance, the withdrawal of financial support—responsibility for it can be laid at my door, for him. If a case can be made that the consequence of my action is unforeseen (i.e., unexpected) by me, then no responsibility for it can be laid at my door, for him.

As far as responsibility goes, Anscombe would also hold that I am responsible for what I intend. But, she would hold that I may or may not be responsible for what I unintend yet foresee. As long as a case can be made that the consequence of my action is intended by me—whether it is, in the first instance, the prompting of some other person to pay or, in the second instance, the withdrawal of financial support—responsibility for it can be laid at my door, for her. If a case can be made that the consequence of my action is unintended by me—as in the third instance with the withdrawal of financial support—then responsibility for it may or may not be laid at my door, for her.[46]

Moreover, Anscombe would hold that it cannot be permissible (and, so, it must be unjust or wrong) to do bad actions intending (and foreseeing) good effects. So, for her, the withdrawal of the financial support so as to prompt some other person to pay

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[46] Of course, I could try to exculpate myself from the consequences of the withdrawal of financial support from my family by directing my intention away from the consequences, saying something like 'What I really mean to be doing is . . .'. But, for Anscombe, this is a (prevalent) misuse of the Principle of Side-Effects. She writes, '[E]ver since the seventeenth century a false and absurd conception of intention has prevailed, which derives from Cartesian psychology; according to this conception an intention is a secret mental act which is producible at will. In the event, theologians often treated the "direction of intention" as something that could be accomplished by telling oneself at the time of action "What I really mean to be doing is . . .". This tendency of thought has led to repeated condemnations from the Holy See from the seventeenth century to the present day: [. . .] at the present day the conception produced the doctrine of *coitus reservatus*, which is equivalent to the practice of withdrawal accompanied by an "intention" not to ejaculate; the ejaculation that then took place would be "accidental" and *praeter intentionem*.' See, G. E. M. Anscombe, 'Glanville Williams' The Sanctity of Life and the Criminal Law: A Review', in *Human Life, Action and Ethics: Essays by G. E. M. Anscombe*, pp. 247-248.

cannot be permissible (and, so, must be unjust or wrong). As a Hebrew-Christian ethicist, stealing is, of course, forbidden, for Anscombe. Rather than just focusing on the consequences of action, as Sidgwick does, she focuses on the intrinsic value of action. And, it is here that her devotion to the Hebrew-Christian ethic is most apparent. She writes,

> The prohibition of certain things simply in virtue of their description as such-and-such identifiable kinds of action, regardless of any further consequences, is certainly not the whole of the Hebrew-Christian ethic; but it is a noteworthy feature of it; and, if every academic philosopher since Sidgwick has written in such a way as to exclude this ethic, it would argue a certain provinciality of mind not to see this incompatibility as the most important fact about these philosophers [. . .].[47]

Consider the various permutations of Anscombe's example of the killing of civilians.[48] Firstly, intended and foreseen as a means to an end, I want to kill the civilians so as to end the war. Secondly, intended and foreseen as an end in itself, I simply want to kill the civilians. Thirdly, unintended yet foreseen, the killing of civilians happens as a result of me dropping a bomb. For Sidgwick, according to Anscombe, there would be no difference in my responsibility for the killing of civilians between the first and second instance, which involve intention, and the third instance, which involves only foresight. For Anscombe, there is a difference.

Regarding responsibility, Sidgwick would hold that I am responsible for what I intend and foresee and for what I unintend yet foresee. But, he would hold that I am not responsible for what I unintend and unforesee. As long as a case can be made that the consequence of my action is foreseen (i.e., expected) by me—whether it is, in the first instance, ending the war or, in the second and third instance, killing the civilians—responsibility for it can be laid at my door, for him. If a case can be made that the

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[47] G. E. M. Anscombe, 'Modern Moral Philosophy', p. 34.
[48] This example of the killing of civilians appears in the Introduction to this thesis and G. E. M. Anscombe, 'Mr Truman's Degree', pp. 62-71 and 'War and Murder', in *Ethics, Religion and Politics: Collected Philosophical Papers of G. E. M. Anscombe*, III, pp. 51-61.

consequence of my action is unforeseen (i.e., unexpected) by me, then no responsibility for my action can be laid at my door, for him.

Regarding responsibility, Anscombe would also hold that I am responsible for what I intend. But, she would hold that I may or may not be responsible for what I unintend yet foresee. As long as a case can be made that the consequence of my action is intended by me—whether it is, in the first instance, ending the war or, in the second instance, killing the civilians—responsibility for it can be laid at my door, for her. If a case can be made that the consequence of my action is unintended by me—as in the third instance with the killing of civilians—then responsibility for it may or may not be laid at my door, for her.[49]

Moreover, in keeping with the Principle of Side-Effects, Anscombe would hold that it cannot be permissible (and, so, it must be unjust or wrong) to do bad actions intending (and foreseeing) good effects. So, for her, the killing of civilians so as to end the war cannot be permissible (and, so, must be unjust or wrong). As a Hebrew-Christian ethicist, killing is, of course, forbidden, for Anscombe. Rather than just focusing on the consequences of action, as Sidgwick does, she focuses on the intrinsic value of action. And, it is here that her devotion to the Hebrew-Christian ethic is most apparent. She writes,

> [E]very one of the best known English academic moral philosophers has put out a philosophy according to which, e.g., it is not possible to hold that it cannot be right to kill the innocent as a means to any end whatsoever and that someone who thinks otherwise is in error [. . .]. Now this is a significant thing: for it

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[49] Of course, one could try to exculpate oneself from the consequences of the killing of civilians by directing one's intention away from the consequences, saying something like 'What I really mean to be doing is . . .'. But, for Anscombe, this is a (prevalent) misuse of the Principle of Side-Effects. She writes, 'This same doctrine is used to prevent any doubts about the obliteration bombing of a city. The devout Catholic bomber secures by a "direction of intention" that any shedding of innocent blood that occurs is "accidental". I know a Catholic boy who was puzzled at being told by his schoolmaster that it was an *accident* that the people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki were there to be killed; in fact, however absurd it seems, such thoughts are common among priests who know that they are forbidden by the divine law to justify the direct killing of the innocent.' See, G. E. M. Anscombe, 'War and Murder', pp. 58-59.

means that all these philosophers are quite incompatible with the Hebrew-Christian ethic.[50]

It is worth adding that, for Anscombe, as touched on earlier, there are clear-cut cases in ethics where actions distinctly describe the hard core of concepts (e.g., 'Action X' rather than 'Action X in such-and-such circumstances'; 'Killing' rather than 'Killing in such-and-such circumstances'; 'Stealing' rather than 'Stealing in such-and-such circumstances'). And, if I am an advocate of Aristotelian ethics or a devotee of the Hebrew-Christian ethic, then I will, she holds, rarely have to stop and think about whether these actions are unjust or *morally* wrong, respectively, because, for me, this is a judgement that is always based on these actions' intrinsic value. For me—as an Aristotelian ethicist or a Hebrew-Christian ethicist—what is a clear-cut case is a standard derived from absolutism, which comes from a habitually formed character for the Aristotelian ethicist or God for the Hebrew-Christian ethicist. Moreover, because these standards are not, as Anscombe observes, dependent on convention, they can, she interestingly suggests, be a source of support for social revolution. Thus, these philosophies possess a certain profundity, for her. But, if I am a champion of consequentialism, then, as per my philosophy, I will, she holds, often have to stop and think about whether these actions are something I should do or something I should not do because, for me, this is a judgement that is always based on these actions' consequences. For me—as a consequentialist—what is a clear-cut case is a standard derived from convention, which comes not from a habitually formed character or God. Moreover, because these standards are, as Anscombe observes, dependent on convention, they cannot, she interestingly suggests, provide support for social revolution. Thus, this philosophy possesses a certain shallowness, for her. She writes,

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[50] G. E. M. Anscombe, 'Modern Moral Philosophy', pp. 33-34.

> It is a necessary feature of consequentialism that it is a shallow philosophy [. . .]. And it has in fact been the mark of all these philosophers that they have been extremely conventional; they have nothing in them by which to revolt against the conventional standards of their sort of people; it is impossible that they should be profound.[51]

It is worth adding that, for Anscombe, as touched on earlier, there are borderline cases in ethics where actions indistinctly fall within the penumbra that surrounds the hard core of concepts (e.g., 'Action X in such-and-such circumstances' rather than 'Action X'; 'Killing in such-and-such circumstances' rather than 'Killing'; 'Stealing in such-and-such-circumstances' rather than 'Stealing'). And, if I am an advocate of Aristotelian ethics or a devotee of the Hebrew-Christian ethic, then, I will, she holds, sometimes have to stop and think about whether these actions are just or unjust or *morally* right or *morally* wrong, respectively. For me—as an Aristotelian ethicist or a Hebrew-Christian ethicist—I will decide whether doing so-and-so in such-and-such circumstances is just or unjust or *morally* right or *morally* wrong by asking 'Would it be permissible to do so-and-so in such-and-such circumstances?' or 'Would it not be permissible to do so-and-so in such-and-such circumstances?' For the Aristotelian ethicist and the Hebrew-Christian ethicist, the action described in a borderline case can, says Anscombe, stretch a point on the circumference of the action described in a clear-cut case but it cannot destroy its centre, which is to say, it seems, that, for the Aristotelian ethicist and Hebrew-Christian ethicist, as a rule, said action must be unjust and *morally* wrong and, so, off the table as a course of action. But, it may *sometimes* be judged on its consequences. But, if I am a champion of consequentialism, then, I will, she holds, often have to stop and think about whether these actions are something I should do or something I should not do. For me—as a consequentialist—I will not decide whether doing so-and-so in such-and-such circumstances is something I should

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[51] Ibid. p. 36.

do or something I should not do by asking 'Would it be permissible to do so-and-so in such-and-such circumstances?' or 'Would it not be permissible to do so-and-so in such-and-such circumstances?' For the consequentialist, the action described in a borderline case can, says Anscombe, stretch a point on the circumference of the action described in a clear-cut case and it can destroy its centre, which is to say, it seems, that, for the consequentialist, as a rule, said action may be either *morally* right and, so, on the table as a course of action or *morally* wrong and, so, off the table as a course of action. But, it must *always* be judged on its consequences. She writes,

> [I]f a procedure *is* one of judicially punishing a man for what he is clearly understood not to have done, there can be absolutely no argument about the description of this as unjust. No circumstances, and no expected consequences, which do *not* modify the description of the procedure as one of judicially punishing a man for what he is known not to have done can modify the description of it as unjust. Someone who attempted to dispute this would only be pretending not to know what 'unjust' means: for this is a paradigm case of injustice. And here we see the superiority of the term 'unjust' over the terms 'morally right' and 'morally wrong'. For in the context of English moral philosophy since Sidgwick it appears legitimate to discuss whether it *might* be 'morally right' in some circumstances to adopt that procedure; but it cannot be argued that the procedure would in any circumstances be just.[52]

In response, so, to what Moore and Sidgwick have to say about the possibility of consequences alone being the source of (what Anscombe calls) a *moral* 'ought' in matters ethical, Anscombe disagrees with them and thinks that they cannot be. For her, in accordance with her undeveloped natural normativity and necessity (as we have seen in the Introduction to this thesis and as we shall see in more detail in Chapter III) one ought to be virtuous (because being so is conducive to one's flourishing) regardless of the consequences of being so and one ought not to be vicious (because being so is detrimental to one's flourishing) regardless of the consequences of being so. And, here, the terms 'ought' and 'ought not', which are ethical in nature, are

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[52] G. E. M. Anscombe, 'Modern Moral Philosophy', p. 39.

supported by the force of an Aristotelian—but not an absolute—necessity. One ought

to be virtuous because, in terms of one's function, or teleology, as a practically rational

animal, it is normally necessary to be virtuous. But, it is not absolutely necessary for

one to be functionally, or teleologically, as one ought to be. For, such absolute

necessities require a contextually and temporally justifiable ethical arbiter to impose

them. Ultimately, at this point, after the rejection of the idea that consequences can be

the source of a secular *moral* 'ought' in matters ethical by Anscombe, the authoritative

moral force of the ethical term remains incoherent and impracticable outside the

Hebrew-Christian ethic. It still has no place in secular ethics.

In the ethics of Butler, Kant, Bentham and Mill, and Moore and Sidgwick,

which can be advocated outside a religious framework, we do find, following

Anscombe, explicitly or implicitly, a contextually and temporally inappropriate *moral*

force in ethical terminology. In the ethics of the Hebrew-Christian ethic, which must

be advocated inside a religious framework, we do find, following Anscombe,

explicitly, a contextually and temporally appropriate *moral* force in ethical

terminology. In the ethics of Aristotle, which can be advocated outside a religious

framework, we do not find, following Anscombe, explicitly or implicitly either a

contextually and temporally inappropriate *moral* force or a contextually and

temporally appropriate *moral* force in ethical terminology. And, she writes how, in

modern moral philosophy,

> [i]t would be a great improvement if, instead of 'morally wrong', one always
> named a genus such as 'untruthful', 'unchaste', 'unjust'. We should no longer
> ask whether doing something was 'wrong', passing directly from some
> description of an action to this notion; we should ask whether, e.g., it was
> unjust; and the answer would sometimes be clear at once.[53]

In the present chapter, we have seen how Anscombe takes on the ethical theories

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[53] Ibid.

prevalent in her day that she thinks confuse the path back to what is for her the only coherent and practicable ethics outside a religious context: an Aristotelian virtue-based one. Rather than employing the term 'moral' in the way that it is used in Aristotelian ethics (i.e., in relation to virtues like courage, justice, prudence, and temperance, which are called moral virtues, and not in relation to virtues like philosophical knowledge and practical knowledge, which are called intellectual virtues), the modern ethics of her time (wittingly or unwittingly) employ the ethical terms 'ought' and 'ought not', with a *moral* force that is only contextually and temporally justifiable where and when God is deemed the absolute source of ethics. I considered her take on the relevant philosophy of Joseph Butler and what he had to say about conscience being a *moral* authority, Immanuel Kant and what he had to say about reason being a *moral* authority, Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill and what they had to say about pleasure being a *moral* authority, and G. E. Moore and Henry Sidgwick and what they had to say about consequences being a *moral* authority. After looking at how Anscombe questioned, and rejected, their use of the ethical concepts 'ought' and 'ought not', it will be appropriate to consider next, in Chapter III, whether the David Hume-influenced and somewhat Aristotelian alternative to house these ethical terms that she suggests—i.e., natural normativity and necessity—is ultimately suitable.

CHAPTER III

ANSCOMBE'S NON-RELIGIOUS NOTIONS OF 'OUGHT' AND FLOURISHING

[Hume shows] that no content [can] be found in the notion 'morally ought' [. . .]. [But, our present day ethicists] try to find an alternative (very fishy) content and to retain the psychological force of the term. It would be most reasonable to drop it. It has no reasonable sense outside a law conception of ethics; they are not going to maintain such a conception; and you can do ethics without it, as is shown in the example of Aristotle.[1]

§3.1 ANSCOMBE ON DAVID HUME AND DERIVING 'OUGHT' FROM 'IS'

In reaction to Anscombe's aforementioned comments about Aristotelian ethics, the Hebrew-Christian ethic, Butlerian ethics, Kantian ethics, Benthamite and Millian ethics, and Moorean and Sidgwickean ethics, one might wonder whether there can be a secular (what Anscombe calls) *moral* 'ought'—that is, one with a force suggestive of an absolute necessity—in matters ethical. If it could be convincingly shown that there can, then the authoritative *moral* force of this ethical term still might not yet have to be—as Anscombe suggests it needs to be for coherency and practicability purposes—jettisoned from ethics outside the Hebrew-Christian ethic. If it could not be convincingly shown that there can be such a secular *moral* 'ought' in matters ethical, then the authoritative *moral* force of this ethical term still might have to be left as a falling victim to Anscombe's wielding of Ockham's razor and stay shaven from the face of non-religious ethics. She looks to David Hume for (presumably what she considers) the most influential offering on this question.

Let us look at the language—or the grammar—of Hume's relevant philosophy. David Hume (1711–1776), born in Edinburgh, Scotland, was an empiricist, essayist,

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[1] G. E. M. Anscombe, 'Modern Moral Philosophy', pp. 32-33.

sceptic, and seculariser. Early in life, the influence of classical Ciceronian philosophy on him replaced the influence of familial Presbyterian religion on him. His philosophical and irreligious inclinations resulted in the publication in 1739–1740 of his *A Treatise of Human Nature*, which, Hume noted, 'fell *dead-born* from the press, without reaching such distinction, as even to excite a murmur among the zealots'[2], the publication in 1751 of ethical argument from the *Treatise* in his *Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*, and the publication in 1748 of epistemological argument from the *Treatise* in his *Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, which, Kant noted, 'interrupted [Kant's] dogmatic slumber and gave [Kant's] investigations in the field of speculative philosophy a completely different direction.'[3] His philosophical and irreligious inclinations resulted in him being prevented from selection to Chair of Philosophy in Edinburgh and him being prevented from selection to Chair of Philosophy in Glasgow.

Epistemologically, for Hume, there are, on the one hand, what he calls relations of ideas, which are expressed by sentences whose negation results in self-contradiction, whose sentences are *a priori*, whose sentences are true by definition, and whose sentences are necessarily true (e.g., the Is-statement 'It is the case that all bachelors are unmarried men'). We can also name them analytic propositions. They are, he suggests, not descriptions of anything in reality. They provide information about the words. Epistemologically, for Hume, on the other hand, there are what he calls matters of fact, which are expressed by sentences whose negation leads not to self-contradiction, whose sentences are *a posteriori*, whose sentences are not true by definition, and whose sentences are not necessarily true (e.g., the Is-statement 'It is

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[2] David Hume, 'My Own Life', in *The Philosophical Works of David Hume*, ed. by T. H. Green and T. H. Grose (London: Longman Green, 1875).
[3] Immanuel Kant, *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics*, trans. by Paul Carus, rev. by Lewis White Beck (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merril, 1950), Preface.

the case that infants are inherently vulnerable'). We can also name them synthetic

propositions. They are, he suggests, descriptions of everything in reality. They provide

information about the world. He felt that holding the rationalistic view that one cannot

have correct descriptions of reality exclusively from sense experience is to have a life-

denying and inaccurate picture of human nature. And, ethically speaking, he notes that

it is those who hold such a view that deem it possible to logically derive ethical claims

about what is *morally* right and wrong or about how one *morally* ought to act and

ought not to act from non-ethical claims such as (what the orthodoxy of his day

propose to be) self-evident axioms about the being of a God or about human affairs.

He felt that holding the empirical view that one cannot have correct descriptions of

reality exclusive of sense experience is to have a life-affirming and accurate picture of

human nature. But, ethically speaking, he notes that it is those who hold such a view

that deem it not possible to logically derive ethical claims about what is *morally* right

and wrong or about how one *morally* ought to act and ought not to act from non-ethical

claims such as (what the orthodoxy of his day propose to be) self-evident axioms about

the being of a God or about human affairs. He writes,

> In every system of morality, which I have hitherto met with, I have always remark'd, that the author proceeds for some time in the ordinary [i.e., the philosophical] way of reasoning, and establishes the being of a God, or makes observations concerning human affairs; when of a sudden I am surpriz'd to find, that instead of the usual copulations of propositions, *is*, and *is not*, I meet with no proposition that is not connected with an *ought*, or an *ought not*. This change is imperceptible; but is however of the last consequence. For as this *ought* or, *ought not*, expresses some new relation or affirmation, 'tis necessary that it shou'd be observ'd and explain'd; and at the same time that a reason should be given, for what altogether seems inconceivable, how this new relation can be a deduction from others, which are entirely different from it [. . .]. I am persuaded, that a small attention [to this point] would subvert all the vulgar systems of morality, and let us see, that the distinction of vice and virtue is not [. . .] perceiv'd by reason.[4]

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[4] David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, ed. by L. A. Selby Bigge and P. H. Nidditch (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), III. 1. 1.

A simple argument like 'Bob is a bachelor; therefore Bob is unmarried' *is not* a logically valid argument, because in a logically valid argument the non-logical content of the conclusion (e.g., 'unmarried') does have to be present in the premises, and it is not, here. The *meaning* of the non-logical words in the premises and the conclusion are not important. A simple argument like 'Bob is a bachelor; therefore Bob is unmarried' *is* an analytically valid argument, because in an analytically valid argument, the *meaning* of the non-logical words in the premises and the conclusion are important. The non-logical content of the conclusion (e.g., 'unmarried') does not have to be present in the premises, and it is not, here. So, what is necessary to logically derive the conclusion 'Bob is unmarried' from the premise 'Bob is a bachelor' is the addition of an extra premise, or the addition of what Charles Pigden calls an analytic bridge principle[5], 'All bachelors are unmarried men'. So, the argument 'Bob is a bachelor; all bachelors are unmarried men; therefore, Bob is unmarried' is both logically valid and analytically valid.

If Hume's thought is that ethical claims about what is 'good' or about how one 'ought' to act cannot be derived from non-ethical claims by logic alone, then this does not mean that, for him, there can be no analytic bridge principles linking said claims. And, if there can be analytic bridge principles linking non-ethical claims and ethical claims, then, dissimilar to what Moore believes as we have seen in the previous chapter, these ethical terms must be definable. This *is* what Hume thinks. If Hume's thought was that ethical claims about what is 'good' or about how one 'ought' to act cannot be derived from non-ethical claims by logic and analytic bridge principles, then this does mean that, for him, there can be no analytic bridge principles linking said claims. And, if there can be no analytic bridge principles linking non-ethical claims

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[5] Charles Pigden, 'Hume on Is and Ought', in *Philosophy Now*, Issue 83 (2011).

and ethical claims, then, similar to what Moore believes as we have seen in the previous chapter, these ethical terms must be indefinable, here. This *is not* what Hume thinks. For him, virtue can be defined in terms of our natural response, or disposition, or inclination, or ethical sense, to approve of it at our informed and unbiased best. This is an ethical truth that is made true by a natural fact about what human beings are disposed to approve of. For him, vice can be defined in terms of our natural response, or disposition, or inclination, or ethical sense, to disapprove of it at our informed and unbiased best. This is an ethical truth that is made true by a natural fact about what human beings are inclined to disapprove of. So, Anscombe is not quite right when she writes that 'Hume defines "truth" in such a way as to exclude ethical judgements from it, and professes that he has proved that they are so excluded.'[6] He writes,

> The hypothesis which we embrace is plain. It maintains, that morality is determined by sentiment. It defines virtue to be *whatever mental action or quality gives to a spectator the pleasing sentiment of approbation*; and vice the contrary. We then proceed to examine a plain matter of fact, to wit, what actions have this influence.[7]

From the fact that it *is* the case that infants are inherently vulnerable, for example, the evaluation that they *ought* to be cared for does not logically follow. Furthermore, for Hume, because what I value is determined by sentiment rather than reason, '[t]is not contrary to reason to prefer the destruction of the whole world to the scratching of my finger'[8]. Sentiment, for Hume, establishes the end-goal of action—to do something— and, so, it is necessarily practical, if you will, serving to produce and prevent action. This sentiment can be expressed in the following way, for example: I want to keep our promise; I want to square our debt; I want to save money; I want to get a job; etc.

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[6] G. E. M. Anscombe, 'Modern Moral Philosophy', p. 27.
[7] David Hume, *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*, in *Enquiries Concerning Human Understanding and Concerning the Principles of Morals*, ed. by L. A. Selby-Bigge and P. H. Nidditch (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), Appendix I, p. 289.
[8] David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, ed. by L. A. Selby Bigge and P. H. Nidditch, II. 3. 3.

Reason, for Hume, establishes the means to the end-goal of action—how to do something—and, so, it is necessarily philosophical, if you will, serving to provide hypothetical imperatives. This reason can be expressed in the following way, for example: If I want to keep our promise, then I ought to square our debt; If I want to square our debt, then I ought to save money; If I want to save money, then I ought to get a job; etc. What I ought to do is not determined by reason, for Hume. What I ought to do is determined by sentiment, for Hume. Morality is not, as Kant thought, necessarily a system of reason-driven categorical imperatives. Morality is, Hume thought, necessarily a system of sentiment-driven hypothetical imperatives. He writes, 'Reason is, and ought only to be the slave of the passions and can never pretend to any other office than to serve and obey them'[9]. So, Anscombe is quite right when she writes that '[Hume] also implicitly defines "passion" in such a way that aiming at anything is having a passion.'[10]

Hume's *Treatise of Human Nature* dares to be subversively profound. Anscombe's 'Modern Moral Philosophy', in a similar way to Foot's *Natural Goodness*, delves into the supposed profundity. She writes, '[Hume's] objection to passing from "is" to "ought" would apply equally to passing from "is" to "owes" or from "is" to "needs".[11]

According to Hume, as we have seen, the transition from Is-statements to Ought-statements cannot be made by logic alone. According to Anscombe, as we shall see, the transition from Is-statements to Ought-statements can, when it is related to a transition from Is-statements to Owes-statements (simply to what she calls a transition from facts that are more brute to facts that are less brute, respectively[12]), be justifiable

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[9] Ibid., II. 3. 3.
[10] G. E. M. Anscombe, 'Modern Moral Philosophy', p. 27.
[11] Ibid.
[12] She calls them brute facts.

but cannot be logical[13] and can, when it is related to a transition from Is-statements to Needs-statements (*similarly* to what she calls a transition from facts that are more brute to facts that are less brute[14]), be logical[15].[16]

§3.2 'IS' TO 'OWES' AND BRUTE FACTS

Firstly, concerning the transition from Is-statements to Owes-statements, an Is-statement like 'It is the case that you lent me money' is, if we are to follow Anscombe, factually brute relative to an Owes-statement like 'I owe you money'. Collectively, they are seen as descriptions that are brute facts, albeit with the former being more brute and the latter being less brute. Additionally, an Is-statement like 'It is the case that you wrote me a cheque' could be factually brute relative to the Is-statement 'It is the case that you lent me money'. Together, they are descriptions that could be brute facts.

And, an Is-statement like 'It is the case that I promised you repayment' is, if we are to follow Anscombe, factually brute relative to an Owes-statement like 'I owe you money'. Collectively, they are seen as descriptions that are brute facts, albeit with the former being more brute and the latter being less brute. Additionally, an Is-statement like 'It is the case that I shook your hand' could be factually brute relative

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[13] G. E. M. Anscombe, 'Modern Moral Philosophy', pp. 28-29.

[14] I call them brutish facts.

[15] G. E. M. Anscombe, 'Modern Moral Philosophy', p. 31.

[16] Anscombe writes, '[T]he relation of "relative bruteness" is a complicated one. To mention a few points: if xyz is a set of facts brute relative to a description A, then xyz is a set out of a range some set among which holds if A holds; but the holding of some set among these does not necessarily entail A, because exceptional circumstances can always make a difference; and what are exceptional circumstances relatively to A can generally only be explained by giving a few diverse examples, and *no* theoretically adequate provision can be made for exceptional circumstances, since a further special context can theoretically always be imagined that would reinterpret any special context. Further, though in normal circumstances, xyz would be justification for A, that is not to say that A just comes to the same as "xyz"; and also there is apt to be an institutional context which gives its point to the description A, of which institution A is of course not itself a description. (For example, the statement that I give someone a shilling is not a description of the institution of money or of the currency of this country.)' See, ibid., p. 28.

to the Is-statement 'It is the case that I promised you repayment'. Together, they too are descriptions that could be brute facts. But, why are these Is-statements and Owes-statements brute relative?

Owes-statements can, says Anscombe, *justifiably* follow from Is-statements when practically normal circumstances do arise in, and cannot, says Anscombe, *logically* follow from Is-statements when theoretically exceptional circumstances could arise in, the custom or 'institutional context'[17] in question. In the abovementioned example it is lending and promising. Firstly, in normal circumstances: if you write me the cheque, then you have lent me the money and I do owe you the money and, so, for reasons from within the custom or institutional context, I ought to give you the money; in normal circumstances, if I shake your hand to seal the deal, then I have promised you the repayment and I do owe you the money and, so, for reasons from within the custom or institutional context, I ought to give you the money. Secondly, in exceptional circumstances: if you write me the cheque but it is taken from you before it is given to me, then, for reasons from within the custom or institutional context, you have not lent me the money and I do not owe you the money and, so, I ought not to give you the money; if I shake your hand to seal the deal but we are acting in a play, then, for reasons from within the custom or institutional context, I have not promised you the repayment and I do not owe you the money and, so, I ought not to give you the money.

So, brute facts between Is-statements and Owes-statements do show, Anscombe rightly thinks, that there can be a justifiable connection between Is-statements and Ought-statements, between facts and values, from within the

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[17] Ibid. The importance of the 'institutional context' is elsewhere important for Anscombe. See, G. E. M. Anscombe, 'On Promising and its Justice, and Whether it Need be Respected *in Foro Interno*', pp. 10-21.

abovementioned context of a custom or institution like lending and promising. Brute facts between Is-statements and Owes-statements do not show, Anscombe rightly thinks, that there can be a logical connection between Is-statements and Ought-statements, between facts and values, from within the context of a custom or institution like lending and promising. And, in relation to a logical connection between Is-statements and Ought-statements, here, an Is-Ought gap seems appropriate. Anscombe writes,

> [T]hough it would be ludicrous to pretend that there can be *no* such thing as a transition from, e.g., 'is' to 'owes', the character of the transition is in fact rather interesting and comes to light as a result of reflecting on Hume's arguments.[18]

Anscombe elsewhere observes that we *make up* customs or institutions, like lending and promising, using language and the modals 'You *cannot* do that', 'You *must* do that', etc., where these utterances are supported by the force of absolute necessities and are *like* that of a law (as seen in the Hebrew-Christian ethic). But, coming from *within* these social practices, they—and the obligation involved—are not particularly ethical. They *get* these social practices off the ground, so to speak. For, they express engagement *in* them. Anscombe elsewhere remarks that we *take up* customs or institutions, like lending and promising, using language and the modal 'You *must* do that', or the Ought-statement 'You *ought* to do that', where these utterances are supported by the force of Aristotelian necessities and are *unlike* that of a law (as seen in the Hebrew-Christian ethic). And, coming from *without* these social practices, they—and the obligation involved—are particularly ethical. They *keep* these social practices off the ground, so to speak. For, they express engagement *with* them.[19] On

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[18] G. E. M. Anscombe, 'Modern Moral Philosophy', pp. 28-29. Emphasis my own. And for more on 'the character of the transition' see, G. E. M. Anscombe, 'On Brute Facts', in *Ethics, Religion and Politics: Collected Philosophical Papers of G. E. M. Anscombe*, III, pp. 22-25.

[19] See, G. E. M. Anscombe, 'Rules, Rights and Promises', pp. 100-102 and G. E. M. Anscombe, 'Source of the Authority of the State', pp. 138-139, 141, and 142-145.

this point, in *The Philosophy of Elizabeth Anscombe*, Teichmann writes,

> [O]bligation, properly speaking, arises from either law or custom; in the first case, there must be a lawgiver with power to enforce the laws, and in the second case, there must be a society in which the modals 'cannot', 'may', etc. have the sort of role we have described. There will be a further question, as to whether the law or custom is good for human beings, whether there is an Aristotelian need for it; if the answer to this question is positive, we may speak of [. . .] what is *just*.'[20]

Ultimately, Anscombe cautions that whether or not *I* do give someone (even myself), or something, what is, for example, *owed* to them (or owed to me), or owed to it, will depend on whether I want to act justly and be just or I want to act unjustly and be unjust. Thus, just as she suggests that, from within the context of a custom or institution like lending and promising, there is no logical connection between Is-statements and Owes-statements (and on this she is assuredly right), she also suggests that, from within and from without the context of a custom or institution like lending and promising, there is no logical connection between Is-statements to Owes-statements and my behaviour. But, just as she suggests that, from within the context of a custom or institution like lending and promising, there is a justifiable connection between Is-statements and Owes-statements (and on this she is assuredly right), she would, I think, also suggest that, from within and from without the context of a custom or institution like lending and promising, there is a justifiable connection between Is-statements to Owes-statements and my behaviour. In particular, from without the context of a custom or institution like lending and promising, I am justified in giving

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[20] Teichmann writes, '[. . .] we may speak of "moral obligation", or better still, of what is just.' Including the first part of this disjunction is confusing considering Anscombe is trying to turn her focus from contextually and temporally inappropriate *moral* concepts like *moral* rightness or *moral* wrongness and the *moral* 'ought' used in the modern ethics of her time. Therefore, based, at least, on my reading of Anscombe's material, it makes little sense to include it. So, I exclude it in the main document. Including the second part of this disjunction is not confusing because Anscombe is trying to turn her focus to *virtue* concepts like just or unjust and the 'ought' used in Aristotelian virtue ethics. Therefore, based, at least, on my reading of Anscombe's material, it makes lots of sense to include it. So, I include it in the main document. See, Roger Teichmann, *The Philosophy of Elizabeth Anscombe*, p. 110.

what is owed because in doing so I will be acting on a demand of virtue (justice, in particular) and this is as good a reason as any to affect my behaviour. In answer to the question from without the context of a custom or institution like lending and promising 'Why did you give what was owed?', the reply 'I wanted to act justly' or 'I wanted to be just' is surely rationally justifiable. She writes,

> That I owe [a] grocer such-and-such a sum would be one of a set of facts which would be 'brute' in relation to the description 'I am a bilker.' 'Bilking' is of course a species of 'dishonesty' or 'injustice'. (Naturally the consideration will not have any effect on my actions unless I want to commit or avoid acts of injustice) [. . .]. And no amount of truth as to what *is* the case could possibly have a logical claim to have influence on your actions. (It is not judgement as such that set us in motion; but our judgement on how to get or do something we *want*.)[21]

§3.3 'IS' TO 'NEEDS' AND BRUTISH FACTS

Secondly, concerning the transition from Is-statements to Needs-statements, an Is-statement like 'It is the case that plants are hydrotropic' is, if we follow Anscombe, brutishly relative to a Needs-statement like 'Plants need water to flourish'. Together, they can be seen as descriptions that are brutish facts, albeit with the former being more brutish and the latter being less brutish. Additionally, an Is-statement like 'It is the case that plants go through cycles of transpiration' could be brutishly relative to the Is-statement 'It is the case that plants are hydrotropic'. Collectively, they are descriptions that could be brutish facts.

And, an Is-statement like 'It is the case that plants are phototropic' is, if we follow Anscombe, brutishly relative to a Needs-statement like 'Plants need light to flourish'. Together, they can be seen as descriptions that are brutish facts, albeit with the former being more brutish and the latter being less brutish. Additionally, an Is-

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[21] G. E. M. Anscombe, 'Modern Moral Philosophy', pp. 29 and 31.

statement like 'It is the case that plants go through cycles of photosynthesis' could be brutishly relative to the Is-statement 'It is the case that plants are phototropic'. Collectively, they too are descriptions that could be brutish facts. But, why are these Is-statements and Needs-statements brutishly relative?

Needs-statements can, suggests Anscombe (and Foot will later agree), *logically* follow from Is-statements when naturally normal circumstances do surround, and when theoretically exceptional circumstances could surround, 'the characteristics of an organism [and] the environment that it needs'[22] to flourish. In the abovementioned examples, it is hydrotropism of plants and their needing water and phototropism of plants and their needing light. Firstly, in normal circumstances: if this plant can, for reasons pertaining to either the organism itself or its environment, go through cycles of transpiration, then, regardless of my sentiments towards this plant, it can be said that this plant is hydrotropic and, so, that this plant needs water and that this plant ought to have water (here, 'this plant needs water', though it is not an analytic statement, is the equivalent of an analytic bridge principle, as mentioned above, between the Is-statement and the Ought-statement); if this plant can, for reasons pertaining to either the organism itself or its environment, go through cycles of photosynthesis, then, regardless of my sentiments towards this plant, it can be said that this plant is phototropic and, so, that this plant needs light and that this plant ought to have light (here, 'this plant needs light', though it is not an analytic statement, is the equivalent of an analytic bridge principle between the Is-statement and the Ought-statement). Secondly, in exceptional circumstances: if this plant cannot, for reasons pertaining to either the organism itself or its environment, go through cycles of

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[22] Ibid., p. 31. The importance of the 'characteristics of an organism and the environment that it needs' is elsewhere important for Foot. See, Philippa Foot, *Natural Goodness*.

transpiration, then, respectively, either it cannot be said or it can be said that this plant is hydrotropic but, nevertheless, that this plant needs water and that this plant ought to have water, regardless of what my sentiments towards this plant are (here, 'this plant needs water', while not being an analytic bridge principle, bridges the gap between the Is-statement and the Ought-statement); if this plant cannot, for reasons pertaining to either the organism itself or its environment, go through cycles of photosynthesis, then, respectively, either it cannot be said or it can be said that this plant is phototropic but, nevertheless, that this plant needs light and that this plant ought to have light, regardless of what my sentiments towards this plant are (here, 'this plants needs light', while not being an analytic bridge principle, bridges the gap between the Is-statement and the Ought-statement).

Brutish facts between Is-statements and Needs-statements do show, I think (and I think Anscombe would concur and I know Foot would concur, as we will later see) that there can be a logical connection between Is-statements and Ought-statements, between facts and values, as explained in the abovementioned context of an organism and its environment. And, in relation to a logical connection between Is-statements and Needs-statements, here, an Is-Ought gap seems inappropriate. Anscombe writes,

> [I]n the case of a plant, let us say, the inference from 'is' to 'needs' is certainly not in the least dubious. It is interesting and worth examining; but not at all fishy. Its interest is similar to the interest of the relation between brute and less brute facts: these relations have been very little considered. And while you can contrast 'what it needs' with 'what it's got' – like contrasting *de facto* and *de iure* – that does not make its needing this environment less of a 'truth'.[23]

Ultimately, Anscombe cautions that whether or not *I* do give someone (even myself), or something, what they *need* (or I need), or it needs, will depend on whether I want

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[23] G. E. M. Anscombe, 'Modern Moral Philosophy', p. 31.

to act charitably and be charitable or I want to act uncharitably and be uncharitable. Thus, while she suggests that there can be a logical connection between Is-statements and Needs-statements (and on this she, along with Foot as we will see, is surely right), she also suggests that there is no logical connection between Is-statements to Needs-statements and my behaviour. But, while she suggests that there can be a justifiable connection between Is-statements and Needs-statements (and on this she, along with Foot as we will see, is surely right), she would, I think, also suggest that there is a justifiable connection between Is-statements to Needs-statements and my behaviour. For, I am justified in giving what is needed because in doing so I will be acting on a demand of virtue (charity, in particular) and this is as good a reason as any to affect my behaviour. In answer to the question 'Why did you give what was needed?' the reply 'I wanted to act charitably' or 'I wanted to be charitable' is surely rationally justifiable. She writes,

> [Look at] the transition from 'is' to 'needs'; from the characteristics of an organism to the environment that it needs [. . .]. To say that it needs that environment is not to say, e.g., that you want it to have that environment, but that it won't flourish unless it has it. Certainly, it all depends on whether you *want* it to flourish! as Hume would say. But what 'all depends' on whether you want it to flourish is whether the fact that it needs that environment, or won't flourish without it, has the slightest influence on your actions [. . .]. Certainly in the case of what the plant needs, the thought of a need will only affect action if you want the plant to flourish. Here, then, there is no necessary connection between what you can judge the plant 'needs' and what you want. But there is some sort of necessary connection between what you think *you* need, and what you want.[24]

Here, wanting, it seems, is less closely related to how Hume viewed it: as being explicit in my reasoning; as the complete purity of sentiment over reason, if you will; as wanting something for no other reason than that I judge it, just according to my sentiment, to be what ought (and not *morally* ought) to be. In answer to the questions

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[24] Ibid.

'Why did you give what was owed?' and 'Why did you give what was needed?' the answer 'I just did want to do so' would, for Hume, be rationally justifiable. No reason is needed. No further explanation is required. Here, wanting, it seems, is more closely related to how Aristotle viewed it: as being implicit in my reasoning; as the complete harmony of sentiment and reason, if you will; as wanting something for no other reason than that I judge it, just according to practical syllogism, to be what ought (and not *morally* ought) to be. In answer to the questions 'Why did you give what was owed?' and 'Why did you give what was needed?' the answer 'I just wanted to do so' would, for Aristotle, be rationally unjustifiable. A reason is needed. A further explanation is required.

§3.4 ANSCOMBE ON 'NEEDS' AND 'NORMS' IN NATURALISM AND ETHICAL NATURALISM

Looking further at Is-statements and Needs-statements, Anscombe mentions that it might be worthwhile examining the logical connection between the two, firstly, in the area of human biology.[25] Take, for example, the Is-statement 'It is the case that human beings have the full set of teeth'. Now, what is it that we mean when uttering this statement, Anscombe asks? Surely it is not that all human beings have the full set of teeth. For, fewer than all human beings do. And, surely it is not that the average number of teeth that human beings have is the full set. For, human beings on average have fewer than all. The Is-statement appears somehow logically unquantifiable, she alludes. Yet, a complete complement of teeth is, she asserts, still the norm. The Is-statement expresses the norm. And the Needs-statement 'Human beings need the full set of teeth' is a fact that, as before, we can call brutishly relative to the factual Is-statement. If a particular human being has the full set of teeth, then he is as he needs

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[25] Ibid., p. 38.

to be normally; he *is* as he *ought* to be normally. And, the Ought-statement 'This human being ought to have the full set of teeth', follows. If, for reasons pertaining either to the human being himself or to something in his environment, he has not the full set of teeth, then he is not as he needs to be normally—he is not as he ought to be normally—but, nevertheless, the Ought-statement 'This human being ought to have the full set of teeth' still follows. For, with or without the full set of teeth, it is still the case that he needs the full set of teeth to (echoing Aristotelian metaphysics[26]) actualise his potential with respect to the norm; to live up to the norm, if you like. Irrespective of what my sentiments are towards this human being, or human beings in general, having the full set of teeth, it is a fact that it is good for a man's flourishing if he has this many teeth. However, this necessity is not an absolute necessity as it is not absolutely necessary for human beings to have the full set of teeth. Rather, it is an Aristotelian necessity.

Looking further at Is-statements and Needs-statements, Anscombe mentions that it might be worthwhile examining the logical connection between the two, secondly, in the area of human virtue.[27] Take, for example, the Is-statement 'It is the case that human beings have the full complement of virtues'. Now, what is it that we mean when uttering this statement, Anscombe asks? Surely it is not that all human beings have the full complement of virtues. For, fewer than all human beings do. And, surely it is not that the average number of virtues that human beings have is the full complement. For, human beings on average have fewer than all. The Is-statement appears somehow logically unquantifiable, she suggests. Yet, a complete set of virtues is, she asserts, still the norm. The Is-statement expresses the norm. And the Needs-

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[26] See Chapter I of this thesis.
[27] G. E. M. Anscombe, 'Modern Moral Philosophy', p. 31.

statement 'Human beings need the full complement of virtues' is a fact that, as before, we can call brutishly relative to the factual Is-statement. If a particular human being has the full set of virtues, then she is as she needs to be normally; she *is* as she *ought* to be normally. And, the Ought-statement 'This human being ought to have the full complement of virtues', follows. If, for reasons relating either to the human being herself or to something in her environment, she has not the full complement of virtues, then she is not as she needs to be normally—she is not as she ought to be normally— but, nevertheless, the Ought-statement 'This human being ought to have the full complement of virtues' still follows. For, with or without the full complement of virtues, it is still the case that she needs the full complement of virtues to (echoing Aristotelian metaphysics) actualise her potential with respect to the norm; to live up to the norm, if you like. Irrespective of what my sentiments are towards this human being, or human beings in general, having the full complement of virtues, it is a fact that it is good for a man's flourishing if he has this many virtues. However, this necessity is not an absolute necessity as it is not absolutely necessary for human beings to have the full complement of virtues. Rather, it is an Aristotelian necessity. She writes,

> [J]ust as a man has so many teeth, which is certainly not the average number
> of teeth men have, but is the number of teeth for the species, so perhaps the
> species man, regarded not just biologically, but from the point of view of the
> activity of thought and choice in regard to the various departments of life –
> powers and faculties and use of things needed—'has' such-and-such virtues:
> and this 'man' with the complete set of virtues is the 'norm', as 'man' with,
> e.g., a complete set of teeth is a norm. But in *this* sense [. . .] the notion of a
> norm brings us nearer to an Aristotelian [. . .] conception of ethics. There is, I
> think, no harm in that.[28]

Anscombe, in 'Modern Moral Philosophy', does not elaborate much more on this logical connection between Is-statements and Needs-statements and the role of needs

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[28] Ibid., p. 38.

and norms in ethics. That is to say, she does not develop her ethical naturalism. It is not, as we have seen, a main theme of the article. But, with it, and with Hume in mind, she extends the challenge of being able to talk about what ought to be the case 'without bringing God in'[29] to the argument. She calls for the requirement that any such secular ethics must have, for its coherency and practicability, 'an account of human nature, human action, the type of characteristic a virtue is, and above all of human "flourishing".'[30] And, qualitatively, but not quantitatively, as we have seen, she contributes in a major way to this requirement.

Foot, in *Natural Goodness*, does elaborate much more on this logical connection between Is-statements and Needs-statements and the role of needs and norms in ethics. That is to say, she does develop her ethical naturalism. It is, as we shall see, a main theme of the book. And, with it, and with Hume in mind, she accepts the challenge of being able to talk about what ought to be the case, she says, without bringing God in to the argument. She responds to the requirement that any such secular ethics must have, for its coherency and practicability, an account of human nature, human action, the type of characteristic a virtue is, and above all of human flourishing. And, qualitatively, and quantitatively, as we shall see, she contributes in a major way to this requirement. On this point, in *Anscombe's Moral Philosophy*, Richter writes,

> Morality is not necessarily a system of hypothetical imperatives [as Hume says it is], but it must be so if there is no ultimate end [. . .]. Actions done for pleasure can be criticised by those who see little or no value in pleasure. Actions done because they befit, say, a neighbour can be criticised by those who see no point in being a neighbour. So, in Anscombe's view, we can only have the kind of ought some moral philosophers want if we believe in God. If we do not believe, then we need a different kind of ethics.[31]

In response, so, to what Hume has to say about the possibility of there being a secular

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[29] Ibid.
[30] Ibid., p. 41.
[31] Duncan Richter, *Anscombe's Moral Philosophy*, p. 100.

(what Anscombe calls) *moral* 'ought' in matters ethical, Anscombe agrees with him and thinks that there cannot be, even though she clearly thinks that the term has an important role in ethical life. For her, in accordance with her undeveloped ethical naturalism that is influenced by Aristotle it would seem, one ought to be virtuous (in that being so is conducive to one's flourishing) and one ought not to be vicious (in that being so is detrimental to one's flourishing). And, here, the terms 'ought' and 'ought not', which are ethical in nature, are supported by the force of an Aristotelian—but not an absolute—necessity. One ought to be virtuous because, in terms of one's function, or teleology, as a practically rational animal, one needs to be virtuous[32]. And, one ought not to be vicious because, for the same reason, one needs not to be vicious[33]. But, it is not absolutely necessary for one to be functionally, or teleologically, as one ought to be. For, such absolute necessities require a contextually and temporally justifiable ethical arbiter to impose them. Ultimately, at this point, after the rejection of the idea that there can be a secular *moral* 'ought' in matters ethical by Anscombe, the authoritative *moral* force of the ethical term remains incoherent and impracticable outside the Hebrew-Christian ethic. It still has no place in secular ethics. The secularist can, of course, *feel* that it is practically necessary to prohibit absolutely certain injustices. But, this feeling—commonly given expression through the utterance, 'I cannot possibly do that'—comes from a habitually formed character, like that championed in Aristotelian virtue ethics, as we have seen. Indeed, this is a significant

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[32] There is a question, here, of course, about whether a virtuous person necessarily does flourish. For, in cases of self-sacrifice, it is ostensibly difficult to reconcile the concepts of virtue and flourishing. One can imagine a member of the German resistance exercising the virtue of courage and not flourishing as a result, for example. I discuss in more detail the complexities surrounding this issue in Chapter VI and the Conclusion of this thesis.

[33] There is a question, here, of course, about whether a vicious person necessarily does not flourish. For in cases of evil, it is ostensibly easy to reconcile the concepts of vice and flourishing. One can imagine a Nazi exercising the vice of injustice and flourishing as a result, for instance. I discuss in more detail the complexities surrounding this issue in Chapter VI and the Conclusion of this thesis.

mark of the virtue ethicist, of which Anscombe is one.

CHAPTER IV

FOOT ON THE TERMS 'OUGHT' AND 'GOOD' IN HUMEAN PHILOSOPHY AND MOOREAN PHILOSOPHY

For better or worse—and many will say worse—I have [. . .] the overt aim of setting out a view of moral judgement very different from that of most moral philosophers writing today. For I believe that evaluations of human will and action share a conceptual structure with evaluations of characteristics and operations of other living things, and can only be understood in these terms. I want to show moral evil as 'a kind of natural defect' [. . .]. To make such a suggestion, as I interpret it, is to contemplate a naturalistic theory of ethics: to break radically both with G. E. Moore's anti-naturalism and with the subjectivist theories such as emotivism and prescriptivism that have been seen as clarifications and developments of Moore's original thought [. . .]. This is the subjectivism—often called 'non-cognitivism'— That came to the fore with A. J. Ayer, C. L. Stevenson, and Richard Hare [. . .]. [I]t will be good to start by asking how the whole non-cognitivist business began. One finds its deepest roots in David Hume.[1]

The only ethics that can come close to being coherent and practicable outside a religious context, for Foot at the time of writing *Natural Goodness*, is a somewhat Aristotelian virtue-based one. She considers it the optimum candidate for housing the important ethical notion of how one ought to be so as to be fit to flourish. But, before she can return to its language—or grammar—she has to first turn away from the philosophical landscape of her time and its unhelpfully influential ideas that obscure the path back to this virtue ethics (i.e., those of A. J. Ayer, C. L. Stevenson, and R. M. Hare). Prior to looking at those, however, it will be constructive to consider the source of such obscurity, which is what we will do in the present chapter.

§4.1 FOOT ON BRUTISH FACTS AND THE TERM 'OUGHT' IN HUMEAN PHILOSOPHY

Hume is the first of two whose work Foot identifies as being an influence on Ayer's and Stevenson's subjectivist theories of emotivism and Hare's subjectivist theory of

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[1] Philippa Foot, *Natural Goodness*, pp. 5-6.

prescriptivism, which Foot wishes to oppose and which I will outline in the next chapter. Indeed, Foot believes that the philosophical problems of her time are primarily Humean in origin.[2]

Hume's philosophy, as we have seen in the past chapter, dared to threaten any general ethical theory in which there are logical derivations of Ought-statements from Is-statements, or evaluative statements from factual statements. Foot's philosophy, in *Natural Goodness*, in a similar way to Anscombe's philosophy in 'Modern Moral Philosophy', as we shall see in the present chapter, delves into this threat on a specific ethical theory in which there are logical derivations of Ought-statements from Is-statements, or evaluative statements from factual statements. On Hume, she (firstly) says elsewhere in an interview in *The Harvard Review of Philosophy* and (secondly) writes elsewhere in an introduction in *Modern Dilemmas and Other Topics in Moral Philosophy*:

> [W]ith the help of my colleague at Somerville, Elizabeth Anscombe, I was early able to query the idea of a logical gulf between 'is' and 'ought', and the supposed distinction between 'evaluative' and 'descriptive' language. I raised doubts about the relevance, and even the sense, of talk about fact as opposed to value [. . .].[3]

> [I would] sit down [with Anscombe] and talk philosophy. She'd propound some topic and, though she hardly ever agreed with what I said, she was always willing to consider my objection, and to wonder why I had made it. At one crucial moment, I remember saying of some sentence that it must have a mix of descriptive and evaluative meaning. And she said, 'Of what? *What*?' And I thought, 'My God, so one doesn't have to accept that distinction! One can say *what*?!'.[4]

Foot in *Natural Goodness*, like Anscombe in 'Modern Moral Philosophy', finds fault with Hume's Is-Ought logical divide and, like Anscombe, elaborates on her estimation of it. For Hume, as we have seen, the derivation of Ought-statements from Is-

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[2] Philippa Foot, 'Introduction', in *Theories of Ethics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1967), p. 1.
[3] See, Philippa Foot, interviewed by Alex Voorhoeve, 'The Grammar of Goodness', p. 34.
[4] See, Philippa Foot, 'Introduction', in *Moral Dilemmas and Other Topics in Moral Philosophy*, p. 1.

statements cannot be done just by logic. And, for Anscombe, as we have seen, the derivation of Ought-statements from Is-statements can, when it is related to (from the context of a custom or institution like lending and promising) the move of Owes-statements from Is-statements, for example (simply to what she calls a move of facts that are less brute from facts that are more brute, respectively), be justifiable but cannot be logical. But, for Anscombe, as we have seen, the derivation of Ought-statements from Is-statements can, when it is related to (from the context of organism and environment) the move of Needs-statements from Is-statements, for example (similarly to what she calls a move of facts that are less brute from facts that are more brute), be logical. In Foot's *Natural Goodness*, the concept of the former (what are called) *brute* facts from the context of a custom or institution like lending and promising, as we shall see, features neither explicitly nor implicitly. In Foot's *Natural Goodness*, the concept of the latter (what can be called) *brutish* facts from the context of organism and environment, as we shall see, does not feature explicitly but does feature implicitly.

In relation to the derivation of a Needs-statement from an Is-statement, an Is-statement like 'It is the case that plants are hydrotropic' was explicitly in Anscombe's philosophy and, as we shall see, is implicitly in Foot's philosophy brutishly relative to a Needs-statement like 'Plants need water to flourish'. Collectively, they can be seen as descriptions that are brutish facts, though with the former being more brutish and the latter being less brutish. What is more, an Is-statement like 'It is the case that plants go through cycles of transpiration' could be brutishly relative to the Is-statement 'It is the case that plants are hydrotropic'. Again, together, they are descriptions that could be brutish facts.

And, an Is-statement like 'It is the case that plants are phototropic' was

explicitly in Anscombe's philosophy and, as we shall see, is implicitly in Foot's philosophy, brutishly relative to a Needs-statement like 'Plants need light to flourish'. Collectively, they can be seen as descriptions that are brutish facts, though with the former being more brutish and the latter being less brutish. What is more, an Is-statement like 'It is the case that plants go through cycles of photosynthesis' could be brutishly relative to the Is-statement 'It is the case that plants are phototropic'. Again, together they are descriptions that could be brutish facts.

Needs-statements can, suggested Anscombe (and Foot will now agree), *logically* follow from Is-statements when naturally normal circumstances do surround, and when theoretically exceptional circumstances could surround, the characteristics of an organism and the environment that it needs to flourish. Consider, firstly, normal circumstances: if this plant can, for reasons relating to either the organism itself or its environment, go through cycles of transpiration, then it can be said that this plant is hydrotropic and, so, that this plant needs water and that this plant ought to have water (recall how the Needs-statement, here, functions like an analytic bridge principle between the Is-statement and the Ought-statement); if this plant can, for reasons relating to either the organism itself or its environment, go through cycles of photosynthesis, then it can be said that this plant is phototropic and, so, that this plant needs light and that this plant ought to have light (recall how the Needs-statement, here, bridges the gap between the Is-statement and the Ought-statement in the same way that an analytic bridge principle can bridge a gap between apparently unrelated premises and conclusion in an argument). Consider, secondly, exceptional circumstances: if this plant cannot, for reasons pertaining to either the organism itself or its environment, go through cycles of transpiration, then, respectively, either it cannot be said or it can be said that this plant is hydrotropic but, *nonetheless*, that this

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plant *still* needs water and that this plant ought to have water (again, the Needs-statement, here, functions like an analytic bridge principle between the Is-statement and the Ought-statement); if this plant cannot, for reasons relating to either the organism itself or its environment, go through cycles of photosynthesis, then, respectively, either it cannot be said or it can be said that this plant is phototropic but, *nonetheless*, that this plant *still* needs light and that this plant ought to have light (again, the Needs-statement, here, bridges the gap between the Is-statement and the Ought-statement in the same way that an analytic bridge principle can bridge a gap between apparently unrelated premises and conclusion in an argument).

Brutish facts between Is-statements and Needs-statements do show, I think (and I think Anscombe would have agreed and I know Foot would have agreed, as we will now see), that there can be a logical connection between Is-statements and Ought-statements, between facts and values, as explained in the abovementioned context of an organism and its environment. And, with regard to a logical connection between Is-statements and Needs-statements, here, an Is-Ought gap seems inappropriate. Foot writes,

> My belief is that for all the differences that there are, as we shall see, between the evaluation of plants and animals and their parts and characteristics on the one hand, and the [. . .] evaluation of humans on the other, we shall find that these evaluations share a basic logical structure and status [. . .].[5]

Looking further at Is-statements and Needs-statements, Anscombe mentioned, as we have seen, that it might be useful to examine the logical connection between the two in the sphere of human biology and in the sphere of human virtue.

She firstly noted how it is that in the sphere of human biology, the Is-statement 'It is the case that human beings have the full complement of teeth' is an interesting

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[5] Philippa Foot, *Natural Goodness*, p. 27.

one. It does not mean that all human beings have the full complement of teeth, because fewer than all human beings do. And, it does not mean that the average number of teeth that human beings have is the full complement, because human beings on average have fewer than all. The statement seems unquantifiable. But, a complete set of teeth is still the *norm*, she observed. Human beings *need* the full complement of teeth to (remembering Aristotelian metaphysics) actualise their potential in this particular respect; to match the norm. She alluded that it *is* good for a man's flourishing if he has this many teeth; that a man *ought* to be equipped with this many teeth. And, the Needs-statement 'Human beings need the full complement of teeth' can be considered a fact that is brutishly relative to the factual Is-statement 'It is the case that human beings have the full complement of teeth' and it bridges the gap between the Is-statement and the Ought-statement 'Human beings ought to have the full complement of teeth'. Even if a certain human being does not have the full complement of virtues, the fact remains that he needs them so as to live up to the norm.

She secondly noted how it is that in the sphere of human virtue, the Is-statement 'It is the case that human beings have the full set of virtues' is a similarly noteworthy one. It does not mean that all human beings have the full set of virtues, as fewer than all human beings do. And, it does not mean that the average number of virtues that human beings have is the full set, as human beings on average have fewer than all. The statement seems unquantifiable. But, a complete complement of virtues is still the *norm*, she observed. Human beings *need* the full set of virtues to (remembering Aristotelian metaphysics) actualise their potential in this particular respect; to match the norm. She suggested that it *is* good for a man's flourishing if he has this many virtues; that a man *ought* to be equipped with this many virtues. And, the Needs-statement 'Human beings need the full set of virtues' can be considered a

fact that is brutishly relative to the factual Is-statement 'It is the case that human beings have the full set of virtues' and it bridges the gap between the Is-statement and the Ought-statement 'Human beings ought to have the full set of virtues'. Even if a certain human being does not have the full set of virtues, the fact remains that she needs them so as to live up to the norm.

§4.2 FOOT ON 'NORMS' AND 'NEEDS' IN ANSCOMBE'S NATURALISM AND ETHICAL NATURALISM

Looking further at Is-statements and Needs-statements, Foot mentions that it might be useful to examine the logical connection between the two in the area of plant biology, non-human animal biology, and human biology and in the area of human virtue. For Foot, the *norms* of which Anscombe wrote are expressed in what are named logically unquantifiable natural-history propositions that apply solely to living things—as distinguished from logically quantifiable 'All' propositions or 'Some' propositions that apply similarly to living things and to non-living things—and state how a certain species at a certain time in a certain environment ought to be in terms of (recalling Aristotelian metaphysics) its *normal* function or teleology (i.e., so that it is fit to flourish). Referring to some work of Michael Thompson[6], she also calls them Aristotelian categoricals: that which 'speak[s] of the life cycle of individuals of a given species.'[7]. For Foot, the *needs* of which Anscombe wrote are that with/without which living things do/do not realise (recalling Aristotelian metaphysics) their *normal* function or teleology (i.e., can/cannot flourish) and are, consequently, naturally good/deficient (or intrinsically good/deficient, or autonomously good/deficient). Referring to some work of Anscombe[8], she also calls them Aristotelian necessities:

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[6] See Introduction of this thesis, n. 45.
[7] Ibid., n. 46.
[8] Ibid., n. 47.

that which 'is necessary because and in so far as good hangs on it.'[9] She writes,

> We see here the interaction of what Anscombe calls 'Aristotelian necessities' with Thompson's 'Aristotelian categoricals'. Aristotelian necessity is the necessity of that on which good hangs, and Anscombe points out that it was in just this sense that wartime posters challenged would-be travellers with the question 'Is your journey really necessary?' In this same sense, she says, it is 'necessary' in many circumstances that human beings should be able to bind each other's wills. But the demonstration also relies on considerations about what human beings do, and do not, have in their repertoire that plays so large a part in determining their natural-history.[10]

We have Anscombe's writing on the logical relationship between Is-statements and Needs-statements and, as a result, between Is-statements and Ought-statements—together with her explicit allusion to the notion of brute facts to illustrate it[11]—in her undeveloped ethical naturalism, which we have seen. We have Foot's writing on the logical relationship between Is-statements and Needs-statements and, as a result, between Is-statements and Ought-statements—together with her implicit application of the notion of brute facts to illustrate it—in her developed ethical naturalism, which we shall see. Anscombe's philosophy and Foot's philosophy, here, I argue, underpin a template: natural normativity and natural necessity *mutatis mutandis*—'a change of characteristic context and purpose'[12]—in the world of plants, in the world of non-human animals, and in the world of human beings. I will later in the next chapter look at what Foot takes to be a *specific* dissimilarity between living things in the sub-rational world and the rational world (e.g., rationality) and I will now in this chapter look at what Foot takes to be a *general* similarity between living things in the sub-rational world and the rational world (i.e., teleology).

From a logically unquantifiable natural-history proposition, or Aristotelian categorical, of the variety S has P (that a certain species has a certain part), S is C (that

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[9] Ibid., n. 48.
[10] Philippa Foot, *Natural Goodness*, p. 46.
[11] See Chapter III of this thesis.
[12] Philippa Foot, *Natural Goodness*, p. 39.

a certain species is a certain characteristic), or S does O (that a certain species does a certain operation), where P, C, and O are Aristotelian necessities, the following follows. If a member of S has P, is C, or does O, then, in this specific way, it is as it functionally, or teleologically, ought to be normally and, so, in this specific way, it is naturally good (or intrinsically good, or autonomously good). Barring any other lack of Aristotelian necessities, it is fit to flourish. If a member of S has not P, is not C, or does not O (however likely this might be), then, in a general sense too, it is not as it functionally, or teleologically, ought to be normally and, so, in a general sense too, it is naturally deficient (or intrinsically deficient, or autonomously deficient) and is not fit to flourish. And, it *is* still the case that it *ought* to have, be, or do—that it *needs* to have, be, or do—P, C, or O.

Anscombe did not go further in 'Modern Moral Philosophy' than expressing an interest in examples of these Is-Needs (and, therefore, Is-Ought) logical connections from the world of plants, of non-human animals, and of human beings. They, and the notion of Aristotelian teleology in them, are not integral to her article and, so, we should not expect her to propound a developed ethical naturalism. Ultimately, bearing in mind the earlier outlined work of Hume, they offer a way in which we might be able to talk about what ought to be the case without invoking a divine arbiter. And, her article can, in part, be seen as a call for a requirement for any coherent and practicable secular ethics to include an account of human nature, human action, the type of characteristic a virtue is, and above all of human flourishing. She contributed in a qualitatively, but not in a quantitatively, significant way to this requirement; but, not before rejecting the relevant influential Humean philosophy of her day, as we have seen in the past chapter.

Foot does go further in *Natural Goodness* than expressing an interest in

examples of these Is-Needs (and, therefore, Is-Ought) logical connections from the world of plants, of non-human animals, and of human beings. They, and the notion of Aristotelian teleology in them, are integral to her book and, so, we should expect her to propound a developed ethical naturalism. Ultimately, bearing in mind the earlier outlined work of Hume, they offer a way in which we might be able to talk about what ought to be the case without invoking a divine arbiter. And, with Anscombe in mind or without Anscombe in mind, her work can, in part, be seen as a response to a requirement for any coherent and practicable secular ethics to include an account of human nature, human action, the type of characteristic a virtue is, and above all of human flourishing. She contributes in a qualitatively, and in a quantitatively, significant way to this requirement; but, not before rejecting the relevant Moorean philosophy of her day, as we shall see in the present chapter.

I think Alasdair MacIntyre, in his *After Virtue*, succinctly summarises the conflict concerning Is-statements and Ought-statements, descriptive facts and ethical evaluations, in Aristotelian teleology and Is-statements and Ought-statements, descriptive facts and ethical evaluations, in Humean psychology. He writes,

> On the former view human action, because it is to be explained teleologically, not only can, but must be, characterised with reference to the hierarchy of goods which provide the ends of human action. On the latter view human action not only can, but must be, characterised without any reference to such goods. On the former view the facts about human action include the facts about what is valuable to human beings (and *not* just the facts about what they think to be valuable); on the latter view there are no facts about what is valuable. 'Fact' becomes value-free, 'is' becomes a stranger to 'ought' and explanation, as well as evaluation, changes its character as a result of this divorce between 'is' and 'ought'.[13]

The form in which the Is-Ought divorce is defended before Foot's time as a philosopher is, she says, that in which it is discovered by Hume: generally, as we saw

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[13] Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 3rd edn. (London: Duckworth, 1982), p. 84.

in the previous chapter, it is the notion that ethical claims about how one 'ought' to act cannot be derived from non-ethical claims by logic alone[14]. As we have also seen, this does not mean that there can be no analytic bridge principles linking said claims. And, if there can be analytic bridge principles linking non-ethical claims and ethical claims, then these ethical terms must be definable. This was Hume's view. The form in which the fact-value divorce is defended during Foot's time as a philosopher, by Ayer, Stevenson, and Hare, is, she says, that in which it is rediscovered by Moore: specifically, as we saw in the previous chapter, it is the notion that ethical claims about what is 'good' cannot be derived from non-ethical claims by logic and analytic bridge principles[15]. As we have also seen, this does mean that there can be no analytic bridge principles linking said claims. And, if there can be no analytic bridge principles linking non-ethical claims and ethical claims, then these ethical terms must be indefinable. This was Moore's view.[16]

§4.3 PETER GEACH AND THE TERM 'GOOD' IN MOOREAN PHILOSOPHY

Moore is the second of two whose work Foot identifies as being an influence on Ayer's and Stevenson's subjectivist theories of emotivism and Hare's subjectivist theory of prescriptivism, which Foot wishes to oppose and which I will outline in the next chapter. Indeed, Foot believes that the philosophical problems of her time are secondarily Moorean in origin.[17]

In everyday language, Moore held, there are what might be named Is-statements of identity; for instance, 'Bachelors are unmarried men'. Regarding this

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[14] This point is made in Chapter III of this thesis.
[15] Ibid.
[16] This point about the Is-Ought divorce being discovered by Hume and about the fact-value divorce being rediscovered by Moore is made in Philippa Foot, 'Moral Arguments', in *Virtues and Vices and Other Essays in Moral Philosophy*, pp. 99-100.
[17] Philippa Foot, 'Introduction', in *Theories of Ethics*, p. 1.

statement, 'Bachelors' is identified with 'unmarried men' and 'Bachelors' and 'unmarried men' are thus definitively connected. In everyday language also, Moore held, there are what might be named Is-statements of predication; for instance, 'Grass is green'. Regarding this statement, 'green' is predicated of, rather than identified with, 'Grass' and thus 'Grass' and 'green' are coincidentally, rather than definitively, connected.

Moore believed that if it is proposed by someone (like Bentham or Mill) that an Is-statement such as 'Pleasure is good' is an Is-statement of identity, then that someone is committing the naturalistic fallacy by doing so. For, they are failing or refusing to acknowledge the fact that it is open to question 'Is "Pleasure" *really* identical with "good"?' in a way that 'Is "Bachelors" *really* identical with "unmarried men"?' is not. They wrongly define, or identify, a non-natural property—e.g., good—as a natural thing—e.g., pleasure—according to Moore. We might say too that 'Bachelors are unmarried men' is an analytic statement and, therefore, can be an analytic bridge principle and that, for Moore, there can be no analytic bridge principles linking said natural thing with said non-natural property.

Moore believed that if it is proposed by someone (unlike Bentham or Mill) that an Is-statement such as 'Pleasure is good' is an Is-statement of predication, then that someone is not committing the naturalistic fallacy by doing so. For, they are not failing or refusing to acknowledge the fact that it is open to question 'Is "Pleasure" *really* identical with "good"?' in a way that 'Is "Grass" *really* identical with "green"?' is. They rightly coincide, or predicate, rather than define, or identify, a non-natural property—e.g., good—with, or of, a natural thing—e.g., pleasure—according to Moore. We might say too that 'Grass is green' is not an analytic statement and, therefore, cannot be an analytic bridge principle and that, for Moore, there can be no

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analytic bridge principles linking said natural thing and said non-natural property.

Therefore, for Moore, goodness must be an indefinable and unidentifiable non-natural property. However, for Moore, goodness must be a coincidental and predicative property of natural things. As noted earlier, he stated how,

> [e]thics aims at discovering what are those other properties belonging to all things which are good. But far too many philosophers have thought that when they named those other properties they were actually defining good; that these properties, in fact, were simply not 'other', but absolutely and entirely the same with goodness. This view I propose to call the 'naturalistic fallacy'.[18]

For Moore, objects and states of affairs have intrinsical value; they are ends in themselves. For Moore, actions have instrumental value; they are means to ends. The notion of Good, he proposed, is intuited and has to do with the intrinsical value of objects and states of affairs. The notion of Duty, he suggested, is a disposition to act and has to do with the instrumental value of the action that produces more good than any alternative. The notion of Right, he proposed, is a disposition to act and has to do with the instrumental value of the action that produces no less good than any alternative. The notion of Virtue, he suggested, is a disposition to act and has to do with duty to do what is unpleasant and what is unpleasantly right to do. Duty and Right, as he saw it, does imply degrees of Good. Good, as he saw it, is intuited. Aesthetic experiences (i.e., to do with beauty) and affectionate relationships (i.e., to do with love) are the highest degree of Good, he wrote. And, on the highest degree of Good, as noted earlier, he stated how,

> [. . .] it is the ultimate and fundamental truth of Moral Philosophy [. . .] [t]hat it is only for the sake of these things – in order that as much of them as possible may at some time exist – that any one can be justified in performing any public or private duty; that they are the *raison d'être* of virtue; that it is they [. . .] that form the rational ultimate end of human action and the sole criterion of social progress.'[19]

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[18] See, Chapter II of this thesis, n. 37.
[19] Ibid., n. 38.

Foot in *Natural Goodness*, like Anscombe in 'Modern Moral Philosophy', finds fault

with Moore's naturalistic fallacy but, unlike Anscombe, elaborates on her estimation

of it. It is interesting that Foot does take seriously the idea that the most notable

advance in moral philosophy during the fifty years or so preceding 1958, the year in

which her article 'Moral Beliefs' was published, was the naturalistic fallacy.[20] For

Foot, the ills of contemporary ethics are, as we shall presently see, rooted in a

misappropriation of language, and it is Moore's in particular that she has in mind. It is

interesting that Anscombe does not take seriously the idea that the most notable

advance in moral philosophy during the fifty years or so preceding 1958, the year in

which her article 'Modern Moral Philosophy' was published, was the naturalistic

fallacy.[21] For Anscombe, the ills of contemporary ethics are, as we have previously

seen, rooted in a misappropriation of language, but it is not Moore's in particular that

she has in mind.

Channelling work of Peter Geach[22], Foot thinks that in everyday language

there are what can be called attributive adjectives and she thinks that in everyday

language there are what can be called predicative adjectives. First, the meaning of the

predicative adjectives, she argues, is such that it can be grasped without a noun to

which it might be applied—e.g., 'red' in 'X is red'. Coincidentally, the adjective and

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[20] On the naturalistic fallacy, she writes in 'Moral Beliefs', 'To many people it seems that the most notable advance in moral philosophy during the past fifty years or so has been the refutation of naturalism; and they are a little shocked that at this late date such an issue should be reopened. It is easy to understand their attitude: given certain apparently unquestionable assumptions, it would be about as sensible to try to reintroduce naturalism as to try to square the circle. Those who see it like this have satisfied themselves that they know in advance that any naturalistic theory must have a catch in it somewhere, and are put out at having to waste more time exposing an old fallacy.' See, Philippa Foot, 'Moral Beliefs', in *Virtues and Vices and Other Essays in Moral Philosophy*, p. 110.

[21] She writes in 'Modern Moral Philosophy' (and this is all she writes about it), '[The] charge [of committing the naturalistic fallacy] does not impress me, because I do not find accounts of it coherent.' See, G. E. M. Anscombe, 'Modern Moral Philosophy', pp. 27-28.

[22] The man: husband of Anscombe. Anthony Kenny described them as 'the most intellectually formidable philosophical couple of the twentieth century'. See, Anthony Kenny, *A New History of Western Philosophy*, *Volume 4*: *Philosophy in the Modern World* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2007), p. 247. The work: 'Good and Evil', in *Theories of Ethics*, pp. 64-73.

the noun are connected. But, definitively, the adjective and the noun are not connected. Without 'X', here, for Foot, it is possible to know what is 'red'. Second, the meaning of the attributive adjectives, she contends, is such that it must be grasped with a noun to which it might be applied—e.g., 'good' in 'X is good'. Coincidentally, the adjective and the noun are connected. And, definitively, the adjective and the noun are connected. Without 'X', here, for Foot, it is not possible to know what is 'good'. Channelling work of Wittgenstein[23], she writes,

> [Moore] makes it hard to see the real logical grammar of evaluations, in which, in most contexts, 'good' requires to be complemented by a noun that plays an essential role in determining whether we are able to speak of goodness rather than badness, or indeed of goodness or badness at all [. . .]. Seen in the light of Geach's distinction, thoughts about good actions, which are fundamental to moral philosophy, appear with thoughts about good sight, good food, good soil, or good houses [. . .]. [T]hat 'good' and 'red' are logically different is very important and takes us some of the way in the task of bringing back words 'from their metaphysical to their everyday use', as Wittgenstein said was characteristic of his own late philosophy.[24]

Foot points out that, for Moore, the naturalistic fallacy is committed where there is *any* general attempt to define 'good' – in terms of something natural or anything else. But, she points out that, for modern Mooreans, the naturalistic fallacy is committed where there is *a* specific attempt to define 'good'—in terms of something natural and nothing else.[25] Foot holds, however, that if it is proposed by someone (say, like Foot, ethical naturalists) that in the statement 'X is good' 'good' is an attributive adjective, then that someone is not committing what Moore called the naturalistic fallacy, or some sort of a semantic fallacy, by doing so. But, she holds, moreover, that if it is proposed by someone (say, like Moore and modern Mooreans, ethical non-naturalists)

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[23] Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1980), section 116.
[24] Philippa Foot, *Natural Goodness*, pp. 2-3.
[25] Philippa Foot, 'Introduction', in *Theories of Ethics*, p. 5. W. K. Frankena thinks that the naturalistic fallacy could be (i) the mistake of trying to define a natural property in terms of a non-natural property or (ii) the mistake of trying to define 'this' property in terms of 'that' property or (iii) the mistake of trying to define the indefinable. It is any of these three that Moore takes it to be, according to Foot. It is the first of these three that the moderns take it to be, according to Foot.

that in the statement 'X is good' 'good' is a predicative adjective, then that someone is not committing what Moore called the naturalistic fallacy, but some sort of a semantic fallacy, by doing so.

Taking the term 'good', as Foot seems to do, as an attributive adjective—as having to be accompanied by a noun in order to have meaning—and as a natural property, it has an explicably perceptible relationship with the natural world. Taking the term 'good', as Moore seems to do, as a predicative adjective—as not having to be accompanied by a noun in order to have meaning—and as a non-natural property, it has an inexplicably imperceptible relationship with the natural world. I think John Hacker-Wright, in his *Philippa Foot's Moral Thought*, identifies insightfully the issue. He writes,

> Foot advocates a form of naturalism [. . .]. In Foot's view, moral judgements are a distinctive class of judgements because of their subject matter, and that subject matter is the world described by the natural sciences [. . .]. Moore argued stridently against all forms of naturalism. Yet, like Foot, he thought that moral judgements are about a distinct subject matter. For Moore, moral judgements are about what will bring about the most good, using the word 'good' in a distinctive sense. As Moore is often read, 'good' in this special sense designates a non-natural property belonging to a Platonic realm that, though separate from the natural world, still somehow pertains to whatever we call 'good' [. . .]. [A]lthough Moore's argument against naturalism was widely accepted by philosophers in the early to mid-twentieth century, his non-naturalism was seen as abhorrent because it invoked a mysterious non-natural property standing in an equally mysterious relation to the natural world.[26]

§4.4 NATURAL GOODNESS I

Foot, influenced by Hume's outlined philosophy, wants to show that there can be a logical connection between Is-statements and Ought-statements and, in contrast with Moore's outlined philosophy, wants to show that the term 'good' is an attributive adjective. To illustrate these points, she firstly looks to examples of what she calls the

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[26] John Hacker-Wright, *Philippa Foot's Moral Thought* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), p. 10.

logical grammar—belonging to a logical category—of the evaluation of the parts, characteristics, and operations of the sub-rational world of plants and non-human animals. Moreover, in this logical category of evaluation we shall see that Moorean consequentialism (or any consequentialism for that matter), which links goodness of action with goodness of states of affairs, does not fit.

From the logically unquantifiable natural-history proposition, or Aristotelian categorical, 'Trees have strong roots', where having strong roots is an Aristotelian necessity for trees, the following follows. If a particular tree, which should have strong roots, does have strong roots, then, in this specific way, it is as it functionally, or teleologically, ought to be normally and, so, in this specific way, regardless of the consequences of it being so, it is naturally good (or intrinsically good, or autonomously good). Barring any other lack of Aristotelian necessities, it can flourish. If a particular tree, which should have strong roots, does not have strong roots (however likely this might be), then, in a general sense too, it is not as it functionally or teleologically ought to be normally and, so, in a general sense too, regardless of the consequences of it not being so, it is naturally deficient (or intrinsically deficient, or autonomously deficient) and cannot flourish. And, it *is* still the case that it *ought* to have—that it *needs* to have—strong roots.

From the logically unquantifiable natural-history proposition, or Aristotelian categorical, 'Birds build nests', where building nests is an Aristotelian necessity for birds, the following follows. If a particular bird, which should build nests, does build nests, then, in this specific way, it is as it functionally, or teleologically, ought to be normally and, so, in this specific way, regardless of the consequences of it being so, it is naturally good (or intrinsically good, or autonomously good). Barring any other lack of Aristotelian necessities, it can flourish. If a particular bird, which should build nests,

does not build nests (however likely this might be), then, in a general sense too, it is not as it functionally, or teleologically, ought to be normally and, so, in a general sense too, regardless of the consequences of it not being so, it is naturally deficient (or intrinsically deficient, or autonomously deficient) and cannot flourish. And, it *is* still the case that it *ought* to—that it *needs* to—build nests. Foot writes,

> [I]t is necessary for plants to have water, for birds to build nests, for wolves to hunt in packs, and for lionesses to teach their cubs to kill. These 'Aristotelian necessities' depend on what the particular species of plants and animals need, on their natural habitat, and the ways of making out that are in their repertoire. These things together determine what it is for members of a particular species to be as they should be, and to do that which they should do.[27]

Foot secondly looks to examples of what she calls the logical grammar—belonging to a logical category—of the evaluation of the parts, characteristics, and operations of the rational world of human beings. Moreover, in this logical category of evaluation we shall see again how it is that Moorean consequentialism (or any consequentialism), which links goodness of action with goodness of states of affairs, has no place.

From the logically unquantifiable natural-history proposition, or Aristotelian categorical, 'Human beings are linguistic', where being linguistic is an Aristotelian necessity for human beings, the following follows. If a particular human being, who should be linguistic, is linguistic, then, in this specific way, he/she is as he/she functionally, or teleologically, ought to be normally and, so, in this specific way, regardless of the consequences of him/her being so, he/she is naturally good (or intrinsically good, or autonomously good). Barring any other lack of Aristotelian necessities, he/she can flourish. If a particular human being, which should be linguistic, is not linguistic (however likely this might be), then, in a general sense too, he/she is not as he/she functionally, or teleologically, ought to be normally and, so, in

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[27] Philippa Foot, *Natural Goodness*, p. 15.

a general sense too, regardless of the consequences of him/her not being so, he/she is naturally deficient (or intrinsically deficient, or autonomously deficient) and cannot flourish. And, it *is* still the case that he/she *ought* to be—that he/she *needs* to be—linguistic.

From the logically unquantifiable natural-history proposition, or Aristotelian categorical, 'Human beings are social animals', where being social is an Aristotelian necessity for human beings, the following follows. If a particular human being, who should be social, is social, then, in this specific way, he/she is as he/she functionally, or teleologically, ought to be normally and, so, in this specific way, regardless of the consequences of him/her being so, he/she is naturally good (or intrinsically good, or autonomously good). Barring any other lack of Aristotelian necessities, he/she can flourish. If a particular human being, who should be social, is not social (however likely this might be), then, in a general sense too, he/she is not as he/she functionally, or teleologically, ought to be normally and, so, in a general sense too, regardless of the consequences of him/her being so, he/she is naturally deficient (or intrinsically deficient, or autonomously deficient). And, it *is* still the case that he/she *ought* to be—that he/she *needs* to be—a social animal. Foot writes,

> [F]or all the enormous differences between the life of humans and that of plants or animals, we can see that human defects and excellences are similarly related to what human beings are and what they do. We do not need to be able to dive like gannets, nor see in the dark like owls; but our memory and our concentration must be such as to allow us to learn language, and our sight such that we can recognise faces at a glance; while, like lionesses, human parents are defective if they do not teach their young the skills that they need to survive. Moreover, in that we are social animals, we depend on each other as do wolves that hunt in packs, with cooperation such as our own depending on special factors such as conventional arrangements.[28]

On the one hand, Foot, echoing Anscombe, wants to show in the end that, in the world

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[28] Ibid., pp. 15-16.

of human beings, virtue—exercised, for example, when going in for conventional arrangements such as promising—is naturally good (or intrinsically good, or autonomously good). And, here, goodness is related to how human beings, like with all living things, ought to be vis-à-vis the life cycle of their particular species. On the other hand, Foot, echoing Anscombe, wants to show in the end that, in the world of human beings, vice—exercised, for example, when not going in for conventional arrangements such as promising—is naturally defective (or intrinsically defective, or autonomously defective) in and for human beings. And, here, defectiveness is related to how human beings, like with all living things, ought not to be vis-à-vis the life cycle of their particular species. Foot writes,

> Elizabeth Anscombe brings out this dependence of morality on the life of our species [. . .] [pointing] out facts about human life that make it necessary for human beings to be able to bind each other to action through institutions like promising, such as that there are so few other ways in which one person can reliably get another to do what he wants. And what hangs on this may, we might add, be something very important, such as that one's children should be cared for after one's death [. . .]. Anscombe is pointing here to 'Aristotelian necessity': that which is necessary because and in so far as good hangs on it. We invoke the same idea when we say that it is necessary for plants to have water, for birds to build nests, for wolves to hunt in packs, and for lionesses to teach their cubs to kill.[29]

In the present chapter, we have seen how Foot draws attention to what she considers to be the source of those ethical theories prevalent in her day (more of which in the next chapter) that she thinks obscure the path back to what is for her the only coherent and practicable ethics outside a religious context: a virtue-based one. She highlights an important similarity in how the terms 'ought' and 'good' are viewed in Humean philosophy and Moorean philosophy (i.e., as being not derivable from non-ethical claims and as being not definable as a non-natural property, respectively) and to how they are viewed, as we shall see, in said (secular-friendly) modern ethics of her time.

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[29] Ibid., p. 15.

Rather than employing ethical terms in the way that they are used in the Hebrew-Christian ethic (i.e., with a *moral* force that is only contextually and temporally justifiable where and when God is deemed the absolute source of ethics), the modern ethics of her time, as we shall see, (wittingly) employ these ethical terms with a *moral* force that is only contextually and temporally justifiable where and when man is deemed the subjective source of ethics, as we shall see. In the next chapter I look at how Foot removes from the philosophical environment of her day these unhelpfully influential ideas that rather obscure the path back to the virtue ethics that she identifies as the optimum candidate for a coherent and practicable secular ethics outside of a religious context. I will consider her take on the relevant philosophy of A. J. Ayer and C. L. Stevenson and what they have to say about subjective emotions being a *moral* authority and R. M. Hare and what he has to say about subjective prescriptions being a *moral* authority. Overall, I will be looking at how Foot questions, and ultimately (and quite appropriately as we shall see) rejects, their use of the terms 'ought' and 'good', before checking to see, in Chapter VI, whether, ultimately, the David Hume-influenced and somewhat Aristotelian alternative she suggests is suitable. Essentially, she writes about (what I would like to entitle) the 'ought' of flourishing – about the language, or grammar, that is and is not the basis for a coherent and practicable ethics.

CHAPTER V

'OUGHT' AND 'GOOD' IN THE PREVALENT MORAL PHILOSOPHY OF FOOT'S DAY

Now I come face to face with an apparently unanswerable objection, which is that human beings as rational creatures can ask why what has so far been said should have any effect on their conduct. For let us suppose that the normative pattern that I called 'natural normativity' does govern our evaluations of human beings as human beings. Suppose that human beings are defective as human beings unless they do what is needed for human good, [. . .]. The sceptic will surely ask 'But what if I do not care about being a good human being?' This is an objection to take seriously. For, after all, human beings are rational beings. It is part of the sea change that came at the point of transition from plants and animals on one side to human beings on the other that we can look critically at our own conduct [. . .]. The problem is about the rationality of doing what virtue demands.[1]

§5.1 FOOT ON A. J. AYER, C. L. STEVENSON, AND R. M. HARE AND SUBJECTIVE ATTITUDE BEING A *MORAL* AUTHORITY

In reaction to Anscombe's and Foot's aforementioned comments about natural normativity and necessity, one might wonder why subjective attitude could not be the source of a secular *moral* 'ought'—that is, one with a force suggestive of a speaker-relative necessity—in matters ethical. If it could be convincingly shown that it can, then the authoritative *moral* force of this ethical term might not yet have to be—as Foot shall suggest it needs to be for coherency and practicability purposes—jettisoned from ethics outside divine command ethics. If it could not be convincingly shown that subjective attitude can be the source of such a secular *moral* 'ought' in matters ethical, then the authoritative *moral* force of this ethical term might have to be left as a falling victim to Foot's wielding of Ockham's razor and stay shaven from the face of non-religious ethics. Foot looks to A. J. Ayer, C. L. Stevenson, and R. M. Hare for

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[1] Philippa Foot, *Natural Goodness*, pp. 52-53.

(presumably what she considers) the most influential offering on this question of subjective attitude.

Let us look at the language—or the grammar—of Ayer's, Stevenson's, and Hare's relevant philosophy. A. J. Ayer (1910–1989), Professor of Philosophy at London (1946–1959) and University of Oxford (1959–1978), C. L. Stevenson (1908–1979), Professor of Philosophy at Yale University (1939–1946) and University of Michigan, Ann Arbor (1946–1977), and R. M. Hare (1919–2002), Professor of Philosophy at University of Oxford (1947–1983) and University of Florida (1983–1994), were influenced, on the one hand, by eighteenth and twentieth century British analytic philosophy of Hume and Moore and were influenced, on the other hand, by twentieth century continental analytic philosophy of the Vienna Circle.[2] They were influenced, in the main, by Logical Positivism, according to which there are necessarily true propositions (such as those of logic and maths) and there are contingently true propositions (such as those of ordinary language and scientific language), and these statements are analytically true, or verifiable, and experientially true, or verifiable, respectively. Statements that are, according to Logical Positivism and its verification principle, unverifiable are rejected as factually meaningless. Statements that are aesthetical, ethical, metaphysical, and theological, therefore, are, according to Logical Positivism and its verification principle, unverifiable and are rejected as factually meaningless.

For Ayer, though, actions are what *morally* ought to be done, or are *morally* good, if the speaker expresses positive feelings towards them and actions are what *morally* ought not to be done, or are *morally* bad, if the speaker expresses negative

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[2] The Vienna Circle was founded in 1904 by sociologist Otto Neurath, mathematician Hans Hahn, and physicist Philip Frank. It flourished between 1923 to 1936 with mathematical minds and scientific minds under Moritz Schlick.

feelings against them. For Stevenson, though, actions are what *morally* ought to be done, or are *morally* good, if the speaker expresses approval towards them and expresses an imperative to influence the listener's approval towards them and actions are what *morally* ought not to be done, or are *morally* good, if the speaker expresses disapproval against them and expresses an imperative to influence the listener's disapproval against them. A statement like 'Stealing is what *morally* ought not to be done' or 'Stealing is *morally* bad' is not factual, according to them—it expresses nothing disinterestedly and objectively about what is the case or about what is not the case: i.e., it is not an assertion from the speaker. A statement like 'Stealing is what *morally* ought not to be done' or 'Stealing is *morally* bad' is (what they believe to be) evaluative, according to them—it expresses something interestedly and subjectively about what ought to be the case: i.e., it is an emotion from the speaker, for Ayer, and an emotion from the speaker and an imperative to the listener, for Stevenson. Consequently, Ayer and Stevenson are known as emotivists.

For these emotivists, ethical judgement is explained in terms of evaluation. And, it is, *in the end*, evaluation akin to exclamation that is at play here: 'Boo to stealing!' and 'Hurray for sympathy!', for example. Facts, for Ayer and Stevenson, can, it seems, be taken into account but ultimately individual feeling and commitment to action and individual approval and commitment to action, respectively, is required to reach all the way to ethical judgement, for them. This is the condition placed on ethical judgement by them. Something conative must be present, for them: a belief that something is the case *and* a desire to do something about it, or to not do something about it as the case may be. And, it is a feature of this particular form of subjectivism that one might not find it in oneself to feel positively about and be committed to or to approve of and be committed to—that is, one might not find the requisite desire for—

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an action that is particularly emotive for another. In his *Language, Truth and Logic*,

Ayer states,

> Another man may disagree with me about the wrongness of stealing, in the
> sense that he may not have the same feelings about stealing as I have, and he
> may quarrel with me on account of my moral sentiments. But he cannot, strictly
> speaking, contradict me.[3]

In his *Ethics and Language*, Stevenson states,

> 'This is good' has the meaning of 'This has qualities or relations X, Y, Z …',
> except that 'good' has as well a laudatory meaning, which permits it to express
> the speaker's approval, and tends to evoke the approval of the hearer.[4]

From Hume's idea that ethical evaluations (e.g., Ought-statements) are not derivable

from descriptive facts (i.e., Is-statements) by logic alone[5], Ayer and Stevenson

develop the idea that facts, related to assertion, are distinguished from values, which

are related to attitude. From Hume's idea that morality is necessarily practical serving

to produce and prevent action[6] and Moore's idea that 'good' is a special non-natural

property[7], Ayer and Stevenson develop the idea that 'good' is a special, essentially

practical, use of language that expresses (for Ayer) individual feeling, from which

there is a tendency to act, and (for Stevenson) individual approval, from which there

is a tendency to act.

For Hare, though, actions are what *morally* ought to be done, or are *morally*

good, if the speaker expresses assent to an imperative to have doing them universally

prescribed and actions are what *morally* ought not to be done, or are *morally* bad, if

the speaker expresses assent to an imperative to have not doing them universally

prescribed. Consequently, Hare is known as a prescriptivist. A statement like 'Stealing

is what *morally* ought not to be done' or 'Stealing is *morally* bad' is not factual,

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[3] A. J. Ayer, *Language, Truth and Logic*, 2nd edn. (Harmondsworth: Pelican Books, 1971), p. 142.
[4] Charles Stevenson, *Ethics and Language* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1944), p. 207.
[5] See, Chapter III of this thesis.
[6] Ibid.
[7] See, Chapter II, Section 4, and Chapter IV, Section 3, of this thesis.

according to him—it expresses nothing disinterestedly and objectively about what is the case or about what is not the case: i.e., it is not an assertion from the speaker. A statement like 'Stealing is what *morally* ought not to be done' or 'Stealing is *morally* bad' is (what he believes to be) evaluative, according to him—it expresses something interestedly and subjectively about what ought to be the case: i.e., it is an imperative from the speaker and to the listener, for Hare.

For this prescriptivist, ethical judgement is explained in terms of evaluation. And, it is, *in the end*, evaluation akin to command that is at play here: 'Thou shalt not kill' and 'Thou shalt not steal', for example. Facts, for Hare, can, it seems, be taken into account when evaluating but ultimately individual assent and commitment to action is required to reach all the way to ethical judgement, for him. This is the condition placed on ethical judgement by him. Something conative must be present, for him: a belief that something is the case *and* a desire to do something about it, or to not do something about it as the case may be. And, it is a feature of this particular form of subjectivism that one might not find it in oneself to assent and be committed to— that is, one might not find the requisite desire for—an action that is universally prescribed by another. In his *Moral Thinking*, Hare states,

> We say something prescriptive if and only if, for some act A, some situation S and some person P, if P were to assent (orally) to what we say, and not, in S, do A, he logically must be assenting insincerely.[8]

From Hume's idea that ethical evaluations (e.g., Ought-statements) are not derivable from descriptive facts (i.e., Is-statements) by logic alone, Hare develops the idea that facts, related to assertion, are distinguished from values, which are related to attitude. From Hume's idea that morality is necessarily practical serving to produce and prevent action and Moore's idea that 'good' is a special non-natural property, Hare develops

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[8] R. M. Hare, *Moral Thinking* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), p. 21.

the idea that 'good' is a special, essentially practical, use of language that expresses individual assent, from which there is a tendency to act.

Anscombe, in 'Modern Moral Philosophy', was not very interested in Ayer's and Stevenson's emotivism and Hare's prescriptivism, but, elsewhere in her oeuvre, she did find general fault with them but did not elaborate on her estimation of them.[9] Foot, in *Natural Goodness*, is very interested in Ayer's and Stevenson's emotivism and Hare's prescriptivism, and, elsewhere in her oeuvre, she does find specific fault with them, and she does elaborate on her estimation of it.[10]

Firstly, however, it will be helpful to remind ourselves of the earlier considered examples from Anscombe of the fact-value transition between Is-statements and Owes-statements from the context of a custom or institution like lending and promising, where the Is-statements were: 'It is the case that you lent me money' and 'It is the case that I promised you repayment'. The Owes-statement was: 'I owe you money'.[11] For Foot, Ayer, Stevenson, and Hare, the question 'Why ought I give someone what is owed to him/her?' can be answered with reference to Anscombe's observation that whether or not I do give someone what is owed to him/her will depend

[9] In her 1956 article 'Mr Truman's Degree', she wrote generally about ethical subjectivism: '[N]ow [. . .] I find another [philosophy], whose cardinal principle is that "good" is not a "descriptive" term, but one expressive of a favourable attitude on the part of the speaker. Hand in hand with this, though I do not know if there is any logical connection, goes a doctrine that it is impossible to have any quite general moral laws [. . .].' See, G. E. M. Anscombe, 'Mr Truman's Degree', p. 71. Also, in John M. Dolan's 2001 obituary of Anscombe 'G. E. M. Anscombe: Living the Truth', he writes specifically about Anscombe and Ayer. Anscombe once revealed to Ayer, 'If you didn't talk so quickly, people wouldn't think you were so clever.' Ayer at once replied to Anscombe, 'If you didn't talk so slowly people wouldn't think you were so profound.' See, John M. Dolan, 'G. E. M. Anscombe: Living the Truth' in *First Things*, 113 (May 2001), pp. 11-13.

[10] In some essays in her *Virtues and Vices and Other Essays in Moral Philosophy*, she writes about Ayer's and Stevenson's emotivism and Hare's prescriptivism. In the Introduction to that volume, she writes, 'Two themes run through many of the essays: opposition to emotivism and prescriptivism, and the thought that a sound moral philosophy should start from a theory of the virtues and vices.' See, Philippa Foot, *Virtues and Vices and Other Essays in Moral Philosophy*, xi. In some essays in her *Moral Dilemmas and Other Topics in Moral Philosophy*, she writes about Ayer's and Stevenson's emotivism and Hare's prescriptivism. In the Introduction to that volume, she writes, 'I am pleased that I was always against the prevailing subjectivist orthodoxies of emotivism [and] prescriptivism.' See, Philippa Foot, *Moral Dilemmas and Other Topics in Moral Philosophy*, p. 2.

[11] See, Chapter III, Section 2 of this thesis.

on whether I *want* to act justly/be just or I *want* to act unjustly/be unjust.[12] More needs to be said about this *wanting*, which I will discuss below. Furthermore, Foot would, I am sure, support both parts, and Ayer, Stevenson, and Hare could support both parts, of Anscombe's suggestion that, in relation to the context of a custom or institution like lending and promising, (i) there is no logical connection between Is-statements and Owes-statements, due to the possibility of theoretically exceptional circumstances arising in the custom or institutional context in question (i.e., lending and promising), (and on this she was assuredly right), and (ii) there is no logical connection between Is-statements to Owes-statements and my behaviour.[13]

Moreover, Foot would support both parts, and Ayer, Stevenson, and Hare could support both parts of Anscombe's suggestion that, in relation to the context of a custom or institution like lending and promising, (i) there is a justifiable connection between Is-statements and Owes-statements, because of the probability of practically normal circumstances arising in the custom or institutional context in question (i.e., lending and promising), (and on this she was assuredly right), and (ii) there is a justifiable connection between Is-statements to Owes-statements and my behaviour.[14]

I am justified in giving what is owed because in doing so I will be acting on a demand of virtue (justice, in particular) and this is as good a reason as any to affect my behaviour. In answer to the question 'Why did you give what was owed?', the reply 'I wanted to act justly' or 'I wanted to be just' is surely rationally justifiable. Foot, Ayer, Stevenson, and Hare would not disagree with any of this, I feel. Where they would disagree, I am sure, is on the point of *why* they are acting justly.

Ayer and Stevenson would say that they are acting justly not because virtue

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[12] See, Chapter III of this thesis, n. 21.
[13] See, Chapter III, Section 2, of this thesis.
[14] Ibid.

demands it—not because there is some descriptive fact about the necessity of the custom or institution of lending and promising from which an evaluation that they ought to act can be derived—but rather because they feel positively about doing so and approve of doing so, respectively. Hare would say that he is acting justly not because virtue demands it—not because there is some descriptive fact about the necessity of the custom or institution of lending and promising from which an evaluation that he ought to act can be derived—but rather because he assents to doing so. But, Foot would say that she is acting justly not necessarily because she feels positively about doing so or approves of doing so or assents to doing so—indeed, this might not be the case at all—but rather necessarily because virtue demands that she does so. That is her *reason* for doing so.

Secondly, moreover, it will be helpful to remind ourselves of the earlier considered examples of the fact-value transition between Is-statements and Needs-statements from the context of the characteristics of an organism and the environment that it needs, where the Is-statements were: 'It is the case that plants are hydrotropic' and 'It is the case that plants are phototropic'. The Needs-statements were: 'This plant needs water' and 'This plant needs light'.[15] For Foot, Ayer, Stevenson, and Hare, the question 'Why ought I give someone or something what he/she or it needs?' can be answered with reference to Anscombe's observation that whether or not I do give someone or something what he/she or it needs will depend on whether I *want* to act charitably/be charitable or I *want* to act uncharitably/be uncharitable.[16] More needs to be said about this *wanting*, which I will discuss below. Furthermore, Foot would, I am sure, support both parts, and Ayer, Stevenson, and Hare could support both parts, of

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[15] See, Chapter III, Section 3 of this thesis.
[16] See, Chapter III of this thesis, n. 24.

Anscombe's suggestion that (i) there can be a logical connection between Is-statements and Needs-statements despite the possibility of theoretically exceptional circumstances surrounding the characteristics of an organism and the environment that it needs (i.e., being hydrotropic and needing water and being phototropic and needing light), (and on this Anscombe was surely right), and (ii) there is no logical connection between Is-statements to Needs-statements and my behaviour.[17]

But, I am justified in giving what is needed because in doing so I will be acting on a demand of virtue (charity, in particular) and this is as good a reason as any to affect my behaviour. In answer to the question 'Why did you give what was needed?', the reply 'I wanted to act charitably' is surely rationally justifiable. Ayer, Stevenson, Hare, and Foot would not disagree with any of this, I feel. Where they would disagree, I am sure, is on the point of *why* they are acting charitably.

Ayer and Stevenson would say that they are acting charitably not because virtue demands it—not because there is some descriptive fact about the characteristics of an organism and the environment that it needs from which an evaluation that they ought to act can be derived—but rather because they feel positively about doing so and approve of doing so, respectively. Hare would say that he is acting charitably not because virtue demands it—not because there is some descriptive fact about the characteristics of an organism and the environment that it needs from which an evaluation that he ought to act can be derived—but rather because he assents to doing so. But, Foot would say that she is acting charitably not necessarily because she feels positively about doing so or approves of doing so or assents to doing so—indeed, this might not be the case at all—but rather necessarily because virtue demands that she does so. That is her *reason* for doing so.

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[17] See, Chapter III, Section 3, of this thesis.

In the first example of the context of a custom or institution like lending and promising, doing what virtue demands—i.e., giving what is owed—is an action of disinterested justice. In the second example of the context of the characteristics of an organism and the environment that it needs, doing what virtue demands—i.e., giving what is needed—is an action of disinterested charity. In each example, doing what virtue demands—giving what is owed and giving what is needed—shows (as Gary Watson writes[18]) 'an intelligible connection' between virtue and what we have reason to do, or what we ought to do, (as Donald Davidson writes[19]) 'all things considered'. And, what we have reason to do, or what we ought to do, all things considered is the essence of practical reason. And, for Foot, there is (as Warren Quinn alludes[20]) a mistake of strategy in Ayer's, Stevenson's, and Hare's subjectivist notion of practical reason. But, for Foot, there is no mistake of strategy in her and Quinn's objectivist notion of practical reason. Foot writes,

> It was not [. . .] a fit of collective madness that seized moral philosophers in the mid-twentieth century, and still grips them today. Their theories were devised to take account of something that really is a feature of moral judgement: the 'action-guiding' character of morality, which Hume had insisted on and taken as the foundation of his moral philosophy. Morality, Hume had said, is necessarily practical, serving to produce and prevent action, and I shall call this 'Hume's practicality requirement'. Nor am I denying that that his demand must be met. My contention is rather that the theories I am attacking tried to meet it in the wrong way [. . .]. If I am to prove my thesis I must, of course, produce an alternative to the non-cognitivist way of showing that moral judgement is essentially 'action-guiding'. So what's my own account of the matter? It is [. . .] that Hume's demand is met by the (most un-Humean) thought that acting morally is part of practical rationality.[21]

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[18] Gary Watson, 'On the Primacy of Character', in *Virtue Ethics*, ed. by Stephen Darwall (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2003), p 244.
[19] Donald Davidson, 'How is Weakness of the Will Possible?', in *Essays on Actions and Events* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980), pp. 21-42.
[20] Warren Quinn, 'Rationality and the Human Good', in *Morality and Action* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).
[21] Philippa Foot, *Natural Goodness*, p. 9.

§5.2 MISTAKE OF STRATEGY

For Ayer, Stevenson, and Hare, wanting or not wanting to be just or charitable—which, for them, is necessarily feeling positively or negatively about, approving or disapproving of, and assenting or not assenting to being just or charitable, respectively—seems to be, *in the end*, explicit in one's reasoning (as it was for Hume); wanting to do something for no other reason than that one judges it, just according to one's subjective attitude, to be what *morally* ought to be done. (And, again, they use a speaker-relative *moral* 'ought' here, and not just 'ought', that is dissimilar to the absolute one of divine command ethics highlighted by Anscombe.) In answer to the above questions 'Why did you give what was owed?' and 'Why did you give what was needed?', the answer 'I just did want to do so' would, for Ayer, Stevenson, and Hare, be rationally justifiable. A further reason is not needed. A further explanation is not required. This answer—'I just did want to do so'—would, for them, satisfy what Foot called (above) Hume's 'practicality requirement': the notion that morality is necessarily practical, serving to produce and prevent action. Foot is not denying that there is such a requirement in matters ethical. But, she is, I think, emphasising that the emotivists and the prescriptivists meet it in the wrong way—a subjective way; that is, with a focus on the subjective feelings and approvals and the subjective assents of the speaker in question.

According to Ayer's, Stevenson's, and Hare's philosophies, what we have reason to do, or what we ought to do, all things considered, is necessarily determined by Humean hypothetical imperatives, which concern only means to ends reasoning and, it would seem, reasoning of means to *any* ends at that: virtuous or vicious (e.g., 'If I want or do not want to give what is owed, then I ought or ought not to do so' and 'If I want or do not want to give what is needed, then I ought or ought not to do so').

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Their philosophy could complement the idea that the rationality of action is necessarily associated with desire and self-interest but that it is not necessarily associated with virtue. They are not immoralists, of course. They would, I am sure, as one might expect from moral philosophers, advocate the virtues of justice and charity needed to give what is owed in the context of the custom or institution of lending and promising and required to give what is needed in the context of the characteristics of an organism and the environment that it needs. But, their philosophies ostensibly do allow for immoralism. For, they seem to have here no satisfactory answer to the question that Quinn had asked in relation to what he saw as the likes of emotivists' and prescriptivists' mistake of strategy: What would be so important about practical reason if it merely had to do with the relation of means to *any*, including wicked, ends?

For Foot, wanting or not wanting to be just or charitable—which, for her, is not necessarily feeling positively or negatively about, approving or disapproving of, and assenting or not assenting to being just or charitable—seems to be, *in the end*, implicit in one's reasoning (as it was for Aristotle); wanting to do something for no other reason than that one judges it, just according to one's practical syllogism, to be what ought to be done. (But, again, Foot does use a species-relevant 'ought' here, and not *moral* 'ought' here, that is similar to the Aristotelian one of Aristotelian ethics highlighted by Anscombe.) In answer to the questions 'Why did you give what was owed?' and 'Why did you give what was needed?', the answers 'I did so because I wanted to be just' and 'I did so because I wanted to be charitable' would, for Foot, be rationally justifiable. No further reason is needed. No further explanation is required. These answers—'I did so because I wanted to be just' and 'I did so because I wanted to be charitable'—would, for her, satisfy what Foot calls Hume's 'practicality requirement': the notion that morality is necessarily practical, serving to produce and

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prevent action. Foot is not denying that there is such a requirement in matters ethical. But she is, I think, emphasising that she meets it in the right way—an objective way; that is, with a focus on the objective needs of the species in question.

According to Foot's philosophy, what we have reason to do, or what we ought to do, all things considered, is not necessarily determined by Humean hypothetical imperatives, which concern only means to ends reasoning and, it would seem, reasoning of means to *any* ends at that: virtuous or vicious (e.g., 'If I want or do not want to give what is owed, then I ought or ought not to do so' and 'If I want or do not want to give what is needed, then I ought or ought not to do so'). Her philosophy would complement the idea that the rationality of action is not necessarily associated with desire and self-interest, for example, but that it is necessarily associated with virtue. She is not an immoralist, of course. She would, I am sure, as one might expect from a moral philosopher, advocate the virtues of justice and charity needed to give what is owed in the context of a custom or institution like lending and promising and required to give what is needed in the context of the characteristics of an organism and the environment that it needs. And, her philosophy obviously does not allow for immoralism[22]. Hence, she seems to have here a satisfactory answer to the question that Warren Quinn had asked in relation to what he saw as the likes of emotivists' and presctiptivists' mistake of strategy: What would be so important about practical

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[22] Elsewhere, in 'Nietzsche's Immoralism' from her second volume of essays *Moral Dilemmas and Other Topics in Moral Philosophy*, she writes, '[I]t is hard to hold onto anything simple in the face of this determined joker, who loved masks and hidden things, and whose protean style is sometimes of the most lapidary aphoristic simplicity but often lush and rhetorical.' See, Philippa Foot, 'Nietzsche's Immoralism', in *Moral Dilemmas and Other Topics in Moral Philosophy*, p. 144. Elsewhere, in 'Nietzsche: The Revaluation of Values' from her first volume of essays *Virtues and Vices and Other Essays in Moral Philosophy*, she writes, '[A] confrontation with Nietzsche is a difficult thing to arrange. We find it hard to know where we could meet him because of the intrinsically puzzling nature of a project such as his [. . .]. The idea of such a thing is enough to make one's head spin.' See, Philippa Foot, 'Nietzsche: The Revaluation of Values', in *Virtues and Vices and Other Essays in Moral Philosophy*, p. 82. In *Natural Goodness*, she writes, 'I want to challenge Nietzsche. But that is easier said than done. If only because it is hard even to locate the field of battle.' See, Philippa Foot, *Natural Goodness*, p. 104.

reasoning if it merely had to do with the relation of means to *any*, including wicked, ends?

On the one side of this particular philosophical playing field, we have Ayer's, Stevenson's, and Hare's ethical subjectivism, which stands close to immoralism insofar as the former allows for the latter. On the other side of this particular philosophical playing field, we have Foot's ethical objectivism, which, it seems, stands far from immoralism insofar as the former does not allow for the latter. Furthermore, after looking at their Hume-inspired and Moore-inspired above-mentioned philosophy, it seems possible, from a *first* look at the topic of cultural relativism, that Ayer, Stevenson, and Hare are (possibly unwittingly) committed to that theory and that it can coincide with their ethical subjectivism. Moreover, after looking at Mary Midgley's below-mentioned philosophy, it seems possible, from a *further* look at the topic of cultural relativism, that Foot is (positively wittingly) committed to that theory but that it can coincide with her ethical objectivism.

Midgley, in 'Trying Out One's New Sword'[23], portrays a practice of Ancient Japanese Samurai culture: a warrior, to prove the quality of his requisite skill and to prove the quality of his requisite sword, kills a wayfarer. And, on account of the fact that we are not members of this culture, we might, Midgley suggests, as a result of our modern times of *laissez-faire* cultural tolerance, become habituated to a non-critical approach to this and that alien cultural practice. And, she questions, is this a possible position? But, owing to the fact that we are not members of other cultures, we might, Midgley suggests, as a result of our modern times of *laissez-faire* cultural tolerance, become isolated from critical approaches to other and all alien cultural practices. And,

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[23] Mary Midgley, 'Trying Out One's New Sword', in *Ethical Theory: An Anthology*, ed. by Russ Shafer-Landau (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2007), pp. 58-61.

she answers, this is an impossible position!

Midgley, like Foot I am sure, is regarding the notion that, even though there is necessary differentiation between cultures, there cannot always be subjective irreconcilability in principle between them. That is to say that there cannot be no objective criteria by which differences in attitude (towards other cultures) can be resolved.[24] According to Ayer's, Stevenson's, and Hare's ethical subjectivism, this practice of Ancient Japanese Samurai culture could be considered acceptable just because one (à la Ayer) feels positively about it, or (à la Stevenson) approves of it, or (à la Hare) assents to it. Ayer, Stevenson, and Hare, therefore, initially appear to be both subjectivists and cultural relativists. But, in reality, adherence to their theories can, as Midgley alludes, breed a sort of ethical isolationism.

Midgley, like Foot I am sure, is disregarding the notion that, even though there is necessary differentiation between cultures, there must sometimes be objective reconcilability in principle between them. That is to say that there must be objective criteria by which differences in attitude (towards other cultures) can be resolved.[25] According to Midgley's and Foot's ethical objectivism, this practice of Ancient Japanese Samurai culture should not be considered acceptable just because one (à la Ayer) feels positively about it, or (à la Stevenson) approves of it, or (à la Hare) assents to it. Midgley and Foot, therefore, ultimately appear to be both objectivists and cultural relativists. And, in reality, adherence to their theories can, as Midgley alludes, breed a sort of ethical universalism. She writes,

> [W]e are rightly angered by those who despise, oppress or steamroll other
> cultures. We think that doing these things is actually *wrong* [. . .]. [Yet] [w]e

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[24] That Ayer, Stevenson, and Hare reject the presence of objective criteria by which differences in attitude (towards other cultures) can be resolved is something surmised by Foot here: Philippa Foot, *Moral Dilemmas and Other Topics in Moral Philosophy*, p. 26.

[25] That Foot accepts the presence of objective criteria by which differences in attitude (towards other cultures) can be resolved is something surmised by her here: Philippa Foot, interviewed by Rick Lewis, 'Philippa Foot', in *Philosophy Now*, Issue 41, (2003).

could not condemn oppression and insolence if we thought that all our condemnation were just a trivial local quirk of our own culture [. . .]. Isolating barriers simply cannot arise here. If we accept something as a serious moral truth about one culture, we can't refuse to apply it—in however different an outward form—to other cultures as well, wherever circumstances admit it [. . .]. Morally as well as physically, there is only one world, and we all have to live in it.[26]

And, the ethical isolationism to which Midgley refers must, it would seem for Foot at least, be one with a Humean air, for it must be underpinned by Humean hypothetical imperatives, which, as we have already seen[27], are inclination-dependent and can take the (practical, but passion-directed) form of, for example, 'If one wants to kill, then one ought to kill'. The notion of ethical isolationism to which Midgley alludes is a dangerous position and it is one that Foot would find particularly uncomforting in the face of some patently poisonous ideology like Nazism. And, on the issue of Humean hypothetical imperatives, of which Foot, unlike Anscombe, was once in the grip[28], Foot writes,

I see [Warren] Quinn as watching us all struggling to tie a horse to the back of a cart, and suggesting 'Try it the other way round' [. . .]. [Try] to show the rationality of acting, even against desire and self-interest, on a demand of morality. The argument depends on the change of direction that Quinn suggested: seeing goodness as setting a necessary condition of practical rationality and therefore as at least a part determinant of the thing itself.[29]

But, the ethical universalism to which Midgley refers cannot, it would seem for Foot at least, be one with a Kantian air, for it cannot be underpinned by Kantian categorical imperatives, which, as we have already seen[30], are inclination-independent and can take the (reason-directed, but theoretical) form of, for example, 'One ought not to kill'. The notion of ethical universalism to which Midgley alludes is not a dangerous

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[26] Mary Midgley, 'Trying Out One's New Sword', pp. 59-61.
[27] See, Chapter III, Section 1 of this thesis.
[28] See, Philippa Foot, 'Morality as a System of Hypothetical Imperatives', in *Virtues and Vices and Other Essays in Moral Philosophy*, pp. 157-173.
[29] Philippa Foot, *Natural Goodness*, p. 63.
[30] See, Chapter II, Section 2 of this thesis.

position and it is one that Foot would find particularly comforting in the face of some

patently poisonous ideology like Nazism. And, on the issue of Kantian categorical

imperatives, of which Foot, like Anscombe, was never in the grip, Foot writes,

> [Kant] seems to have gone wrong [. . .] in thinking that an abstract idea of
> practical reason applicable to rational beings as such could take us all the way
> to anything like our own moral code. For the evaluation of human action
> depends also on essential features of specifically human life.[31]

§5.3 EVALUATION OF HUMAN ACTION

Because we tend to (à la Ayer) feel positively about or feel negatively about, (à la

Stevenson) approve of or disapprove of, and (à la Hare) assent to or not assent to acts

of justice or injustice—which Mill influentially saw as just belonging to an other-

regarding public sphere of morality[32]—with high levels of passion, it is hardly

surprising that in modern moral philosophy the Humean idea of passion leading

morality, rather than the rather Aristotelian idea of morality leading rationality, has

been popular. Because we tend to (à la Ayer) feel positively about or feel negatively

about, (à la Stevenson) approve of or disapprove of, and (à la Hare) assent to or not

assent to acts of courage or cowardice, prudence or imprudence, and temperance or

intemperance—which Mill influentially saw as also belonging to a self-regarding

private sphere of non-morality[33]—with lower levels of passion, it is hardly surprising

that in modern moral philosophy the rather Aristotelian idea of morality leading

rationality, rather than passion leading morality, has not been popular. For Foot,

morality does not have to pass the test of rationality. For Foot, rationality has to pass

the test of morality.

Practical reason, for Foot, is a sort of master virtue from which the (what Mill

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[31] Philippa Foot, *Natural Goodness*, p. 14.
[32] See, Chapter II, Section 3 of this thesis.
[33] See, Chapter II of this thesis.

just saw as other-regarding/public/moral) virtue of justice, for example, is exercised. Those who are just are so because they recognise good practical reasons for exercising that virtue, according to her. Practical reason, for Foot, is a sort of master virtue from which the (what Mill also saw as self-regarding/private/non-moral) virtues of courage, prudence, and temperance, for instance, are exercised. Those who are courageous, prudent, and temperate are so because they recognise good practical reasons for exercising those virtues, according to her. Furthermore, to say 'He is just' or 'He is unjust' is, for Foot, to make an evaluation of the rational human will—to talk about goodness or defect of human action. Moreover, to say 'She is courageous' or 'She is cowardly', 'He is prudent' or 'He is imprudent', and 'She is temperate' or 'She is intemperate' is, for Foot, to also make an evaluation of the rational human will—to also talk about goodness or defect of human action. There are, she believes, firstly in relation to evaluations of voluntary action and purpose[34], commonalities between Mill's public sphere of morality and private sphere of non-morality that chip away at that distinction. For, these evaluations, on both sides of Mill's divide, can be imputed to the rational human will. There are, she believes, secondly in relation to formal features of action[35], commonalities between Mill's public sphere of morality and private sphere of non-morality which chip away at that distinction. For, these evaluations, on both sides of Mill's divide, can also be imputed to the rational human will. There are, she believes, thirdly in relation to reasons for acting[36], commonalities between Mill's public sphere of morality and private sphere of non-morality that chip away at that distinction. For, these evaluations, on both sides of Mill's divide, can be

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[34] Philippa Foot, *Natural Goodness*, p. 69.
[35] Ibid., p. 72.
[36] Ibid., p. 77.

imputed to the rational human will as well.

First, Foot points out that regardless of whether an action is, following Mill, deemed either particularly other-regarding/public/moral (e.g., just or unjust) or particularly self-regarding/private/non-moral (e.g., courageous or cowardly, prudent or imprudent, temperate or intemperate), (i) if one does it voluntarily and (ii) if one does it intentionally, then it can be evaluated in terms of goodness or badness and imputed to one's rational will. However, (iii) if, by acting in ignorance of what one is doing, one acts negligently, then it is possible for one to be absolved of one's responsibility for doing the action. Moreover, (iv) if, by acting in ignorance of what one could know and should know, one acts negligently, then it is not possible for one to be absolved of one's responsibility for doing the action. And, by highlighting these aspects of voluntary action and purpose, Foot is proposing that ethical evaluations are not only related to the virtue of justice and the vice of injustice but rather they can also be related to, for example, the virtue of courage and the vice of cowardice, to the virtue of prudence and the vice of imprudence, to the virtue of temperance and the vice of intemperance, etc. And, she notes,

> With these observations we [are] tracing logical limits to evaluations whose subject is goodness and defect of human action considered as such [. . .]. A special connection with the voluntary is, then, the first of the conceptual marks of the special evaluations, picked out from others (such as speech defects) which have to do with goodnesses and defects *in* human beings but are not of the kind that I have indicated by saying that they are about goodness and defect *of the rational will*. And my present point is that their subject matter is more extensive than that picked out by Mill when he spoke of 'morality'. So there is this first reason for treating the subject of the virtues as a whole, as the ancients did.[37]

Second, Foot points out that regardless of whether an actions is, following Mill, deemed either particularly other-regarding/public/moral (e.g., just or unjust) or

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[37] Ibid., pp. 71-72.

particularly self-regarding/private/non-moral (e.g., courageous or cowardly, prudent or imprudent, temperate or intemperate), there are three formal features of action that can be evaluated in terms of goodness or badness and imputed to one's rational will. The first two are: (i) the action one does (e.g., saving a life or taking a life) and (ii) the end for which one does the action, with a bad end always annulling a good action and with a good end sometimes justifying a bad action and sometimes not justifying a bad action. The last one is: (iii) one's belief that the action one does is good or bad, right or wrong, and one's belief that the end for which one does the action is good or bad, right or wrong, where acting from an erring conscience in blameable cases does not absolve one of one's responsibility for doing the action and acting against an erring conscience in blameable cases does not absolve one of one's responsibility for doing the action. In the former case, one is acting in ignorance of what one could and should know. In the latter case, one is acting against reason. And, these observations from Foot are initially reminiscent of Anscombe's comments on Butler[38]. But, these observations from Foot are ultimately reminiscent of Aquinas' comments on conscience[39]: particularly, that a single defect in one's action or in one's conscience is

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[38] See, Chapter II, Section 1, of this thesis.

[39] See, St Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, trans. by Fathers of the English Dominican Province (New York: Benziger Brothers, 1997), First Part of the Second Part, Question XVIII, article 4. Foot is asked in an interview: 'What attracted and attracts you to [approach moral philosophy by focusing on the virtues]?' Foot answers in the interview: 'I believe it was reading Aquinas that got me started. I was on leave and Elizabeth Anscombe had said, 'I think you ought to read Aquinas.' See, Philippa Foot, interviewed by Alex Voorhoeve, 'The Grammar of Goodness', in *The Harvard Review of Philosophy*, XI, (2003), p. 35. Aquinas, however, does not appear at all in 'Modern Moral Philosophy'. Elsewhere, Mary Geach writes, 'Anscombe drew upon his thought to an unknowable extent: she said to me that it aroused prejudice in people to tell them that a thought came from him [. . .]. [T]o ascribe a thought to him made people boringly ignore the philosophical interest of it, whether they were for Aquinas or against him [. . .]. She once called Aquinas a 'strikingly good philosopher' [. . .]. However she seems from her remains not to have done much expounding of Aquinas.' See, G. E. M. Anscombe, *From Plato to Wittgenstein: Essays by G. E. M. Anscombe*, xix. Aquinas, moreover, does appear a little in *Natural Goodness*. Elsewhere, Foot writes, 'It is my opinion that [Aquinas's] *Summa Theologica* is one of the best sources we have for moral philosophy, and moreover that St Thomas's ethical writings are as useful to the atheist as to the Catholic or other Christian believer.' See, Philippa Foot, 'Virtues and Vices', in *Virtues and Vices and Other Essays in Moral Philosophy*, p. 2.

enough for badness, while goodness must be goodness in all respects.[40] However, this

ostensibly questionable idea from Aquinas shouldn't surprise us too much as it is at

the heart of Foot's logical category of the evaluations of the biological parts,

characteristics, and operations of species of the sub-rational world: the natural

goodness and defect of plants and non-human animals. Moreover, this idea shouldn't

surprise us too much as it is at the heart of Foot's logical category of the evaluations

of the biological parts, characteristics, and operations of species of the rational world:

the natural goodness and defect of human beings. And, she notes,

> [M]y examples [. . .] have been from the area that Mill assigned to morality.
> But these faults have their parallels in those that he excluded, in which self-
> destructiveness takes the place of cruelty to others, and indifference to one's
> own good that of indifference to theirs [. . .]. So far, therefore, we have seen
> no reason to think that Mill's 'moral' evaluations should be treated any
> differently from other evaluations concerning the human will.[41]

Third, Foot points out that regardless of whether an action is, following Mill, deemed

either particularly other-regarding/public/moral (e.g., just or unjust) or particularly

self-regarding/private/non-moral (e.g., courageous or cowardly, prudent or imprudent,

temperate or intemperate), there is a reason for doing it or a reason for not doing it that

can be evaluated in terms of goodness or badness and imputed to one's rational will.

They are twofold. The first is: (i) if the action is absolutely prohibited (something

determined by a code of conduct that one follows), then it ought never to be done.

Anscombe advocates the absolute prohibition of lying, for example. Foot advocates

the absolute prohibition of torture, for example. And, it is not just showing indifference

to others that is included (e.g., killing another). But, it is also showing indifference to

oneself that is included (e.g., killing oneself). The second is: (ii) if the description of

the action determines what we ought to do, all things considered (something settled

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[40] Philippa Foot, *Natural Goodness*, pp. 73 and 75.
[41] Ibid., p. 74.

by the weight of the words like—from Mill's other-regarding/public/moral domain—'just' or 'unjust' and—from Mill's self-regarding/private/non-moral domain—'courageous' or 'cowardly', 'prudent' or 'imprudent', and 'temperate' or 'intemperate'), then either it ought to be done or it ought not to be done. And, Foot notes,

> [The] belief in the general overridingness of Millian 'moral' considerations does not [. . .] seem to me defensible, and one may wonder why it is held. That it is may have something to do with the special position of certain prohibitions that as a matter of fact all have to do with what Mill counted as morality [. . .]. But 'moral absolutism' of this ilk does not support any general theory of the overridingness of those reasons for action that could be called 'moral reasons' in Mill's lexicon [. . .]. '[I]mprudent' or foolish [. . .] too are verdictive, contrasting in this respect with expressions such as 'dangerous' and 'self-regarding'. The latter descriptions can be applied to an action without implying that it should not be done, whereas this is not true of words such as 'prudent' and 'foolish'.[42]

We have seen how Foot firstly drew attention to voluntary action and purpose. We have seen how Foot secondly drew attention to formal features of action. We have seen how Foot thirdly drew attention to reasons for action. And, before doing so, Mill's proposal of a division between the evaluations of other-regarding/public/moral actions and self-regarding/private/non-moral actions gave rise to the idea that, in terms of evaluating the *moral* goodness or *moral* badness of actions, there is no significant substance common to both sides of the divide. There was a certain asymmetry to his ethics, therefore. But, after doing so, Foot's opposition to a division between evaluations of other-regarding/public/moral actions and self-regarding/private/non-moral actions gives rise to the idea that, in terms of evaluating the goodness or badness of actions, there is a significant substance common to both sides of the divide. There is a certain symmetry to her ethics, therefore. And, Foot does not want to exclude from conversation about ethics the word 'moral' (without the relative force of Ayerean and

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[42] Ibid., p. 78.

Stevensonian emotivism and Harean prescriptivism and without the absolute source of divine command ethics) and the notions of moral goodness and moral badness in relation to virtues of the will and vices of the will, respectively. She is passive in her suggestion that these terms ought to be used on both sides of Mill's divide. But, Foot does want to include in conversation about ethics the word 'volitional' and the notions of volitional excellence and volitional fault in relation to virtues of the will and vices of the will, respectively. She is active in her suggestion that these terms ought to be used on both sides of Mill's divide. And, she writes,

> My opponent in the main line of our controversy may protest that my attention to a wide class of evaluations has, in taking us outside the realm of obligation and duty, also taken us outside moral philosophy. One might say, 'So much the worse for moral philosophy!' I do not [. . .] much care how the word 'moral' is used [. . .]. [But] [t]hat we tend to speak in moral philosophy only of volitional faults that impinge particularly on others gives the whole subject an objectionably rigoristic, prissy, moralistic tone that we would hardly care to take up in everyday life.[43]

§5.4 NATURAL GOODNESS II—PRACTICAL RATIONALITY

Obviously, the ethical subjectivism of Ayer, Stevenson, and Hare can have no influence on the logical grammar of Foot's logical category of the evaluation of the parts, characteristics, and operations of the sub-rational world of plants and non-human animals. For, human communication and reasoning are clearly not on the scene here. (Foot, echoing Aquinas, notes that, regarding non-human animals, we are dealing with the partaking of choice, of which non-human animals are capable through appetite, rather than the exercising of choice, of which human beings are capable through reason. For, non-human animals have a kind of knowledge of an *end as an end* or a means to that end *as a means to that end*. In essence, non-human animals

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[43] Ibid., p. 79.

cannot choose on a rational ground.[44]) Both her Hume-influenced idea that there can be a logical connection between Is-statements and Ought-statements and her idea (contra Moore) that the term 'good' is an attributive adjective are left unchallenged by the emotivists and prescriptivists at this level of life. However, in this sphere of life, for Foot (as we shall presently see),

> we seem to be far away from the 'boos' and 'hurrays', and even the feelings and attitudes referred to in expressive accounts of judgements of good and bad. No one thinks that calling a knife a good knife, a farmer a good farmer, a speech a good speech, a root a good root necessarily expresses or even involves an attitude or feeling towards it.[45]

Moreover, in this logical category of evaluation, we shall again see that there is no place for consequentialism. However, it is of course not here that Foot bridges the Millian divide between the virtues and vices of Mill's other-regarding/public/moral domain of action and the virtues and vices of his self-regarding/private/non-moral domain of action by introducing the concepts of volitional excellence to denote all virtues of the rational human will and volitional fault to denote all vices of the rational human will.

From the logically unquantifiable natural-history proposition, or Aristotelian categorical, 'Trees have strong roots', where having strong roots is an Aristotelian necessity for trees, the following follows. If a particular tree, which should have strong roots, does have strong roots, then, in this specific way, it is as it functionally, or teleologically, ought to be normally and, so, in this specific way, regardless of the consequences of it being so, and regardless of whether someone (à la Ayer) feels positively or negatively about, or (à la Stevenson) approves or disapproves of, or (à la Hare) assents or does not assent to this particular tree's natural normality, and its need

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[44] Ibid., pp. 53-56.
[45] Philippa Foot, 'Rationality and Virtue', in *Moral Dilemmas and Other Topics in Moral Philosophy*, p. 163.

for strong roots, it is naturally good (or intrinsically good, or autonomously good). This evaluation, therefore, is species-relevant and not speaker-relative. Barring any other lack of Aristotelian necessities, it can flourish. If a particular tree, which should have strong roots, does not have strong roots (however likely this might be), then, in a general sense too, it is not as it functionally or teleologically ought to be normally and, so, in a general sense too, regardless of the consequences of it not being so, and regardless of whether someone (à la Ayer) feels positively or negatively about, or (à la Stevenson) approves or disapproves of, or (à la Hare) assents or does not assent to this particular tree's natural abnormality, and its need still for strong roots, it is naturally deficient (or intrinsically deficient, or autonomously deficient) and cannot flourish. It *is* still the case that it *ought* to have—that it *needs* to have—strong roots. This evaluation, therefore, is species-relevant and not speaker-relative.

From the logically unquantifiable natural-history proposition, or Aristotelian categorical, 'Lions have sharp teeth', where having sharp teeth is an Aristotelian necessity for lions, the following follows. If a particular lion, which should have sharp teeth, does have sharp teeth, then, in this specific way, it is as it functionally, or teleologically, ought to be normally and, so, in this specific way, regardless of the consequences of it being so, and regardless of whether someone (à la Ayer) feels positively or negatively about, or (à la Stevenson) approves or disapproves of, or (à la Hare) assents or does not assent to this particular lion's natural normality, and its need for sharp teeth, it is naturally good (or intrinsically good, or autonomously good). This evaluation, therefore, is species-relevant and not speaker-relative. Barring any other lack of Aristotelian necessities, it can flourish. If a particular lion, which should have sharp teeth, does not have sharp teeth (however likely this might be), then, in a general sense too, it is not as it functionally, or teleologically, ought to be normally and, so, in

a general sense too, regardless of the consequences of it not being so, and regardless of whether someone (à la Ayer) feels positively or negatively about, or (à la Stevenson) approves or disapproves of, or (à la Hare) assents or does not assent to this particular lion's natural abnormality, and its need still for sharp teeth, it is naturally deficient (or intrinsically deficient, or autonomously deficient) and cannot flourish. It *is* still the case that it *ought* to have—that it *needs* to have—sharp teeth. This evaluation, therefore, is species-relevant and not speaker-relative. She writes,

> Expressivist theories have the remarkable though seldom mentioned consequence of separating off the evaluation of human action not only from the evaluation of human sight, hearing, and bodily health but also from all evaluation of the characteristics and operations of plants and [non-human] animals. For it is obvious that no expressivist account will do in those other domains: we cannot think of the use of the word 'good' is to express a 'pro-attitude' in what we say about the roots of nettles or the fangs of ferocious beasts. Nowadays such evaluations are apt to be marginalised as if they were fanciful expressions of the 'proper' evaluations that express our attitudes, practical decisions, or desires. But when I was told by a certain philosopher who wanted to explain 'good' in terms of choices, that the *good* roots of trees were roots of the kind that we 'should choose if we were trees', this finally confirmed my suspicion of the kind of moral philosophy that was his.[46]

Ostensibly, the ethical subjectivism of Ayer, Stevenson, and Hare—crudely characterised, at base, by the adage: *de gustibus non est disputandum*—can have influence on the logical grammar of Foot's logical category of the parts, characteristics, and operations of the rational world of human beings. For, human communication and reasoning are clearly on the scene here. (Foot, echoing Aquinas, notes that, regarding human beings, we are dealing with the exercising of choice, of which human beings are capable through reason, rather than the partaking of choice, of which non-human animals are capable through appetite. For, human beings have a perfect knowledge of an end *as an end* or a means to that end *as a means to that end*. In essence, human beings can choose on a rational ground. This *seeing* an end as an

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[46] Ibid., pp. 25-26.

a general sense too, regardless of the consequences of it not being so, and regardless of whether someone (à la Ayer) feels positively or negatively about, or (à la Stevenson) approves or disapproves of, or (à la Hare) assents or does not assent to this particular lion's natural abnormality, and its need still for sharp teeth, it is naturally deficient (or intrinsically deficient, or autonomously deficient) and cannot flourish. It *is* still the case that it *ought* to have—that it *needs* to have—sharp teeth. This evaluation, therefore, is species-relevant and not speaker-relative. She writes,

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[46] Ibid., pp. 25-26.

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end or a means to that end as a means to that end, for Foot, is not something to be discovered in some privacy of the human mind, where choices to act and reasons for acting might be thought of as being in some way separable from, indeed independent of, the external-world of customs or institutions, for example, and the Wittgensteinian language-games that underpin them. This seeing an end as an end or a means to that end as a means to that end, for Foot, is something to be discovered in some publicity of the human milieu, where choices to act and reasons for acting must be thought of as being in some way inseparable from, indeed dependent on, the external-world of customs or institutions, for instance, and the Wittgensteinian language-games that underpin them.) Both her Hume-influenced idea that there can be a logical connection between Is-statements and Ought-statements and her idea (contra Moore) that the term 'good' is an attributive adjective are not left unchallenged by the emotivists and prescriptivists at this level of life. However, in this sphere of life, for Foot (as we shall presently see),

> [. . .] one may be surprised, and a little sad, that this particular conflict, about 'fact and value', has occupied so much of our time. We seem to have rushed on to the field without waiting to map the territory supposedly in dispute, ready to die for some thesis about commendation or approval, about pro-attitudes or evaluation [. . .].[47]

Furthermore, in this logical category of evaluation, we shall again see that there is no place for consequentialism. Moreover, it is here that Foot bridges the Millian divide between the virtues and vices of Mill's other-regarding/public/moral domain of action and the virtues and vice of his self-regarding/private/non-moral domain of action by introducing the concepts of volitional excellence to denote all virtues of the rational human will and volitional fault to denote all vices of the rational human will.)

From the logically unquantifiable natural-history proposition, or Aristotelian

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[47] Philippa Foot, 'Introduction' in *Theories of Ethics*, p. 12.

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categorical, 'Human beings are linguistic', where being linguistic is an Aristotelian necessity for human beings, the following follows. If a particular human being, who should be linguistic, is linguistic, then, in this specific way, he/she is as he/she functionally, or teleologically, ought to be normally and, so, in this specific way, regardless of the consequences of him/her being so, and regardless of whether he/she (à la Ayer) feels positively or negatively about, or (à la Stevenson) approves or disapproves of, or (à la Hare) assents or does not assent to this natural normality, and this objective need to be linguistic, he/she is naturally good (or intrinsically good, or autonomously good). This evaluation, therefore, is species-relevant and not speaker-relative. Barring any other lack of Aristotelian necessities, he/she can flourish. If a particular human being, who should be linguistic, is not linguistic (however likely this might be), then, in a general sense too, he/she is not as he/she functionally, or teleologically, ought to be normally and, so, in a general sense too, regardless of the consequences of him/her not being so, and regardless of whether he/she (à la Ayer) feels positively or negatively about, or (à la Stevenson) approves or disapproves of, or (à la Hare) assents or does not assent to this natural abnormality, he/she is naturally deficient (or intrinsically deficient, or autonomously deficient) and cannot flourish. It *is* still the case that he/she *ought* to be—that he/she *needs* to be—linguistic. This evaluation, therefore, is species-relevant and not speaker-relative.

Let us look a little closer at the role of the human will and practical reason, here. On one level, saying that human beings ought to be linguistic is saying that human beings ought to have a certain kind of voice box for speaking language, a certain kind of auditory apparatus for hearing language, a certain kind of mental capacity for discerning language, etc. On another level, saying that human beings ought to be linguistic provides us with a practical reason to be linguistic and, for

example, to engage in jokes, poetry, songs, stories, etc. That human beings engage in these activities is observably an objective fact about what human beings normally do (and, so, ought to do) in order to flourish that is independent of any attitude one might have about it. Hence, one must see a good reason to exercise the relevant virtues (i.e., volitional excellences), here, and be linguistic in this way. It follows that if a particular human being, in terms of his/her practical reason, is functional or teleological in this way, then, in this specific way, he/she is naturally good (or intrinsically good, or autonomously good). Barring any other lack of Aristotelian necessities, he/she can flourish. If this human being, in terms of his/her practical reason, is not functional or teleological in this way, then, in a general sense too, he/she is naturally deficient (or intrinsically deficient, or autonomously deficient).

From the logically unquantifiable natural-history proposition, or Aristotelian categorical, 'Human beings are social animals', where being social is an Aristotelian necessity for human beings, the following follows. If a particular human being, who should be social, is social, then, in this specific way, he/she is as he/she functionally, or teleologically, ought to be normally and, so, in this specific way, regardless of the consequences of him/her being so, and regardless of whether he/she (à la Ayer) feels positively or negatively about, or (à la Stevenson) approves or disapproves of, or (à la Hare) assents or does not assent to this natural normality, and this objective need to be social, he/she is naturally good (or intrinsically good, or autonomously good). This evaluation, therefore, is species-relevant and not speaker-relative. Barring any other lack of Aristotelian necessities, he/she can flourish. If a particular human being, who should be social, is not social (however likely this might be), then, in a general sense too, he/she is not as he/she functionally, or teleologically, ought to be normally and, so, in a general sense too, regardless of the consequences of him/her not being so, and

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regardless of whether he/she (à la Ayer) feels positively or negatively about, or (à la Stevenson) approves or disapproves of, or (à la Hare) assents or does not assent to this natural abnormality, he/she is naturally deficient (or intrinsically deficient, or autonomously deficient). It *is* still the case that he/she *ought* to be—that he/she *needs* to be—a social animal. This evaluation, therefore, is species-relevant and not speaker-relative.

Let us look a little closer at the role of the human will and practical reason, here. On one level, saying that human beings ought to be social animals is saying that human beings ought to have mutual relationships. On another level, saying that human beings ought to be social animals provides us with a practical reason to be social animals and, for example, to engage in familial promises, neighbourly promises, professional promises, romantic promises, etc. That human beings engage in these activities is observably an objective fact about what human beings normally do (and, so, ought to do) in order to flourish—about what human beings need normally so as to flourish—that is independent of any attitude one might have about it. Hence, one must see a good reason to exercise the relevant virtues (i.e., volitional excellences), here, and be a social animal in this way. It follows that if a particular human being, in terms of his/her practical reason, is functional or teleological in this way, then, in this specific way, he/she is naturally good (or intrinsically good, or autonomously good). Barring any other lack of Aristotelian necessities, he/she can flourish. If this human being, in terms of his/her practical reason, is not functional or teleological in this way, then, in a general sense too, he/she is naturally deficient (or intrinsically deficient, or autonomously deficient). She writes,

> [A] moral evaluation does not stand over against the statement of a matter of fact, but rather has to do with facts about a particular subject matter, as do evaluations of such things as sight and hearing in animals, and other aspects of their behaviour. Nobody would, I think, take it as other than a plain matter of

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fact that there is something wrong with the hearing of a gull that cannot distinguish the cry of its own chick, as with the sight of an owl that cannot see in the dark. Similarly, it is obvious that there are objective, factual evaluations of such things as human sight, hearing, memory, and concentration, based on the life form of our own species. Why, then, does it seem so monstrous a suggestion that the evaluation of the human will should be determined by facts about the nature of human beings and the life of our own species? Undoubtedly the resistance has something to do with the thought that the goodness of good action has a special relation to choice. But as I have tried to show, the special relation is not what non-cognitivists [Ayer, Stevenson, and Hare] think it is, but rather lies in the fact that moral action is rational action, and in the fact that human beings are creatures with the power to recognise reasons for action and to act on them.[48]

In response, so, to what Ayer, Stevenson, and Hare have to say about the possibility of subjective attitude being a *moral* authority in matters ethical, Foot disagrees with them and thinks that it cannot be, even though she clearly thinks that it has an important role in ethical life[49]. For her, in accordance with her developed natural normativity and necessity (as we have seen in the Introduction to this thesis and as we have seen in more detail in the previous chapter and in the present chapter, one ought to be virtuous (in that being so is conducive to one's flourishing), regardless of any attitude one might have about being so, and one ought not to be vicious (in that being so is detrimental to one's flourishing), regardless of any attitude that one might have about not being so. And, here, the terms 'ought' and 'ought not', which are ethical in nature, are supported by the force of an Aristotelian—but not a speaker-relative—necessity. One ought to be virtuous because, in terms of one's function, or teleology, as a practically rational animal, it is normally necessary to be virtuous. But, it is not speaker-relatively necessary for one to be functionally, or teleologically, as one ought to be. Ultimately, at this point, after the rejection of the idea that subjective attitude

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[48] Philippa Foot, *Natural Goodness*, p. 24.
[49] She writes, 'This in no way precludes recognition of the part played by 'sentiments' such as (negatively) shame and revulsion or (positively) sympathy, self-respect, and pride in motivating human virtue. I think that David Wiggins is right often to have stressed this side of Hume's moral philosophy.' See, ibid.

can be the source of a secular *moral* 'ought' in matters ethical by Foot, the authoritative *moral* force of the ethical term remains incoherent and impracticable outside divine command ethics. It still has no place in secular ethics.

In the present chapter, we have seen how Foot takes on the ethical theories prevalent in her day that she thinks obscure the path back to what is for her the only coherent and practicable ethics outside a religious context: a virtue-based one. Rather than employing ethical terms in the way that they are used in divine command ethics (i.e., with a *moral* force that is only contextually and temporally justifiable where and when God is deemed the absolute source of ethics), the modern ethics of her time (wittingly) employ these terms with a *moral* force that is only contextually and temporally justifiable where and when man is deemed the subjective source of ethics. I considered her take on the relevant philosophy of A. J. Ayer and C. L. Stevenson and what they had to say about subjective emotions being a *moral* authority and R. M. Hare and what he had to say about subjective prescriptions being a *moral* authority. After looking at how Foot questioned, and rejected, their use of the ethical terms 'ought' and 'good', it will be appropriate to consider next, in Chapter VI, whether the David Hume-influenced and somewhat Aristotelian alternative to house these ethical terms that she suggested—i.e., natural normativity and necessity—is ultimately suitable.

CHAPTER VI

FLOURISHING OF THE VIRTUOUS, FLOURISHING OF THE VICIOUS, AND NON-FLOURISHING OF THE SELF-SACRIFICIAL

I have argued [. . .] that it is wrong to look for an independent criterion of practical rationality to which goodness in action must somehow be shown to conform. Instead, rational choice should be seen as an aspect of human goodness, standing at the heart of the virtues rather than out there on its own. I now want to discuss [. . .] an objection to my view of practical rationality: [. . .] the idea that happiness is Man's good, together with the thought that happiness may be successfully pursued through evil action. For then it would seem that there is an independent criterion of rational action—the pursuit of happiness—with rationality on occasion demanding what virtue forbids. Indeed, the thought that happiness is humanity's good may seem to disrupt the argument of [. . .] natural normativity through the idea that the instantiation of the human life form lies in happiness, which should therefore be the determinant of virtue. For how then could it be that virtue sometimes requires the sacrifice of happiness? And how is it that happiness can, it seems, be obtained by wickedness?[1]

In reaction to Foot's comments about Ayerean ethics, Stevensonian ethics, and Harean ethics, one might wonder whether happiness could not be Man's good. But, according to her idea of practical rationality, Foot proposed, there must be no independent criterion of practical rationality to which goodness in action must be shown to conform. The challenge for Foot was to show the rationality of acting on a demand of virtue. But, according to the idea that happiness is Man's good, Foot proposes, there is an independent criterion of practical rationality to which goodness in action is shown to conform. The challenge for proponents of that view is to show that the pursuit of happiness, which would be the independent criterion of practical rationality, is the determinant of virtue. Foot looks to cognates of happiness and contexts of happiness to deal with this issue.

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[1] Philippa Foot, *Natural Goodness*, pp. 81 and 82.

§6.1 COGNATES OF HAPPINESS AND CONTEXTS OF HAPPINESS

Let us look at the language—or the grammar—of Foot's relevant philosophy. Delving into the concept of happiness, Foot observes firstly how happiness can appear in various ways. And, she seems to set about discussing this aspect of the topic of happiness with some certainty, which has been characteristic of her writing in the rest of *Natural Goodness*. She writes, '[Happiness] is a protean concept, appearing now in one way and now in another.'[2]

There are, she states, cognates of happiness, which she elsewhere describes as an 'articulated concept'[3], such as enjoyment of something seen as good on the one hand and enjoyment of something pleasurable and contentment on the other hand, where the first one, having a dimension of depth (and with the relationship with its objects of happiness therefore being more conceptual and grammatical than causal), cannot apply to infants but do apply to adults and where the last two, not having a dimension of depth (and with the relationship with their objects of happiness therefore being more causal than conceptual and grammatical), do apply to infants and can apply to adults. There are, she states, contexts of happiness, which she elsewhere describes as an 'intractable concept'[4], such as being happy doing something, being in a happy frame of mind, and having a happy life, which are applicable to infants and adults. In making this adult-infant distinction about happiness, she alludes in *Natural Goodness* to the Aristotelian notion that, as she puts it, 'we should not wish to continue in the pleasures of childhood at the cost of remaining a child'[5] and she alludes in *Natural Goodness* to the Aristotelian notion that, as she puts it, '[we would not wish to]

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[2] Ibid., p. 97.
[3] Philippa Foot, interviewed by Rick Lewis, 'Philippa Foot'.
[4] Philippa Foot, 'Moral Relativism', in *Moral Dilemmas and Other Topics in Moral Philosophy*, p. 35.
[5] Philippa Foot, *Natural Goodness*, p. 86.

exchange [a child's pleasure] for the things that can be good in an adult life.'[6] In making this adult-infant distinction about happiness, Aristotle writes in *Nicomachean Ethics*, 'Nobody would choose to live out his life with the mentality of a child, even if he continued to take the greatest pleasure in the things that children like [. . .].'[7]

The following table is, as it seems to me, a precise breakdown of what Foot takes to be some of the cognates of and the contexts of the happiness of adults[8] and infants[9].

Contexts of happiness	Cognates of happiness applicable to adults	Cognates of happiness applicable to infants
Being happy doing some activity.	*With dimension of depth*	*With dimension of depth*
	Enjoyment of something seen as good	
Being in a happy frame of mind.	*With no dimension of depth*	*With no dimension of depth*
Having a happy life.	Enjoyment of something pleasurable Contentment	Enjoyment of something pleasurable Contentment

When Foot suggests that the relationship between the enjoyment of something seen as good and *what* is seen as good is more conceptual and grammatical than causal, she means, firstly, that there is more restriction between the effect of deep happiness and the cause of deep happiness and, secondly, that, as with an adult, this happiness, which again is 'deep' happiness, is something that we have learned (like 'deep' friendship and 'deep' love) through language, like the language of the abovementioned customs

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[6] Ibid.
[7] Aristotle, *The Nicomachean Ethics*, p. 260.
[8] Some others that are not her main focus but that she seems to briefly outline in relation to adults in particular are gladness and joy. See, Philippa Foot, *Natural Goodness*, p. 84 and p. 85.
[9] Some others that are not her main focus but that she briefly outlines in relation to infants in particular are excitement and elation. See, Philippa Foot, *Natural Goodness*, p. 86.

or institutions such as lending and promising. Therefore, to understand deep happiness in the context of being in a happy frame of mind, for example, we must also look outward to the public criteria of the external social world and the language-use that underpins it; to the cross-cultural beliefs and experiences of the adult social animal to do with (along with deep happiness) deep friendship and deep love.

When Foot alludes that the relationship between the enjoyment of something pleasurable and *what* is pleasurable is less conceptual and grammatical than causal, she means, firstly, that there is less restriction between the cause of this type of happiness and the effect of this type of happiness and, secondly, that, as with an infant, this happiness, which is not 'deep' happiness, is not something that we have learned (unlike 'deep' friendship and 'deep' love) through language, like the language of the aforementioned customs or institutions such as lending and promising. Therefore, to understand this happiness in the context of being in a happy frame of mind, here, we cannot also look outward to the public criteria of the external social world and the language-use that underpins it; to the cross-cultural beliefs and experiences of the adult social animal to do with (along with deep happiness) deep friendship and deep love. Foot writes,

> I want to draw [. . .] from the discussion of deep happiness, the thought that we should be suspicious of the idea that whenever we speak of happiness we are speaking of a state of mind which seems as detachable from beliefs about special objects as is, for example, having a head ache, or a tune running through one's head. It seems to me that this picture should be shaken by a realisation of the impossibility of attributing a grown-ups deep happiness to a young child.[10]

In reaction to Foot's comments about happiness, one might wonder why happiness could not be successfully pursued through evil action. According to the idea that happiness may be successfully pursued through evil action, Foot proposes, there is an

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[10] Philippa Foot, *Natural Goodness*, p. 89.

independent criterion of practical rationality to which badness in action may be shown to conform. The challenge for proponents of that view is to show that rationality, of which the pursuit of happiness would be the independent criterion, occasionally demands what virtue forbids. Foot looks to instances of the combination of happiness and virtue and instances of the combination of happiness and vice to deal with this issue.

§6.2 HAPPINESS AND VIRTUE AND HAPPINESS AND VICE

Delving into the notion of happiness, Foot observes secondly how happiness can appear with virtue and how happiness can appear with vice. But, she seems to set about discussing this aspect of the topic of happiness with some uncertainty, which has been uncharacteristic of her writing in the rest of *Natural Goodness*. She writes, '[M]y best efforts are going to be pretty pathetic in this deep and difficult part of moral philosophy.'[11]

As regards the virtuous adult, one way of explaining the interconnectedness of some of the cognates of happiness and the contexts of happiness, as Foot presents them, is, I think, as follows. For virtuous adults, for whom Foot believes there can be (and for whom I will now agree that there can be) a dimension of depth in their happiness, enjoyment without a real dimension of depth (i.e., the enjoyment of something pleasurable) can be derived from the achievement itself of doing some activity but enjoyment with a real dimension of depth (i.e., the enjoyment of something good seen as good) can be derived from what is being achieved overall by doing some activity. And, the cognate of deep enjoyment, here, in particular, can manifest in a happy frame of mind and be a part of a happy life, for Foot.

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[11] Ibid., p. 82.

For an example, Foot proposes, look at gardening.[12] Here, enjoyment without a dimension of depth (i.e., enjoyment of something pleasurable) can be derived from the achievement itself of, for example, planting, watering, weeding, etc. But, enjoyment with a dimension of depth here (i.e., enjoyment of something good seen as good) can be derived from what is being achieved overall, such as better health, blooming herbs, pride of one's place, etc. And, the cognate of deep enjoyment, here, in particular, can manifest in a happy frame of mind and be a part of a happy life, for Foot. Or look at philosophising as an example, Foot suggests.[13] Here, enjoyment without a dimension of depth (i.e., enjoyment of something pleasurable) can be derived from the achievement itself of, for example, engaging with particular philosophies, grappling with philosophical problems, arguing with philosophers' points, etc. But, enjoyment with a dimension of depth here (i.e., enjoyment of something good seen as good) can be derived from what is being achieved overall, such as clarity of thought, enrichment of life, expansion of knowledge, etc. And, the cognate of deep enjoyment, here, in particular, can manifest in a happy frame of mind and be a part of a happy life, for Foot. And, again, interestingly, for Foot, in instinctively wanting to accept the link between *overall* achievement and deep happiness, here, we glimpse a 'conceptual [and] not a causal' truth.[14] And, this conceptual (and grammatical) truth is related to the idea of benefit, for Foot, which, as we shall see below, is central to her project of natural normativity and necessity.

The following table is, as it seems to me, a precise breakdown of what Foot takes to be some of the cognates of and the contexts of the happiness of the virtuous adult.

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[12] Ibid., pp. 83 and 84
[13] Ibid.
[14] Philippa Foot, 'Moral Relativism', p. 35.

Contexts of happiness	Cognates of happiness applicable to virtuous adults
Being happy doing some virtuous activity	*With dimension of depth*
	Enjoyment of something good seen as good
Being in a happy frame of mind	*With no dimension of depth*
	Enjoyment of something pleasurable
Having a happy life	Contentment

Foot writes,

> It is not just what someone says but what he says it *about* that matters, and why should it not be so? We are tempted to think of deep happiness as explicable psychologically in a way that makes it possible to separate it from its objects. But why should this be possible? Why shouldn't the communality of meaning not depend here on a shared reaction among human beings to certain things that are very general in human life? Are not these reactions shared even by people of very different cultures; not, of course, exactly, but nevertheless with sufficient similarity for people of one age or culture to understand depth of happiness over a birth and depth of grief about the death of a parent, child, or friend? Thus possible objects of deep happiness seem to be things that are basic in human life, such as home, and family, and work, and friendship.[15]

As regards the vicious adult, one way of explaining the interconnectedness of some of the cognates of happiness and the contexts of happiness, as Foot presents them, is, I think, as follows. For vicious adults, for whom Foot believes there can be (but for whom I will later disagree that there cannot be) a dimension of depth in their happiness, enjoyment without a real dimension of depth (i.e., enjoyment of something pleasurable) can be derived from the achievement itself of doing some activity but enjoyment with a real dimension of depth (i.e., enjoyment of something bad seen as good) can be derived from what is being achieved overall by doing some activity. And, the cognate of deep enjoyment, here, in particular, can manifest in a happy frame of mind and be a part of a happy life, for Foot.

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[15] Philippa Foot, *Natural Goodness*, p. 88.

For an example, Foot proposes, look at the actions of Nazis.[16] Here, enjoyment without a dimension of depth (i.e., enjoyment of something pleasurable) was, for her, derived from the achievement itself of, for example, '[making] the day-to-day arrangements for the death of great numbers of men, women, and children in the gas chambers [. . .] solving administrative problems [. . .] [selecting] prisoners for death or for 'punishment', taking pleasure in [the] power to terrify them and to have them destroyed or spared at the wave of a hand [. . .] tormenting and destroying the inmates of the camp'[17], etc. But, enjoyment with a dimension of depth here (i.e., enjoyment of something bad seen as good) was, for her, derived from what was being achieved overall, such as 'helping to purify the Aryan race, inspired by Hitler's leadership, and serving a great cause'[18], etc. And, somewhat counter-intuitively due to what Foot believes is our natural refusal to accept so, the cognate of deep enjoyment, here, in particular, was manifest in a happy frame of mind and a part of a happy life, for her. Or look at the actions of Frederick West and Rosemary West, as an example, Foot suggests.[19] Here, enjoyment without a dimension of depth (i.e., enjoyment of something pleasurable) was, for her, derived from the achievement itself of, for example, '[acting] out their sexual fantasies free from detection'[20]. But, enjoyment with a dimension of depth here (i.e., enjoyment of something bad seen as good) was, for her, derived from what was being achieved overall, such as a 'career of abuse and murder'[21]. And, somewhat counter-intuitively due to what Foot believes is our natural refusal to accept so, the cognate of deep enjoyment, here, in particular, was manifest in a happy frame of mind and a part of a happy life, for her. But, again, interestingly,

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[16] Ibid.
[17] Ibid. p. 90.
[18] Ibid.
[19] Ibid., p. 94.
[20] Ibid.
[21] Ibid.

for Foot, in instinctively wanting to reject the link between *overall* achievement and deep happiness, here, we glimpse 'not truth [because the Nazis *had* deep happiness from their overall achievement, according to Foot, and because the Wests *had* deep happiness from their overall achievement, according to Foot] but rather the crooked reflection of a real "grammatical" (meaning conceptual) truth.'[22] And, this conceptual (and grammatical) truth is related to the idea of benefit, for Foot, which, as we shall see below, is central to her project of natural normativity and necessity.

The following table is, as it seems to me, a precise breakdown of what Foot takes to be some of the cognates of and the contexts of the happiness of the vicious adult. (Worth noting here too is the implicit rejection of Bentham's pleasure principle.)

Contexts of happiness	Cognates of happiness applicable to vicious adults
Being happy doing some vicious activity	*With dimension of depth*
Being in a happy frame of mind	Enjoyment of something bad seen as good
	With no dimension of depth
Having a happy life	Enjoyment of something pleasurable Contentment

Summarising an important point, here, related to the rationality of acting on a demand of virtue and not happiness, MacIntyre writes the following in *After Virtue*,

> [W]hat *I* particularly enjoy will of course depend upon what sort of person I am, and what sort of person I am is of course a matter of my virtues and vices [. . .]. The oddity of [the suggestion that the virtues are nothing but those qualities which we happen to find generally pleasant or useful] lies in the fact that what we find generally pleasant or useful will depend on what virtues are generally possessed and cultivated in our community. [T]he virtues cannot be defined or identified in terms of the pleasant or useful. To this it may be replied that surely there are qualities which are useful or pleasant to human beings *qua* members of a particular biological species with a particular kind of an environment. The standard of utility or pleasure is set by man *qua* animal, man prior to and without any particular culture. But man without culture is a myth.

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[22] Ibid., p. 91.

> Our biological nature certainly places constraints on all cultural possibility; but man who has nothing but a biological nature is a creature of whom we know nothing. It is only man with practical intelligence—and that, as we have seen, is intelligence informed by virtues—whom we actively meet in history.[23]

For Foot, we *observe* that one can flourish and be happy when one does something good seen as good (i.e., when one is virtuous). And, we naturally accept this combination of happiness and virtue, she believes, thinking that, because one can *benefit* from virtue, it must be true happiness. With this natural acceptance, Foot alludes, we glimpse the clear reflection of a real conceptual (and grammatical) truth: that happiness and virtue are conceptually inseparable. Happiness, therefore, though definitely not the determinant of virtue, when combined with virtue *can* be considered Man's good, according to Foot.

For Foot, we *observe*, in cases of evil, like that of the Nazis facilitating death, that one can flourish and be happy when one does something bad seen as good (i.e., when one is vicious). Such cases of evil can lead to reservations about how one ought to be so as to flourish and, therefore, about the strength of the connection between flourishing and virtue—on which Aristotle wrote—as it is conveyed, in particular, in the above blueprint of natural normativity and necessity that I have drawn from 'Modern Moral Philosophy' and *Natural Goodness*. Anscombe is manifestly mindful of the difficulty, writing, '[H]uman 'flourishing' [. . .] appears the most doubtful [of concepts to account for].'[24] Foot is also well aware of the difficulty, writing, '[T]here is a [. . .] sad truth to be recognised in the saying about the wicked who flourish like the bay tree.'[25] We naturally refuse this combination of happiness and vice, she believes, thinking that, because one cannot *benefit* from vice, it cannot be true happiness. And, with this natural refusal, Foot suggests, we glimpse the crooked

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[23] Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 3rd edn., pp. 160-161.
[24] G. E. M. Anscombe, 'Modern Moral Philosophy', p. 41.
[25] Philippa Foot, *Natural Goodness*, p. 97.

reflection of a real conceptual (and grammatical) truth: that happiness and vice are conceptually separable. Happiness, therefore, though maybe the determinant of vice, when combined with vice *cannot* be considered Man's good, according to Foot. Foot writes,

> Can one describe a wicked person as a happy person? Of course one can, look at how the wicked flourish like the bay tree. But there are some examples that make me stick with the idea that someone could say, 'I cannot get happiness through wickedness, through acting badly, through selling my friends down the river. That's not something that I could count as happiness and it's not just that I wouldn't be happy afterwards because I would be so ashamed. It would be true even if I was going to be given some drug, or if a happy brick would drop on my head after I'd done this thing so that I'd never remember that I'd done it.' Someone might well say, 'nothing that I could get by really wicked actions, by desperate corruption, by betraying my friends, is anything that I would count as happiness, and anything that made me do it I would not count as having benefited me.'[26]

On first inspection of cases of self-sacrifice, moreover, like that of the members of the German resistance facing death, where by opting to not act in accordance with vice (and in accordance with the evil of the SS) their happiness *could*, Foot notes, be said to have been sacrificed, we see an instance of virtue and happiness being conceptually separable. For, *in one way*, it can be said that by acting virtuously, they sacrificed deep happiness with their loved ones. Such cases of self-sacrifice can lead to reservations also about how one ought to be so as to flourish and, therefore, also about the strength of the connection between flourishing and virtue—on which Aristotle wrote—as it is depicted, in particular, in the above blueprint of natural normativity and necessity that I have drawn from Anscombe's article and Foot's book. Anscombe is well aware of the difficulty, as she writes, '[S]omeone might say that one at least needed to stay alive to flourish.'[27] Foot is manifestly mindful of the difficulty, as she writes, [W]e must understand someone who [is] sacrificing his life for the sake of justice.'[28] On further

[26] Philippa Foot, interviewed by Rick Lewis, 'Philippa Foot'.
[27] G. E. M. Anscombe, 'Modern Moral Philosophy', p. 41.
[28] Philippa Foot, *Natural Goodness*, p. 97.

inspection of cases of self-sacrifice, however, like that of the members of the German

resistance facing death, where their happiness *should*, Foot notes, be said to have been

not sacrificed but rather not possible by opting to act in accordance with vice (and in

accordance with the evil of the SS), we see an instance of virtue and happiness being

conceptually inseparable. For, *in another way*, it can be said that by acting viciously,

deep happiness with their loved ones was not sacrificed but rather not possible.

Summarising an important point, here, about the rationality of acting on a demand of

virtue and not happiness, Hacker-Wright writes the following in *Philippa Foot's*

Moral Thought,

> [Foot] states that happiness is the *enjoyment of good things* and such enjoyment
> is not identical with the goodness of virtue itself. In the view that Foot opposes,
> any good that I could attain only by acting viciously will not count as a loss to
> a fully virtuous agent. The fully virtuous agent sees himself as having no
> reason to pursue freedom from the torture rack if doing so would mean being
> cowardly. In that view, the virtuous agent on the rack is acting well and
> therefore living well and flourishing. Foot resists the identification of living
> well with happiness. Though the virtuous agent in such a circumstance can live
> well, he *cannot enjoy* this activity, and so he is suffering and unhappy even as
> he acts well.[29]

§6.3 NATURAL GOODNESS III—BENEFIT

The logical grammar of Foot's logical category of the evaluation of the parts,

characteristics, and operations of the sub-rational world of plants and non-human

animals includes a conceptual connection between plant and non-human animal

benefit and plant and non-human animal good. And, for Foot, it is enough to say of a

plant or a non-human animal that it flourishes if, for example, it lives a long life and

reproduces. She writes,

> Look at what a plant or an animal needs to do for the sake of its flourishing, so
> that it will have a good life in the sense that things will go well for it [. . .].

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[29] John Hacker-Wright, *Philippa Foot's Moral Thought*, p. 86. I emphasise the word 'cannot' to
highlight that, in this example, happiness is not sacrificed. I emphasise the word 'cannot' to highlight
that, in this example, happiness is not possible.

> [T]he notion of flourishing is central [. . .]. What is beneficial to [a plant or a non-human animal] [. . .] is what allows it to flourish, or makes it more possible for it to flourish.[30]

From the logically unquantifiable natural-history proposition, or Aristotelian categorical, 'Trees have strong roots', where having strong roots is an Aristotelian necessity for trees, the following follows. If a particular tree, which should have strong roots, does have strong roots, then, in this specific way, it is as it functionally, or teleologically, ought to be normally and, so, in this specific way, regardless of the consequences of it being so, and regardless of whether someone (à la Ayer) feels positively or negatively about, or (à la Stevenson) approves or disapproves of, or (à la Hare) assents or does not assent to this particular tree's natural normality, and its need to have strong roots, it is naturally good (or intrinsically good, or autonomously good). This evaluation, therefore, is species-relevant and not speaker-relative. Barring any other lack of Aristotelian necessities, it can flourish. And, having strong roots can *benefit* the tree in question, therefore. If a particular tree, which should have strong roots, does not have strong roots (however likely this might be), then, in a general sense too, it is not as it functionally or teleologically ought to be normally and, so, in a general sense too, regardless of the consequences of it not being so, and regardless of whether someone (à la Ayer) feels positively or negatively about, or (à la Stevenson) approves or disapproves of, or (à la Hare) assents or does not assent to this particular tree's natural abnormality, and its need still to have strong roots, it is naturally deficient (or intrinsically deficient, or autonomously deficient) and cannot flourish. And, not having strong roots cannot *benefit* the tree in question, therefore. It *is* still the case that it *ought* to have—that it *needs* to have—strong roots. This evaluation, therefore, is species-relevant and not speaker-relative.

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[30] Philippa Foot, interviewed by Rick Lewis, 'Philippa Foot'.

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From the logically unquantifiable natural-history proposition, or Aristotelian categorical, 'Wolves hunt in packs, where hunting in packs is an Aristotelian necessity for wolves, the following follows. If a particular wolf, which should hunt in packs, does hunt in packs, then, in this specific way, it is as it functionally, or teleologically, ought to be normally and, so, in this specific way, regardless of the consequences of it being so, and regardless of whether someone (à la Ayer) feels positively or negatively about, or (à la Stevenson) approves or disapproves of, or (à la Hare) assents or does not assent to this particular wolf's natural normality, and its need to hunt in packs, it is naturally good (or intrinsically good, or autonomously good). This evaluation, therefore, is species-relevant and not speaker-relative. Barring any other lack of Aristotelian necessities, it can flourish. And, hunting in packs can *benefit* the wolf in question, therefore. If a particular wolf, which should hunt in packs, does not hunt in packs (however likely this might be), then, in a general sense too, it is not as it functionally or teleologically ought to be normally and, so, in a general sense too, regardless of the consequences of it not being so, and regardless of whether someone (à la Ayer) feels positively or negatively about, or (à la Stevenson) approves or disapproves of, or (à la Hare) assents or does not assent to this particular wolf's natural abnormality, and its need still to hunt in packs, it is naturally deficient (or intrinsically deficient, or autonomously deficient) and cannot flourish. And, not hunting in packs cannot *benefit* the wolf in question, therefore. It *is* still the case that it *ought* to—that it *needs* to—hunt in packs. This evaluation, therefore, is species-relevant and not speaker-relative. Foot writes,

> Let us ask what it is to benefit a living thing, as this seems, after all, to be the same as doing something that is for its good. The concept of benefit seems to have the right kind of generality, and will of course cover both a beneficial change in an organism and that which protects it from external harm. To benefit an individual it may be necessary to act on it—or make it better—or on the other hand to act on its environment. St Jerome healed the lion's paw but

> Noah sheltered his animals from the flood [. . .] Let us now consider the concept of benefit specifically in relation to human beings, using the discussion as a first step to an understanding of the idea of happiness that would disallow the combination of wickedness and felicity [. . .].[31]

The logical grammar of Foot's logical category of the evaluation of the parts, characteristics, and operations of the rational world of human beings includes a conceptual connection between human benefit and human good. And, for Foot, it is not enough to say of a human being that it flourishes if, for example, it lives a long life and reproduces. She writes,

> You can't say that human beings flourish if they just survive to a ripe old age and reproduce themselves. In an animal or a plant that may be enough for flourishing, but if a human being just does that with no happiness they must live a wretched life. So what is for a person's good certainly must have some relation to their happiness.[32]

As highlighted in the previous chapter, if we say that human beings ought to be linguistic, we might, on the one hand, mean that human beings ought to have a certain kind of voice box for speaking language, a certain kind of auditory apparatus for hearing language, a certain kind of mental capacity for discerning language, etc.; that having them will be of benefit to human beings. On the other hand, if we say that human beings ought to be linguistic, this 'ought' provides us with a practical reason to be linguistic and, for example, to engage in jokes, poetry, songs, stories, etc. That human beings engage in these activities is observably an objective fact about what human beings normally do (and, so, ought to do) in order to flourish that is independent of any attitude one might have about it. Hence, one must see a good reason to exercise the relevant virtues (i.e., volitional excellences), here, and be linguistic in this way. If one does see a good reason to be so, then, according to Foot, one can exercise the relevant virtues with a deep happiness. For, enjoyment with a dimension of depth for

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[31] Philippa Foot, *Natural Goodness*, pp. 93-94.
[32] Philippa Foot, interviewed by Rick Lewis, 'Philippa Foot'.

the virtuous person (i.e., enjoyment of something good *seen* as good) can be derived from what is being achieved overall by being linguistic. And, the cognate of deep enjoyment, here, in particular, can manifest in a happy frame of mind and must be a part of a happy life, for Foot.

It follows that if this human being, in terms of his/her practical reason, is functional or teleological in this way, then, in this specific way, he/she is naturally good (or intrinsically good, or autonomously good). Barring any other lack of Aristotelian necessities, he/she can flourish. And, being practically rational can *benefit* the human being in question, therefore. If this human being, in terms of his/her practical reason, is not functional or teleological in this way, then, in a general sense too, he/she is naturally deficient (or intrinsically deficient, or autonomously deficient) but nevertheless *can* flourish, according to Foot. Indeed, one might see a reason to stop one's child from engaging in jokes, poetry, songs, stories, etc., for example. And, even if one does see a reason to do so, according to Foot, one can exercise this vice (volitional fault) with a deep happiness too. For, enjoyment with a dimension of depth for the vicious person (i.e., enjoyment of something bad *seen* as good) can be derived from whatever is being achieved overall by preventing one's child from engaging in jokes, poetry, songs, stories, etc. And, the cognate of deep enjoyment, here, in particular, can manifest in a happy frame of mind and *can* be a part of a happy life, for Foot. But, acting contrary to practical rationality, here, cannot *benefit* the human being in question, however, according to her philosophy.

As highlighted in the previous chapter, if we say that human beings ought to be social animals, we might, on the one hand, mean that human beings ought to have mutual relationships; that having them will be of benefit to human beings. On the other hand, if we say that human beings ought to be social animals, this 'ought' provides us

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with a practical reason to be social animals and, for example, to engage in familial promises, neighbourly promises, professional promises, romantic promises, etc. That human beings engage in these activities is observably an objective fact about what human beings do (and, so, ought to do) in order to flourish—about what human beings need normally so as to flourish—that is independent of any attitude one might have about it. Hence, one must see a good reason to exercise the relevant virtues (i.e., volitional excellences), here, and be a social animal in this way. If one does see a good reason to be so, then, according to Foot, one can exercise the relevant virtues with a deep happiness. For, enjoyment with a dimension of depth for the virtuous person (i.e., enjoyment of something good *seen* as good) can be derived from what is being achieved overall by being a social animal. And, the cognate of deep enjoyment, here, in particular, can manifest in a happy frame of mind and must be a part of a happy life, for Foot.

It follows that if this human being, in terms of his/her practical reason, is functional or teleological in this way, then, in this specific way, he/she is naturally good (or intrinsically good, or autonomously good). Barring any other lack of Aristotelian necessities, he/she can flourish. And, being practically rational can *benefit* the human being in question, therefore. If this human being, in terms of his/her practical reason, is not functional or teleological in this way, then, in a general sense too, he/she is naturally deficient (or intrinsically deficient, or autonomously deficient) but nevertheless *can* flourish, according to Foot. Indeed, one might see a reason to stop one's child from engaging in mutual relationships, for example. And, even if one does see a reason to do so, according to Foot, one can exercise this vice (volitional fault) with a deep happiness too. For, enjoyment with a dimension of depth for the vicious person (i.e., enjoyment of something bad *seen* as good) can be derived from

whatever is being achieved overall by preventing one's child from engaging in mutual relationships. And, the cognate of deep enjoyment, here, in particular, can manifest in a happy frame of mind and *can* be a part of a happy life, for Foot. But, acting contrary to practical rationality, here, cannot *benefit* the human being in question, however, according to her philosophy. Foot writes,

> The suggestion is, then, that humanity's good can be thought of as happiness, and yet in such a way that combining it with wickedness is a priori ruled out [. . .]. I agree [. . .] that we have an understanding of the word 'happiness' that is close to Aristotle's *eudaimonia* in that operation in conformity with the virtues belongs to its meaning. In my own terminology 'happiness' is here understood as *the enjoyment of good things*, meaning enjoyment in attaining, and in pursuing, right ends.[33]

In response, firstly, to what the cognates of happiness and the contexts of happiness tell us about the possibility of happiness being Man's good, Foot thinks that, on the understanding that happiness is the enjoyment of something good seen as good, it can be considered so but that, on the understanding that happiness may be the enjoyment of something bad seen as good, it cannot be considered so. In response, secondly, to what the instances of the combination of happiness and virtue and the instances of the combination of happiness and vice tell us about the possibility of happiness being successfully pursued through evil action, Foot thinks that if we exclude from our account of happiness a conceptual connection between it and the notion of what it is to benefit someone, or what is for someone's good, then, on that account, it seems as though it can be pursued through evil action but that if we include in our account of happiness a conceptual connection between it and the notion of what it is to benefit someone, or what is for someone's good, then, on that account, it seems as though it cannot be pursued through evil action. For her, in accordance with her natural normativity, one ought to be virtuous because being so is good for one, or of benefit

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[33] Philippa Foot, *Natural Goodness*, pp. 96 and 97.

to one, and *can* make one happy and one ought not to be vicious because being so *may* make one happy but is not good for one, or of benefit to one. And, here, the terms 'ought' and 'ought not', which are ethical in nature, are supported by the force of an Aristotelian—but neither an absolute nor speaker-relative—necessity. One ought to be virtuous because, in terms of one's function, or teleology, as a practically rational animal, it is normally necessary to be virtuous regardless of the happiness from being so.

CONCLUSION

OVERVIEW

Philippa Foot, although a philosopher deserving of much merit in her own right, owed a great deal to Elizabeth Anscombe and Foot's book *Natural Goodness*, although a work justifying much merit in its own right, was indebted significantly to Anscombe's article 'Modern Moral Philosophy'. In Chapters I through III of this thesis, we considered what Anscombe had to say in 'Modern Moral Philosophy' about (what I have called) the 'ought' of flourishing—about the language that is and is not the basis for a coherent and practicable ethics. For her, being a Catholic, divine command ethics was coherent and practicable. Yet, she reasonably felt that there was a need for those with no religion—herself excluded, of course—to have a coherent and practicable ethics too. She chose virtue ethics as the ideal candidate because she was impressed by its ethical notions of how one ought to be so as to be fit to flourish.

At the time of writing 'Modern Moral Philosophy', however, she believed that in the influential moral philosophies of the day (which included the deontologies of Joseph Butler and Immanuel Kant and the utilitarianisms of Jeremy Bentham, John Stuart Mill, G. E. Moore, and Henry Sidgwick), the ethical term 'ought' bore a contextually and temporally unjustifiable *moral* force, appropriate only where and when God was considered the absolute source of ethics; where and when what one *morally* ought to do was thought to be determined by God. And, although she thought that such a *moral* force was incapable of resonating with the progressively prevalent questioning agnostic or atheist of her time, she found these ethical theories incoherent and impracticable in their own right and sought to expose their weaknesses, clearing the way for a return to a virtue-based ethics.

After examining, in Chapter I, what Anscombe considered to be the history of such an acquisition of said *moral* force, looking at the ethical language of divine command ethics (wherein the term 'moral' is related to authority that is underpinned by the force of an absolute necessity) which, dissimilar to that of Aristotelian ethics (wherein the term 'moral' is related to virtues that are underpinned by the force of an Aristotelian necessity), left a residue on the ethical language of the moral philosophy of her day, we examined, in Chapter II, said moral philosophy and what she had to say about Butler and his proposed *moral* authority of conscience alone, Kant and his proposed *moral* authority of reason alone, Bentham and Mill and their proposed *moral* authority of pleasure alone, and Moore and Sidgwick and their proposed *moral* authority of consequences alone. We did this before examining, in Chapter III, the suitability of her (David Hume-influenced) alternative suggestion for a coherent and practicable (secular-friendly) home for the ethical notions of how one ought to be so as to be capable of flourishing, the foundation of which, as I argued in Chapter III of this thesis, can be extrapolated from Anscombe's notion of brute facts.[1]

Anscombe proposed that the foundation for such a coherent and practicable home for this term ('ought') and that concept (flourishing) could maybe be found in an examination of needs and norms in nature; to be more specific, by considering the commonalities between the needs and norms of human biology and human virtue, for example. But, she did not really work on this idea beyond the following embryonic thoughts. Firstly, she noted how it is that with regard to human biology, it is good for a man's flourishing if he has the full complement of teeth; that a man ought to have the full complement of teeth. It is not that all men have the full set of teeth, for fewer than all men have. Nor is it that the average number of teeth men have is the full set,

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[1] See, Chapter III, Sections 3 of this thesis.

for most men have fewer. But, it is what he *needs* to actualise his potential in this particular respect. A complete set of teeth is the *norm*. It is the ideal, if you will. Secondly, she noted how it is that in the area of human virtue, the proposition 'It is the case that human beings have the full complement of virtues' is an interesting one. It is interesting because it does not mean that all human beings have the full complement of virtues, since fewer than all human beings do. And, it does not mean that the average number of virtues that human beings have is the full complement, since human beings on average have fewer than all. But, a complete set of virtues is still the *norm*. Human beings *need* the full complement of virtues to actualise their potential in this particular respect; to live up to the norm, if you like. Again, it is the ideal. She suggested that it is good for a man's flourishing if he has this many virtues; that a man ought to be equipped with this many virtues.

In Chapters IV through VI, we considered what Foot had to say in *Natural Goodness* about (what I have called) the 'ought' of flourishing—about the grammar that is and is not the basis for a coherent and practicable ethics. For her, being an atheist, divine command ethics was not coherent and practicable. And, she reasonably felt, as Anscombe did, that there was a need for those with no religion—herself included, of course—to have a coherent and practicable ethics too. She chose, as Anscombe did, virtue ethics as the ideal candidate because she was impressed by its ethical notions of how one ought to be so as to be fit to flourish.

But, at the time of writing *Natural Goodness*, she held that in the influential moral philosophies of the day (which included the emotivism of A. J. Ayer and C. L. Stevenson and the prescriptivism of R. M. Hare), the ethical term 'ought' bore a contextually and temporally justifiable *moral* force, appropriate only where and when man, and not God, is considered a subjective, and not an absolute, source of ethics;

where and when what one *morally* ought to do is thought to be determined by man's subjective emotions or man's subjective prescriptions. And, although she thought that such a *moral* force was capable of resonating with the progressively prevalent questioning agnostic or atheist of her time, she found these ethical theories incoherent and impracticable in their own right and sought to expose their weaknesses, clearing the way for a return to a virtue-based ethics.

After examining, in Chapter IV, what Foot considered to be the history of such an acquisition of a subjective *moral* force, looking at the ethical language of some Moorean philosophy which, similar to that of some Humean philosophy, left a residue on the ethical language of the moral philosophy of her day (namely Moore's idea of the term 'good' as being not definable as a non-natural property and namely Hume's idea of the term 'ought' as being not derivable from non-ethical claims), we examined, in Chapter V, said moral philosophy and what she had to say about Ayer and Stevenson and their proposed subjective *moral* authority of emotivism and Hare and his proposed subjective *moral* authority of prescriptivism. We did this before examining, in Chapter VI, the suitability of her (Hume-influenced) alternative suggestion for a coherent and practicable (secular-friendly) home for the ethical notions of how one ought to be so as to be capable of flourishing, the basis of which, as I argued in Chapter IV of this thesis, can be transferred from Anscombe's notion of brute facts.[2]

Foot proposed that the basis for such a coherent and practicable home for the term 'ought' and the concept of flourishing could definitely be found in an examination of needs and norms in nature; to be more specific, by considering the commonalties between the needs and norms of plant biology, non-human animal

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[2] See, Chapter IV, Section 1 of this thesis.

biology, human biology, and human virtue. And, she did really work on this idea beyond the following embryonic thoughts. Firstly, she highlighted how it is that the *norms* which Anscombe wrote about, in her analysis of needs and norms in nature, are expressed in what are named logically unquantifiable natural-history propositions that relate to living things alone—in contrast with logically quantifiable propositions like 'All' propositions or 'Some' propositions that relate to living things and to non-living things also—and state how a certain species at a certain time in a certain environment ought to be in respect of its *normal* function or teleology (i.e., so that it is fit to flourish). Following Michael Thompson, she also called them Aristotelian categoricals. Secondly, she highlighted how it is that the *needs* which Anscombe wrote about, in her analysis of needs and norms in nature, are that with/without which living things do/do not fulfil their *normal* function or teleology (i.e., are/are not fit to flourish) and are, thus, naturally good/deficient (or intrinsically good/deficient, or autonomously good/deficient). Following Anscombe, she also called them Aristotelian necessities.

From Anscombe's philosophy here and Foot's philosophy here, we could, I argued, create a design: natural normativity and natural necessity *mutatis mutandis* in the life of plants, in the life of non-human animals, and in the life of human beings. And, there were specific dissimilarities between living things in the sub-rational world and the rational world (e.g., rationality) that were ultimately relevant, here.[3] But, there were general similarities between living things in the sub-rational world and the rational world (i.e., teleology) that were initially relevant, here.[4]

From a logically unquantifiable natural-history proposition, or Aristotelian

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[3] See, Chapter V and Chapter VI of this thesis.
[4] See, Chapter III and Chapter IV of this thesis.

categorical, of the form S has P (that a certain species has a certain part), S is C (that a certain species is a certain characteristic), or S does O (that a certain species does a certain operation), where P, C, and O are Aristotelian necessities, the following followed. If a member of S, which should have P, should be C, or should do O, has P, is C, or does O, then, in this specific way, it is as it functionally, or teleologically, ought to be normally and, so, in this specific way, it is naturally good (or intrinsically good, or autonomously good). Barring any other absence of Aristotelian necessities, it is fit to flourish. If a member of S, which should have P, should do C, or should do O, has not P, is not C, or does not O (however likely this might be), then, in a general sense too, it is not as it functionally, or teleologically, ought to be normally and, so, in a general sense too, it is naturally deficient (or intrinsically deficient, or autonomously deficient) and is not fit to flourish.

Take these examples from the sphere of plant biology, the realm of non-human animal biology, the domain of human biology, and the area of human virtue. From the logically unquantifiable natural-history proposition, or Aristotelian categorical, 'Trees have strong roots', or 'Lionesses teach their cubs to kill', or 'Human beings are linguistic, or 'Human beings are social animals', where having strong roots is an Aristotelian necessity for trees, teaching their cubs to kill is an Aristotelian necessity for lionesses, being linguistic is an Aristotelian necessity for human beings, and being social is an Aristotelian necessity for human beings, the following followed.

If a certain tree which should have strong roots does have strong roots, or if a certain lioness which should teach her cubs to kill does teach her cubs to kill, or if a certain human being who should be linguistic is linguistic, or if a certain human being who should be social is social, then, in this specific way, the plant, the lioness, the first human being, and the second human being are as they functionally, or teleologically,

ought to be normally and, so, in this specific way, they are naturally good (or intrinsically good, or autonomously good). Barring any other absence of Aristotelian necessities, they are fit to flourish.

If a certain tree which should have strong roots does not have strong roots, or if a certain lioness which should teach her cubs to kill does not teach her cubs to kill, or if a certain human being who should be linguistic is not linguistic, or if a certain human being who should be social is not social (however likely any of this might be) then, in a general sense too, they are not as they functionally or teleologically ought to be normally and, so, in a general sense too, they are naturally deficient (or intrinsically deficient, or autonomously deficient) and are not fit to flourish.

Anscombe and Foot were manifestly mindful (i) of coincidences of being bad, being what one ought not to be, and (apparent) flourishing (exemplified in instances of evil like that of the Nazis[5]), which look to be damaging to the above design of natural normativity and necessity I derived from their work and to the use of the terms 'ought' and 'flourishing' within that design, and (ii) of concurrences of being good, being what one ought to be, and (apparent) not flourishing (exemplified in instances of self-sacrifice like that of the German resistance, for example[6]), which also raise questions about what is actually detrimental to flourishing and, therefore, about the strength of the relationship between flourishing and virtue—on which Aristotle wrote, as we have seen—as it is conveyed, in particular, in the above blueprint of natural normativity and necessity that I have drawn from 'Modern Moral Philosophy' and *Natural Goodness*.

And, though it was not an aim of 'Modern Moral Philosophy', Anscombe's

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[5] As mentioned in Chapter VI, Section 2 of this thesis.
[6] Ibid.

article did not, as she herself acknowledged, go sufficiently far in being able to account for such occasions and, so, in being able to account adequately, more generally, for the relationship between flourishing and virtue, which underpins her abovementioned undeveloped ethical naturalism. She highlighted in her article the difficulty posed by cases of self-sacrifice and cases of evil), writing,

> [H]uman 'flourishing' [. . .] appears the most doubtful [of concepts to account for] [. . .]. [S]omeone might say that one at least needed to stay alive to flourish. Another man unimpressed by all that will say in a hard case "What we need is such-and-such, which we won't get without doing this (which is unjust)—so this is what we ought to do.[7]

And, though it was an aim of *Natural Goodness*, Foot's book did not, as she herself acknowledged, go sufficiently far in being able to account for such occurrences and, so, in being able to account adequately, more generally, for the relationship between flourishing and virtue, which underpins her aforementioned developed ethical naturalism. She highlighted in her book the difficulty posed by cases of evil and cases of self-sacrifice), writing,

> You can't say that human beings flourish if they just survive to a ripe old age and reproduce themselves. In an animal or a plant that may be enough for flourishing, but if a human being just does that with no happiness they must live a wretched life. So what is for a person's good certainly must have some relation to their happiness. That's why I had to tackle the problem of happiness, and I found it extremely difficult. It's an articulated concept, it's very complex. I tried to describe it, to spread it out, but I was left with a really difficult problem which I couldn't solve and I indicated in the book that I couldn't solve it. There is a really deep problem about the relation between virtue and happiness. Can one describe a wicked person as a happy person? Of course one can, look how the wicked flourish like the bay tree. But there are some examples [like that of the German resistance] that make me stick with the idea that [we cannot totally divorce the ideas of virtue and of happiness]. [. . .] I haven't got it out, so I can only say 'This is really difficult . . . I'll tell you what I can about happiness because flourishing, the human good, is central to this book [. . .].' [. . .] But it must be that there is some deeper notion of one's good. I simply cannot do it, that's all. I'm stuck.[8]

And, I think an important question, here, is: How might it be possible to come unstuck

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[7] G. E. M. Anscombe, 'Modern Moral Philosophy', p. 41.
[8] Philippa Foot, interviewed by Rick Lewis, 'Philippa Foot'.

in trying to find a more adequate account of the relationship between flourishing and virtue and a deeper notion of one's good?

And, I think an important answer, here, is: It might be possible to come unstuck in trying to find a more adequate account of the relationship between flourishing and virtue and a deeper notion of one's good by looking at the concept of belonging and by looking at the concept of vulnerability in the philosophy of natural normativity and necessity initially advocated by Anscombe in her undeveloped ethical naturalism and in the philosophy of natural normativity and necessity ultimately furthered by Foot in her developed ethical naturalism.

And, in an effort to fortify and build on Anscombe's and Foot's idea of natural normativity and necessity and to ultimately contribute to a better understanding of the relationship between flourishing and virtue, I will try to explore, in this Conclusion (drawing on work mainly from Catriona Mackenzie, Wendy Rogers, and Susan Dodds[9], and Alasdair MacIntyre[10]) the concepts of belonging and vulnerability in the world of plants, in the world of non-human animals, and in the world of human beings. In the end, I will contend that human beings, unlike plants and non-human animals, cannot flourish without having a sense of belonging; and that it is a sense of belonging of a certain type (what I name an authentic sense of belonging) to a community of a particular kind (what MacIntyre names a community that acknowledges the vulnerability and dependence of human beings[11]). Plus, since there has been, as Mackenzie, Rogers, and Dodds spot, little systematic analysis[12], or a general

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[9] Catriona Mackenzie, Wendy Rogers, and Susan Dodds, eds., *Vulnerability: New Essays in Ethics and Feminist Philosophy*.
[10] Alasdair MacIntyre, *Dependent Rational Animals*.
[11] Ibid., p. 8.
[12] Catriona Mackenzie, Wendy Rogers, and Susan Dodds, eds., *Vulnerability: New Essays in Ethics and Feminist Philosophy*, p. 1.

undertheorisation[13], of the concept of vulnerability, I would like to think that the examination of the concepts of belonging and vulnerability I suggest will serve as a contribution, as their work is, to addressing this gap; specifically, a contribution, as their work is, to the theoretical work of understanding and disentangling the conceptual connections between the concept of vulnerability and concepts usually associated with it in everyday ethical discourse and ethical theorising such as harm, need, dependency, care, and exploitation[14]; a contribution, as their work is, to a more precise theoretical vocabulary for analysing vulnerability.[15]

Moreover, I trust that this will be, on the one hand, a key acknowledgement of what Anscombe suspected in her article and what Foot confirmed in her book: 'that it is important not to underestimate the degree to which human communication and reasoning change the scene'[16] (specifically, for us, in this thesis, it has been the scene of natural normativity and necessity) and, on the other hand, a key supplement to what Anscombe explicitly calls for in her article to go some way in establishing a coherent and practicable ethics other than the ethical theories (that she felt were) found wanting in her time and what Foot implicitly responds to in her book to support a coherent and practicable ethics alternative to (what she felt were) the lacking ethical theories of her time: 'an account of human nature, human action, the type of characteristic a virtue is, and above all of human flourishing'[17] (specifically, for us, in this thesis, it has been an account for natural normativity and necessity).

BELONGING AND VULNERABILITY OF PLANTS

First of all, I propose the following regarding the concepts of belonging and

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[13] Ibid.
[14] Ibid., pp. 1-2.
[15] Ibid., p. 8.
[16] Philippa Foot, *Natural Goodness*, p. 16.
[17] G. E. M. Anscombe, 'Modern Moral Philosophy', p. 41.

vulnerability and how they relate to the Anscombe-inspired and Foot-inspired blueprint of natural normativity and necessity of plants. Before proceeding, however, I think it is important to note that in what I am proposing, here, at this sub-rational level of life, the concept of belonging, it seems to me, has at least three manifestations (i.e., normal belonging, abnormal belonging, and geographic belonging) and the concept of vulnerability, it seems to me, has at least two (what we might call deficiency vulnerability and what we might call, borrowing a transferrable concept from Mackenzie's, Rogers's, and Dodd's taxonomy of vulnerability of human beings discussed below, inherent vulnerability). I will highlight them presently.

From a logically unquantifiable natural-history proposition, or Aristotelian categorical, of the type S has P (that a plant species has a particular part), S is C (that a plant species is a particular characteristic), or S does O (that a plant species does a particular operation), where P, C, and O are Aristotelian necessities, the following follows. If a member of S, which should have P, should be C, or should do O, has P, is C, or does O, then, in this specific way, it is as it functionally, or teleologically, ought to be normally and, so, in this specific way, it is naturally good (or intrinsically good, or autonomously good). Barring any other absence of Aristotelian necessities, it does *belong* normally to its plant species, it is not a deficiently *vulnerable* member of its plant species (which is not to say that it is not, like all plants are, always inherently *vulnerable*) and it is fit to flourish as its plant species normally is and, therefore, should be. If a member of S, which should have P, should be C, or should do O, has not P, is not C, or does not O (however likely this might be), then, in a general sense too, it is not as it functionally, or teleologically, ought to be normally and, so, in a general sense too, it is naturally deficient (or intrinsically deficient, or autonomously deficient), it does not *belong* normally to its plant species, it is a deficiently *vulnerable* member of

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its plant species, to which it still *belongs* abnormally (as well as being, like all plants, always inherently *vulnerable*) and it is not fit to flourish as its plant species normally is and, therefore, should be.

And, so, there cannot, I want to argue, be a way in which we can talk about it being fit to flourish beyond how its species normally is and, therefore, according to the project of natural normativity and necessity drawn from Anscombe's 'Modern Moral Philosophy' and Foot's *Natural Goodness*, should be. With that in mind, let us now look at, here, in the sub-rational world of plants (what will become even more significant in the sub-rational world of non-human animals and in the rational world of human beings) the important notions of revealed deficiency vulnerability and concealed deficiency vulnerability, where deficiency vulnerability is vulnerability brought about by being naturally deficient. Here, recalling an earlier mentioned point from Aquinas[18], neither the partaking of choice, which we associate with non-human animals, nor the exercising of choice, which we associate with human beings, can be seen. And, along with this distinction, it will be important to keep in mind how dissimilar the nature of plants actually is to the nature of non-human animals and to the nature of human beings.

Plants neither can, through the exercising of choice, conceal their deficiency vulnerability when they are deficiently vulnerable nor can, through the exercising of choice, reveal their deficiency vulnerability when they are deficiently vulnerable. And, whether a certain plant's deficiency vulnerability is somehow concealed or revealed (as a matter of fact) either among its particular species or not among its particular species – when either *belonging* geographically to another plant or other plants of its

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[18] See, Chapter V, Section 4 of this thesis.

kind or not *belonging* geographically to another plant or other plants of its kind[19] – it is probable that it will be unable to flourish. Of course, questions like 'Concealed from whom?' and 'Revealed to whom?' cannot really apply among plants, in contrast with the world of non-human animals where they may or may not apply, as we shall see. However, it can be said that their deficiency vulnerability, concealed or revealed, prevents them from flourishing as their species normally are and, therefore, should be.

This table breaks down the notions of belonging and vulnerability that, I am arguing, are central to—that are, furthermore, necessary for—the flourishing of plants in their natural environment.

Central to the flourishing of plants
Normal belonging
No deficiency vulnerability

And, all of this, it seems to me, is in keeping with our Anscombe-influenced and Foot-influenced project of natural normativity. Specifically, here, we have the idea that there cannot be a way for plants to be fit to flourish in their natural environment beyond how they normally are and, therefore, according to that project, should be. The concepts of belonging and vulnerability, here, serve only to fortify that project and serve to draw attention to a deeper notion of the flourishing of plants that does not threaten that project.

BELONGING AND VULNERABILITY OF NON-HUMAN ANIMALS

Second of all, I propose the following regarding the concepts of belonging and vulnerability and how they relate to the Anscombe-inspired and Foot-inspired design

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[19] Henceforth, (i) when it is written that a plant does belong (geographically) to another plant or other plants of its kind, it is meant that it is in its natural environment, and (ii) when it is written that a plant does not belong (geographically) to another plant or other plants of its kind, it is meant that it is isolated from another plant or other plants but *still* belongs (geographically) to its natural environment and is *not*, for example, a domestic plant.

of natural normativity and necessity of non-human animals. Before proceeding, however, I think it is important to note that in what I am proposing, here, at this sub-rational level of life, the concept of belonging has, it seems to me, at least four manifestations (i.e., normal belonging, abnormal belonging, geographic belonging, and a sub-rational sense of belonging) and the concept of vulnerability, it seems to me, has at least two (i.e., deficiency vulnerability and, borrowing a transferrable concept from Mackenzie's, Rogers's, and Dodd's taxonomy of vulnerability of human beings discussed below, inherent vulnerability). I will highlight them presently.

From a logically unquantifiable natural-history proposition, or Aristotelian categorical, of the type S has P (that a non-human animal species has a particular part), S is C (that a non-human animal species is a particular characteristic), or S does O (that a non-human animal species does a particular operation), where P, C, and O are Aristotelian necessities, the following follows. If a member of S, which should have P, should be C, or should do O, has P, is C, or does O, then, in this specific way, it is as it functionally, or teleologically, ought to be normally and, so, in this specific way, it is naturally good (or intrinsically good, or autonomously good). Barring any other absence of Aristotelian necessities, it does *belong* normally to its non-human animal species, it is not a deficiently *vulnerable* member of its non-human animal species (which is not to say that it is not, like all non-human animals are, always inherently *vulnerable*) and it is fit to flourish as its non-human animal species normally is and, therefore, should be. And, even though it is fit to flourish, whether or not it will have a sense of belonging at this point will depend on whether it *belongs* geographically, as I will discuss below. If a member of S, which should have P, should be C, or should do O, has not P, is not C, or does not O (however likely this might be), then, in a general sense too, it is not as it functionally, or teleologically, ought to be normally

and, so, in a general sense too, it is naturally deficient (or intrinsically deficient, or autonomously deficient), it does not *belong* normally to its non-human animal species, it is a deficiently *vulnerable* member of its non-human animal species, to which it still *belongs* abnormally (as well as being, like all non-human animals, always inherently *vulnerable*) and it is not fit to flourish as its non-human animal species normally is and, therefore, should be. But, even though it is not fit to flourish, whether or not it will have a sense of belonging at this point will depend on whether it *belongs* geographically, as I will explain below.

But, there cannot, I want to argue, be a way in which we can talk about it being fit to flourish beyond how its species normally is and, therefore, according to the project of natural normativity and necessity drawn from Anscombe's 'Modern Moral Philosophy' and Foot's *Natural Goodness*, should be. With that in mind, let us now look at, here, in the sub-rational world of non-human animals (what will become even more significant in the rational world of human beings) the important notions of revealed deficiency vulnerability and concealed deficiency vulnerability, where once again deficiency vulnerability is vulnerability brought about by natural deficiency. Here, recalling an earlier mentioned point from Aquinas[20], the partaking of choice, but not the exercising of choice, which we associate with human beings, can be seen. And, along with this distinction, it will be important to keep in mind how dissimilar the nature of non-human animals actually is to the nature of human beings.

Non-human animals neither can, through the exercising of choice, conceal their deficiency vulnerability when they are deficiently *vulnerable* nor can, through the exercising of choice, reveal their deficiency vulnerability when they are deficiently *vulnerable*. And, whether a certain non-human animal's deficiency *vulnerability* is

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[20] See, Chapter V of this thesis.

somehow concealed or revealed (as a matter of fact) either among its species or not among its species—when either *belonging* geographically to another non-human animal or other non-human animals of its kind or not *belonging* geographically to another non-human animal or other non-human animals of its kind[21]—it will probably be unable to flourish. But, it is still possible that it could have a sense of *belonging*, here, to its natural environment, to which it *belongs* geographically. Of course, questions like 'Concealed from whom?' and 'Revealed to whom?' can really apply among non-human animals, in contrast with the world of plants where they cannot apply, as we have seen. Moreover, it can be said that their deficiency vulnerability, concealed or revealed, prevents them from flourishing as their species normally are and, therefore, should be.

The most important point I am making, here, is that, with regard to non-human animals, when they are in their natural environment, they can have a sense of belonging without flourishing.

This table breaks down the notions of belonging and vulnerability that, I am arguing, are central to—that are, furthermore, necessary for—the flourishing of non-human animals in their natural environment and central to—that are, moreover, necessary for—a sense of belonging for non-human animals in their natural environment.

Central to the flourishing of non-human animals	*Central to a sense of belonging for non-human animals*
Normal belonging	Geographic belonging
No deficiency vulnerability	

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[21] Henceforth, (i) when it is written that a non-human animal does belong (geographically) to another non-human animal or other non-human animals of its kind, it is meant that it is in its natural environment, and (ii) when it is written that a non-human animal does not belong (geographically) to another non-human animal or other non-human animals of its kind, it is meant that it is isolated from another non-human animal or other non-human animals but *still* belongs (geographically) to its natural environment and is *not*, for example, a domestic non-human animal.

And, all of this, it seems to me, is in keeping with our Anscombe-influenced and Foot-influenced project of natural normativity. Specifically, here, we have the idea that there cannot be a way for non-human animals to be fit to flourish in their natural environment beyond how they normally are and, therefore, according to that project, should be. The concepts of belonging and vulnerability, here, serve only to fortify that project and serve to draw attention to a deeper notion of the flourishing of non-human animals that does not threaten that project.

BELONGING AND VULNERABILITY OF HUMAN BEINGS

Third of all, I propose the following regarding the concepts of belonging and vulnerability and how they relate to the Anscombe-inspired and Foot-inspired blueprint of natural normativity and necessity of human beings. Before proceeding, however, I think it is important to note that in what I am proposing, here, at this rational level of life, the concept of belonging, it seems to me, has at least four manifestations (i.e., normal belonging, abnormal belonging, geographic belonging, and a rational sense of belonging) and the concept of vulnerability, it seems to me, has at least four (i.e., deficiency vulnerability, inherent vulnerability, pathogenic vulnerability, and occurrent vulnerability). I will highlight them presently. The second and third mentioned manifestations of vulnerability (i.e., inherent vulnerability and pathogenic vulnerability), taken from Mackenzie's, Rogers's, and Dodds's taxonomy of vulnerability[22], are two of three (what they call) 'sources' of vulnerability[23]. Inherent

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[22] Catriona Mackenzie, Wendy Rogers, and Susan Dodds, eds., *Vulnerability: New Essays in Ethics and Feminist Philosophy*, pp. 7-9.

[23] The third: situational vulnerability, for them, is, 'context specific. This may be caused or exacerbated by the personal, social, political, economic, or environmental situations of individuals or social groups. Situational vulnerability may be short term, intermittent, or enduring. For example, natural disasters such as floods or hurricanes leading to destruction of homes can cause widespread vulnerability as those affected seek shelter and come to terms with their losses. Yet the overall effects of this initial catastrophe are very much mediated by the social context. In an affluent country, the situational vulnerability caused by the loss of one's home to floods may be limited by adequate insurance, relative financial security,

vulnerabilities, for them, are,

> [. . .] intrinsic to the human condition. These vulnerabilities arise from our corporeality, our neediness, our dependence on others, and our affective and social natures. We are all inherently vulnerable to hunger, thirst, sleep deprivation, physical harm, emotional hostility, social isolation, and so forth. Some of these vulnerabilities are constant: we all suffer hunger and thirst if we lack food and fluids for more than a few hours. Others vary depending on a range of factors, such as age, gender, health status, and disability: ill health creates specific vulnerabilities related to the illness in question; extremes of age exaggerate the everyday vulnerabilities of embodiment in proportion to the capacity of the individual to meet her everyday physical needs. Inherent vulnerability also varies depending on a person's resilience and capacity to cope.[24]

Pathogenic vulnerabilities, for them, are,

> [. . .] generated by a variety of sources, including morally dysfunctional or abusive interpersonal and social relationships and sociopolitical oppression or injustice. Pathogenic vulnerabilities may also arise when a response intended to ameliorate vulnerability has the paradoxical effect of exacerbating existing vulnerabilities or generating new ones. For example, people with cognitive disabilities, who are occurrently vulnerable due to their care needs, are thereby susceptible to pathogenic forms of vulnerability, such as to sexual abuse by their carers. Likewise, pathogenic vulnerability may result when social policy interventions aimed to ameliorate inherent or situational vulnerability have the contradictory effect of increasing vulnerability. A key feature of pathogenic vulnerability is the way that it undermines autonomy or exacerbates the sense of powerlessness engendered by vulnerability in general.[25]

The fourth mentioned manifestation of vulnerability (i.e., occurrent vulnerability), taken from Mackenzie's, Rogers's, and Dodds's taxonomy of vulnerability, is one of two (what they call) 'states' of vulnerability[26]. Occurrent vulnerability is a term they use to denote 'actual' vulnerability[27].

From a logically unquantifiable natural-history proposition, or Aristotelian categorical, of the type S has P (that the human species has a particular part), S is C

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well-functioning infrastructure, and government assistance. In contrast, a similar natural disaster may lead to enduring vulnerability for families living in a poor country, with little or no support from government or non-government agencies.' See, ibid., p. 7.

[24] Ibid.

[25] Ibid., p. 9.

[26] The second, dispositional vulnerability, is a term they use to denote 'potential' vulnerability. See, ibid., p. 8.

[27] Ibid.

(that the human species is a particular characteristic), or S does O (that the human species does a particular operation), where P, C, and O are Aristotelian necessities, the following follows. If a member of S, who should have P, should be C, or should do O, has P, is C, or does O, then, in this specific way, he/she is as he/she functionally, or teleologically, ought to be normally and, so, in this specific way, he/she is naturally good (or intrinsically good, or autonomously good). Barring any other absence of Aristotelian necessities, he/she does *belong* normally to his/her human species, he/she is not an occurrent deficiently *vulnerable* member of his/her human species (which is not to say that he/she is not, like all human beings are, always inherently *vulnerable* because of the capacity to suffer that is inherent in human embodiment), and he/she is fit to flourish as his/her human species normally is and, therefore, should be. And, as I will discuss below, central to him/her actually flourishing, here, which as Foot quite rightly noted must have some relation to his/her happiness, will be him/her having a sense of belonging *of a particular kind* to a community *of a particular kind*. This will be the necessary backdrop to him/her actually flourishing, here. If a member of S, who should have P, should be C, or should do O, has not P, is not C, or does not O, then, in a general sense too, he/she is not as he/she functionally, or teleologically, ought to be normally and, so, in a general sense too, he/she is naturally deficient (or intrinsically deficient, or autonomously deficient), he/she does not *belong* normally to his/her human species, he/she is an occurrent deficiently *vulnerable* member of his/her human species, to which he/she still *belongs* abnormally, (as well as being, like all human beings, always inherently *vulnerable*) and he/she is not fit to flourish *as his/her human species normally is and, therefore, should be*. But, as I will explain below, flourishing, here, which for Foot must be bound up with happiness, could still be possible for him/her by him/her having a sense of belonging *of a particular kind* to a community

of a particular kind. Again, this would be the necessary backdrop to him/her flourishing.

And, so, there could, I want to argue, be a way in which we can talk about the occurrent deficiently vulnerable human being, here, being fit to flourish beyond how his/her species normally is and, therefore, according to the project of natural normativity and necessity drawn from Anscombe's 'Modern Moral Philosophy' and Foot's *Natural Goodness*, should be. With that in mind, let us now look at, here, in the rational world of human beings the important notions of revealed occurrent deficiency *vulnerability* and concealed occurrent deficiency *vulnerability* in the rational world, where once more deficiency vulnerability is vulnerability brought about by natural deficiency. Here, recalling an earlier mentioned point from Aquinas[28], the exercising of choice, but not the partaking of choice associated with non-human animals, can be seen. But, along with this distinction, it will be important to keep in mind how similar the nature of human beings actually is to the nature of non-human animals. In *Dependent Rational Animals*, Alasdair MacIntyre writes,

> [We fail or refuse] to acknowledge adequately the bodily dimensions of our existence. This failure or refusal is perhaps rooted in, is certainly reinforced by the extent to which we conceive of ourselves and imagine ourselves as other than animal, as exempt from the hazardous condition of 'mere' animality. Such defective modes of self-understanding and imagination at the level of everyday thought and practice seem often to coexist without any notable difficulty with a theoretical acknowledgement of the past evolutionary history of human beings. But cultural prejudice often divorces the human present from the human past [. . .]. We become in consequence forgetful of our bodies and of how our thinking is the thinking of one species of animal [. . .]. There is also another and perhaps more fundamental relationship between our animal condition and our vulnerabilities [. . .]. [T]he virtues that we need, if we are to develop from our initial animal condition into that of independent rational agents, and the virtues that we need, if we are to confront and respond to vulnerability [. . .] in ourselves and in others, belong to one and the same set of virtues, the distinctive virtues of dependent rational animals, whose dependence, rationality and animality have to be understood in relationship to each other [. . .]. [T]he virtues of independent rational agency need for their

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[28] See, Chapter V of this thesis.

adequate exercise to be accompanied by [. . .] the virtues of acknowledged [vulnerability and] dependence.[29]

The life of human beings is, therefore, as Alasdair MacIntyre suggests, one of animality and sociality. We have needs because we are animal and social. We are vulnerable to the actions of others and dependent on the actions of others because we are needy in terms of our animality and needy in terms of our sociality. We are vulnerable to responses like violence, abuse, and contempt and dependent on responses like care, generosity, and love. The life of human beings is, therefore, as Judith Butler suggests, one of precarity.[30]

When among (or when *belonging* geographically to) a community that fails or refuses to acknowledge the vulnerability and dependence of human beings, a human being might (if able), through the exercising of choice, conceal his/her occurrent deficiency vulnerability (by deed or speech). He/she might acknowledge his/her vulnerability but, due to the community's said failure or refusal to acknowledge the vulnerability and dependence of human beings, see reason to conceal it. Or he/she might refuse to acknowledge his/her vulnerability and see reason to conceal it. But, in both instances, because of the concealment of vulnerability involved, he/she does not virtuously confront and respond to his/her vulnerability. And, with no virtuous confronting and responding to his/her vulnerability by the community or him/her, it is probable (because his/her concealed vulnerability cannot alert us to morally salient claims, such as those based on harm or need) that he/she will not have a sense of belonging and will be unable to flourish, here. It might be objected, here, that it is an exercise in the virtue of prudence to conceal his/her vulnerability in such a community and, so, he/she does act virtuously by doing so. But this I would dispute and I will

[29] Alasdair MacIntyre, *Dependent Rational Animals*, pp. 4-5 and 8.
[30] Judith Butler, *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence* (London: Verso, 2004) and Judith Butler, *Frames of War: When is Life Grievable?* (London: Verso, 2009).

explain why below.

When among (or when *belonging* geographically to) a community that *does* acknowledge the vulnerability and dependence of human beings, a human being might (if able), through the exercising of choice, conceal his/her occurrent deficiency vulnerability (once again by deed or speech). He/she might acknowledge his/her vulnerability but, despite the community's said acknowledgement of the vulnerability and dependence of human beings, see reason to conceal it (e.g., because his/her attitude to his/her individual vulnerability is a feeling of shame). Or, he/she might refuse to acknowledge his/her vulnerability and see reason to conceal it. But, in both instances, because of the concealment of vulnerability involved, he/she does not virtuously confront and respond to his/her vulnerability. And, with no virtuous confronting and responding to his/her vulnerability by him/her or, due to said concealment, the community, it is probable (because his/her concealed vulnerability cannot alert us to morally salient claims, such as those based on harm or need) that he/she will not have a sense of belonging and will be unable to flourish, here.

When among (or when *belonging* geographically to) a community that *does* acknowledge the vulnerability and dependence of human beings, a human being might (if able), through the exercising of choice, reveal his/her occurrent deficiency vulnerability (once more by deed or speech). He/she might acknowledge his/her vulnerability and, due to the community's said acknowledgement of the vulnerability and dependence of human beings, see reason to reveal it. And, because of the revelation of vulnerability involved, he/she does virtuously confront and respond to his/her vulnerability. And, with virtuous confronting and responding to his/her vulnerability by him/her and the community, it is probable (because his/her revealed vulnerability can alert us to morally salient claims, such as those based on harm or

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need) that he/she will have a sense of belonging and will be able to flourish, here.

When among (or when *belonging* geographically to) a community that fails or refuses to acknowledge the vulnerability and dependence of human beings, a human being might (if able), through the exercising of choice, reveal his/her occurrent deficiency vulnerability (by deed or speech). He/she might acknowledge his/her vulnerability and, despite the community's said failure or refusal to acknowledge the vulnerability and dependence of human beings, see reason to reveal it (e.g., because he/she feels his/her community's attitude to vulnerability is shameful). And, because of the revelation of vulnerability involved, he/she does virtuously confront and respond to his/her vulnerability. And, with no virtuous confronting and responding to his/her vulnerability by the community but with virtuous confronting and responding to his/her vulnerability by him/her, it is possible (because his/her revealed vulnerability could eventually alert us to morally salient claims, such as those based on harm or need) that he/she will eventually have a sense of belonging and will eventually be able to flourish, here. It might be objected, here, that it is an exercise in the vice of imprudence to reveal his/her vulnerability in such a community and, so, he/she does not act virtuously by doing so. But this I would dispute and I will explain why below.

But, the most important point that I am making from all of this is that, with regard to human beings, when they are in their natural environment, they cannot flourish without having a sense of belonging.

This table breaks down the notions of belonging and vulnerability that, I am arguing, are central to—that are necessary for—the flourishing of human beings in their natural environment and central to—that are necessary for—a sense of belonging for human beings in their natural environment.

Central to the flourishing of human beings	Central to a sense of belonging for human beings
Having a sense of belonging	Community having the virtues of acknowledged vulnerability and dependence

This table breaks down the notions of belonging and vulnerability that, I am arguing, are central to the flourishing of plants, non-human animals, and human beings in their natural environments and central to a sense of belonging for non-human animals and human beings in their natural environments.

Central to the flourishing of plants	Central to the flourishing of non-human animals	Central to a sense of belonging for non-human animals	Central to the flourishing of human beings	Central to a sense of belonging for human beings
Normal belonging No deficiency vulnerability	Normal belonging No deficiency vulnerability	Geographic belonging	Having a sense of belonging	Community having the virtues of acknowledged vulnerability and dependence

But, all of this, it seems to me, is not in keeping with our Anscombe-influenced and Foot-influenced project of natural normativity. On the one hand, saying that having a sense of belonging of a particular kind to a community of a particular kind (i.e., to a community in possession of the virtues of acknowledged vulnerability and dependence of human beings) is necessary for the flourishing of a human being with no occurrent deficiency vulnerability draws attention to a deeper notion of the flourishing of human beings, and one that does not threaten that project. On the other hand, saying that the flourishing of a human being with an occurrent deficiency vulnerability is possible by having a sense of belonging of a particular type to a community of a particular type (i.e., to a community in possession of the virtues of acknowledged vulnerability and dependence of human beings) draws attention to a deeper notion of the flourishing of human beings, but one that does threaten that project. Specifically, here, we have the

idea that there could be a way in which we can talk about occurrent deficiently vulnerable human beings being fit to flourish in their natural environment beyond how their species normally are and, therefore, according to the Anscombe-influenced and Foot-influenced project of natural normativity, should be—*that* is dependent on them having a sense of belonging and *that* is dependent on their community having the virtues of acknowledged vulnerability and dependence of human beings.

A SENSE OF BELONGING AND THE VIRTUES OF ACKNOWLEDGED VULNERABILITY AND DEPENDENCE

It might be asked, however, why did I not suggest above that concealed vulnerability is necessary for a sense of belonging for human beings? For, one may well point to the possibility that with the concealment of one's vulnerability when among (or when belonging geographically to) a community, one could have a sense of belonging and, therefore, could be able to flourish. This, one may argue, is because one's vulnerability, being concealed, could not be exploited; that is to say, the concealment of one's vulnerability could not lead to further, (what Mackenzie, Rogers, and Dodds call) pathogenic vulnerability. And, so, it might be proposed that the following questions could reasonably be asked: Can the concealment of vulnerability not be a good thing? Can the concealment of vulnerability not be considered an exercise in the virtue of prudence?

It might be asked, moreover, why did I suggest above that revealed vulnerability is necessary for a sense of belonging for human beings? For, one may well point to the possibility that with the revelation of one's vulnerability when among (or when belonging geographically to) a community, one could not have a sense of belonging and, therefore, could not be able to flourish. This, one may propose, is because one's vulnerability, being revealed, could be exploited; that is to say, the

revelation of one's vulnerability could lead to further, (what Mackenzie, Rogers, and Dodds call) pathogenic vulnerability. And, so, it might be argued that the following questions could reasonably be asked: Can the revelation of vulnerability not be a bad thing? Can the revelation of vulnerability not be considered an exercise in the vice of imprudence?

If we answer in the affirmative the questions 'Can the concealment of vulnerability be a good thing?' and 'Can the revelation of vulnerability be a bad thing?', then we are likely in a place and time where and when the concealment of vulnerability (rather than the revelation of vulnerability) is the norm for us. And, the concealment of vulnerability would likely be the norm, to echo MacIntyre's abovementioned words, in a culture to which the notion of ourselves as independent rational human beings *who are other than animal* is central. For, it would be, as he suggests, a place and time where and when we fail or refuse to acknowledge the bodily dimensions, the animality, of our existence; where and when we fail or refuse to acknowledge the vulnerability and dependence of our existence. And, this would necessarily weaken our practical reasoning precisely because the ability to identify good reasons to act virtuously (e.g., charitably, justly, and with care), which is the essence of practical reasoning, in confronting and responding to vulnerabilities—in ourselves and/or in others—would be weakened by being a part of such a place and time and by failing or refusing to acknowledge the vulnerability and dependence of *all* human beings.

One could also argue, perhaps, that it would be a place and time where and when friendships of advantage are commonplace. For, according to these 'friendships', one's fellow man is thought of as a means to an end and nothing more and, as a result, one's end goal—one's focus—is not 'the other', if you like.

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Consequently, it could be proposed, in such a place and time one is more likely to fail or refuse to acknowledge the vulnerabilities and dependences of others and is, therefore, less likely to recognise a good reason to virtuously confront and respond to them. Moreover, it could be suggested that, on a communal level, these friendships of advantage increase the risk of further pathogenic vulnerability. As Aristotle writes, 'Those who are friends for the sake of utility part as soon as the advantage ceases, because they were attracted not by each other but by the prospect of gain.'[31]

And, so, if we answer in the affirmative the questions 'Can the concealment of vulnerability be a good thing?' and 'Can the revelation of vulnerability be a bad thing?', then our idea of a sense of belonging for human beings (whether wittingly or unwittingly) must be a sort of artificial sense of belonging; one without substance; one without a dimension of depth. For, an artificial sense of belonging is a necessary feature of such a culture in which it is the norm to fail or refuse to accept a part—and a significant part—of what a human being is: a vulnerable and dependent rational animal.

In extreme cases, seeing oneself as an independent rational human being who is other than animal, failing or refusing to acknowledge the bodily dimensions, the animality, of oneself, failing or refusing to acknowledge the vulnerability and dependence of oneself, and (because of the weak practical reasoning resulting from failing or refusing to acknowledge the vulnerability and dependence of *all* human beings, including oneself) being unable to identify reasons to act virtuously (e.g., charitably and justly) in confronting and responding to the vulnerabilities of oneself, can lead one to a tragic choice to die rather than to live.[32] And, in extreme cases, seeing

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[31] Aristotle, *The Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. by Hugh Tredennick, p. 207.

[32] It is interesting to note how seeing oneself as an independent rational human being who is other than animal, failing or refusing to acknowledge the bodily dimensions, the animality, of oneself, failing or refusing to acknowledge the vulnerability and dependence of oneself, and not virtuously confronting

oneself but not others as an independent rational human being who is other than animal, failing or refusing to acknowledge the bodily dimensions, the animality, of oneself but not of others, failing or refusing to acknowledge the vulnerability and dependence of oneself but not of others, but (because of the weak practical reasoning resulting from failing or refusing to acknowledge the vulnerability and dependence of *all* human beings, including oneself) being unable to identify reasons to act virtuously (e.g., charitably and justly) in confronting and responding to the vulnerabilities of others, can lead one to a tragic choice to be evil and, for example, to viciously facilitate the death of others, as exhibited in the case of the Nazis highlighted by Foot.[33]

And, is it, one wonders, the *normality* of seeing oneself as an independent rational human being who is other than animal, of failing or refusing to acknowledge the vulnerability and dependence of oneself but not of others—that is, of failing or refusing to acknowledge the vulnerability and dependence of *all* human beings—and, therefore, the weak practical reasoning of oneself and the inability of oneself (e.g., as a Nazi) to identify good reason to virtuously confront and respond to the vulnerabilities of others that underpins something similar to Hannah Arendt's famous phrase: 'the banality of evil'?[34] For, with this phrase, Arendt alluded to the fact that there is nothing especially extraordinary about the thinking and acting of these vicious people who have it in them to be evil. In *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil*, she writes,

> The trouble with Eichmann was precisely that so many were like him, and that the many were neither perverted nor sadistic, that they were, and still are, terribly and terrifyingly normal. From the viewpoint of our legal institutions and of our moral standards of judgement, this normality was much more terrifying than all the atrocities put together, for it implied [. . .] that this new

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and responding to the vulnerabilities of oneself are all addressed through the increasingly popular practises of meditation and mindfulness.

[33] See, Chapter VI, Section 2 of this thesis.

[34] Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil* (New York: Penguin, 1994), p. 252.

type of criminal [. . .] commits his crimes under circumstances that make it well-nigh impossible for him to know or to feel that he is doing wrong.[35]

Here, too, we could argue for (what Foot saw as) the conceptual separability of vice and happiness (e.g., the viciousness and the happiness of the Nazis).[36] For, if we take it that the practical reasoning of the Nazis was necessarily weak as a result of their failure or refusal to acknowledge the vulnerability and dependence of themselves but not of others (i.e., a result of their failure or refusal to acknowledge the vulnerability and dependence of *all* human beings) and resulting in an inability to identify good reason to virtuously confront and respond to the vulnerabilities and dependences of others (e.g. charitably and justly), then this is something that could hardly be said to be of benefit to them (to utilise a concept Foot introduced[37]) and something that is surely at odds with depth of feeling and thinking and, therefore, at odds with happiness with a dimension of depth. And, so, here at least, it is difficult to see how, when coinciding with vice, happiness, shallow rather than profound, could be considered humanity's good, as Foot had acknowledged.[38]

Ultimately, though, I wish to explicitly put forward the idea, already touched on, that in such a place and time where and when (as M. A. Fineman suggests[39]) 'the myth' of the independent rational human being who is other than animal is endorsed, where and when the human being is respected only because of his/her independence and rationality, which is radically distinguished from his/her animality, the concealment of vulnerability through the exercising of choice can be seen as something good for—perhaps even strong in—the person who conceals it and that,

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[35] Ibid., p. 276.
[36] See, Chapter VI, Section 2 of this thesis.
[37] Ibid.
[38] Ibid.
[39] M. A. Fineman, 'Cracking the Foundational Myths: Independence, Autonomy and Self-Sufficiency', *American University Journal of Gender, Social Policy and Law*, vol. 8, n. 13, pp. 12-29.

generally, if we want to talk about vulnerable human beings gaining a sense of belonging and, so, being able to flourish, then, where and when necessary[40], there needs to be a revaluation of values in this respect. And, it is only through the master virtue of practical reason that such a revaluation can be undertaken and maintained—again, through acknowledging the vulnerabilities and dependences of human beings and recognising a good reason to virtuously confront and respond to them (e.g., charitably and justly); in oneself and, with (what S. C. Miller calls) 'dignifying care' (i.e., care that is non-paternalistic and that respects and supports another's self-determined agency[41]), in others. In essence, I am saying: the concealment of vulnerability is a bad thing and the revelation of vulnerability is a good thing.

If we say that the concealment of vulnerability is a bad thing and say that the revelation of vulnerability is a good thing, then we are likely either in a place and time where and when the revelation of vulnerability (rather than the concealment of vulnerability) is valued by us or in a place and time where and when we want the revelation of vulnerability (rather than the concealment of vulnerability) to be valued by us. And, the revelation of vulnerability would likely be valued, to echo MacIntyre's abovementioned words, in a culture to which the notion of ourselves as independent rational human beings *who are not other than animal* is central. For it would be, as he alludes, a place and time where and when we acknowledge the bodily dimensions, the animality, of our existence; where and when we acknowledge the vulnerability and dependence of our existence. And, this would necessarily strengthen our practical reasoning precisely because the ability to identify good reason to act virtuously (e.g., charitably and justly), which is the essence of practical reasoning, in confronting and

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[40] This is an Aristotelian necessity.
[41] S. C. Miller, *The Ethics of Need: Agency, Dignity and Obligation* (New York: Routledge, 2012).

responding to vulnerabilities—in ourselves and in others—would be strengthened by being a part of such a place and time and by acknowledging the vulnerability and dependence of *all* human beings.

One could also propose, perhaps, that it would be a place and time where and when friendships of virtue are commonplace. For, according to these friendships, one's fellow man is thought of as an end in itself and nothing less and, as a result, one's end goal—one's focus—is 'the other', if you will. As a result, it could be argued, in such a place and time one is less likely to fail or refuse to acknowledge the vulnerabilities and dependences of others and is, therefore, more likely to recognise a good reason to virtuously confront and respond to them. Moreover, it could be suggested that, on a communal level, these friendships of virtue decrease the risk of further pathogenic vulnerability. As Aristotle writes, 'And it is those who desire the good of their friends for the friends' sake that are most truly friends, because each loves the other for what he is, and not for any incidental quality.'[42]

And, so, if we say that the concealment of vulnerability is a bad thing, here, and say that the revelation of vulnerability is a good thing, here, then our idea of a sense of belonging for human beings (whether wittingly or unwittingly) must be a sort of authentic sense of belonging; one with substance; one with a dimension of depth. For, an authentic sense of belonging is a necessary feature of such a culture in which it is a value to accept a part—and a substantial part—of what a human being is: a vulnerable and dependent rational animal.

In extreme cases of fighting for this sense of belonging, seeing oneself and others as independent rational human beings who are not other than animal, acknowledging the bodily dimensions, the animality, of oneself and of others,

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[42] Aristotle, *The Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. by Hugh Tredennick, p. 205.

acknowledging the vulnerability and dependence of oneself and of others, and (because of the strong practical reasoning resulting from acknowledging the vulnerability and dependence of *all* human beings) being able to identify reasons to act virtuously (e.g., charitably and justly) in confronting and responding to the vulnerabilities of oneself and of others, can lead one to a heroic choice to live rather than to die.[43] And, in extreme cases of fighting for this sense of belonging, seeing oneself and others as independent rational human beings who are not other than animal, acknowledging the bodily dimensions, the animality, of oneself and of others, acknowledging the vulnerability and dependence of oneself and of others, and (because of the strong practical reasoning resulting from acknowledging the vulnerability and dependence of *all* human beings) being able to identify reasons to act virtuously (e.g. charitably and justly) in confronting and responding to the vulnerabilities of oneself and of others, can lead one to a heroic choice to be self-sacrificial and, for instance, to virtuously face the death of oneself, as exhibited in the case of the German resistance highlighted by Foot.[44]

And, is it, one wonders, the *value* of seeing oneself and others as independent rational human beings who are not other than animal, of acknowledging the vulnerability and dependence of oneself and of others—that is, of acknowledging the vulnerability and dependence of *all* human beings—and, therefore, the strong practical reasoning of oneself and the ability of oneself (e.g., as a member of the German resistance) to identify good reason to virtuously confront and respond to the vulnerabilities of oneself and of others that underpins something similar to Albert

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[43] It is interesting to note how seeing oneself as an independent rational human being who is not other than animal, acknowledging the bodily dimensions, the animality, of oneself, acknowledging the vulnerability and dependence of oneself, and virtuously confronting and responding to the vulnerabilities of oneself are all stressed through the increasingly popular practise of mindfulness.

[44] See, Chapter VI, Section 2 of this thesis.

Camus's famous phrase: 'I revolt, therefore we are'?[45] For, with this phrase, Camus alluded to the fact that there is something especially extraordinary about the thinking and acting of these virtuous people who have it in them to be self-sacrificial. In *The Rebel: An Essay on Man in Revolt*, he writes,

> If an individual actually consents to die, and, when the occasion arises, accepts death as a consequence of his rebellion, he demonstrates that he is willing to sacrifice himself for the sake of a common good which he considers more important than his own destiny. If he prefers the risk of death to a denial of the rights that he defends, it is because he considers that the latter are more important than he is. He acts, therefore, in the name of certain values which are still indeterminate but which he feels are common to himself and to all men. We see that the affirmation implicit in each act of revolt is extended to something which transcends the individual in so far as it removes him from his supposed solitude and supplies him with reason to act.[46]

Here, too, we could argue for (what Foot saw as) the conceptual inseparability of virtue and happiness (e.g., the virtuousness and the happiness of the German resistance).[47] For, if we take it that the practical reasoning of the German resistance was necessarily strong as a result of their acknowledgement of the vulnerability and dependence of themselves and of others (i.e., a result of their acknowledgement of the vulnerability and dependence of *all* human beings) and resulting in an ability to identify good reason to virtuously confront and respond to the vulnerabilities and dependences of others (e.g. charitably and justly), then this is something that could plainly be said to be of benefit to them (to utilise a concept Foot introduced) and something that is surely not at odds with depth of feeling and thinking and, therefore, not at odd with happiness with a dimension of depth. And, so, here at least, it is not difficult to see how, when coinciding with virtue, happiness, profound rather than shallow, here, could be considered humanity's good, as Foot had acknowledged.

Ultimately, though, I wish to explicitly put forward the idea, already touched

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[45] Albert Camus, *The Rebel: An Essay on Man in Revolt* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1954), p. 22.
[46] Ibid., pp. 15-16.
[47] See, Chapter VI, Section 2 of this thesis.

on, that in such a place and time where and when the myth of the independent rational human being who is other than animal is exposed, where and when (as Martha Nussbaum suggests[48]) the human being is respected also because of his/her dependence and animality in the sphere of natural necessity, which is not radically distinguished from his/her rationality, the revelation of one's vulnerability through the exercising of choice can be seen as something good for—perhaps even strong in—the person who reveals it and that, generally, if we want to talk about vulnerable human beings gaining a sense of belonging and being able to flourish, then, where and when necessary[49], there needs to be a revaluation of values in this respect. And, it is only through the master virtue of practical reason that such a revaluation can be undertaken and maintained—again, through acknowledging the vulnerabilities and dependences of human beings and recognising a good reason to virtuously confront and respond to them; in oneself and, with dignifying care (i.e., care that is non-paternalistic and that respects and supports another's self-determined agency), in others. The tension that arises between, if you like, the artificial community (the one in which concealed vulnerability and an artificial sense of belonging are the norm) and the authentic individual (the one for whom revealed vulnerability and an authentic sense of belonging are valued) begets, I think, something similar to what Albert Camus called the *absurd*[50] and something similar to what Émile Durkheim called *anomie*[51]. It is not exclusively in the community (in the world) that the existential weight of the *absurd*

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[48] Martha Nussbaum, *Frontiers of Justice: Disability, Nationality, Species Membership* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006), p. 132.

[49] This is an Aristotelian necessity.

[50] Albert Camus, *The Myth of Sisyphus*, trans. by Justin O'Brien and intro. by James Wood (London: Penguin Group, 2000), pp. 31-32. Camus writes, '[M]an stands face to face with the irrational. He feels within him his longing for happiness and for reason. The absurd is born of this confrontation between the human need and the unreasonable silence of the world.'

[51] Émile Durkheim, *Suicide: A Study in Sociology*, ed. and intro. by G. Simpson and trans. by J. A. Spaulding and G. Simpson (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1952), p. 389. Durkheim writes, 'Man cannot become attached to higher aims and submit to a rule if he sees nothing above him to which he belongs. To free him from all social pressure is to abandon him to himself and demoralise him.'

or *anomie* is borne. It is not exclusively in the individual (in the man) that the existential weight of the *absurd* or *anomie* is borne. The tension that arises between, if you will, the artificial community and the authentic individual begins, I think, in 'the convergence of the twain'; when 'consummation comes, and jars two hemispheres.'[52] And, this jarring is what the requisite revaluation should, with the catalyst of courage, eventually assuage. But, this jarring is where the requisite revaluation should, with the catalyst of courage, initially commence.

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[52] Thomas Hardy, *Thomas Hardy: The Complete Poems*, ed. and intro. by James Gibson (Palgrave MacMillan: Hampshire, 2001), p. 307.

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