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**“On Final Value and States of Affairs”**

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*I dedicate this effort to my beloved mother and father, to my three beautiful sisters, to my supervisor Professor Francesco Orsi, to Professor Siobhan Kattago, and, indeed, to the members of the respected department of philosophy at the University of Tartu.*

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## INTRODUCTION

Some things are good or valuable. But there can be several ways in which good things can be good. A kitchen knife for example is *instrumentally* good, good for the sake of something else, say, cutting vegetables; and having a nice time with family at the beach is *finally* good, good for its own sake and not for the sake of something else. Also, there are other axiological properties with which the discipline of Value Theory, or Axiology, is mostly preoccupied, namely, *being intrinsically good* and *being extrinsically good*. While something being intrinsically good typically means being good because of its intrinsic properties, something being extrinsically good means being good because of its external properties and relations. Things can be extrinsically good for different reasons: a pen can be extrinsically good because of its instrumental features; another pen can be extrinsically good because of its uniqueness, say having been belonged to my grandfather; enjoying a warm shower can be extrinsically good because of it being good for my well-being. This thesis focuses on this kind of extrinsic goodness: the relation between a state and our well-being; it will focus on the extrinsic property of *goodness for us* i.e., goodness for our well-being.

This thesis is interested in the question whether what is finally valuable is intrinsically good (good in itself) or extrinsically good (good for us). Before I state my position regarding this last, I should mention that it is important to not confuse ‘what is *good for me*’ with ‘what is *good according to my view*’. Informally, many people say for instance that smoking cigarettes is good for them, and this is incorrect. For goodness-for is a relational property that is reserved for well-being. What is good for us is what contributes to our well-being as human beings, and what is good for wolves is what contributes to the well-being of wolves, and so on. The activity of smoking cigarettes is certainly not good for our well-being on the grounds that it causes detriment to our lungs and other organs, and even packets of cigarettes have on them the label ‘smoking kills’. Thus, when the smoker says ‘smoking cigarettes is good for me,’ what he actually has in mind is rather ‘smoking cigarettes is good according to my view’, and these formulations are distinct. Throughout this thesis, by ‘good for us’ I mean ‘good for our well-being’ and not ‘what is good according to each of our views’.

Now, the question around which this thesis revolves is the following (let us call it the Thesis Question)

*Are final values good because they are good in themselves or good because they are good for us?*

Put again in other words,

*Is what is finally valuable intrinsically good or extrinsically good?*

Some argue that what is finally valuable is what is good in itself; others argue that what is finally valuable is what is finally good for us; there have been also conjunctive answers to the Thesis Question. Plato for instance holds that justice is good *in itself* and good *for* the just person (I will not deal with conjunctive answers). The objective of this thesis is to defend the claim that what is finally valuable is what is finally good for us, what contributes to our well-being; hence, I object to the claim that what is finally valuable is what is good in itself.

Note further that by ‘final values’ it is meant ‘finally valuable states of affairs’. Final values are *not* considered here as universal properties, for such confusion can easily occur. Suppose I ask someone what is finally valuable? And suppose this person replies ‘happiness’. Now, happiness is ambiguous, and it can refer to at least two things: either the universal property of happiness or the state of affairs in which someone is being happy at a certain time and place. While it may be argued that final values can be construed as universal properties, I wish to note merely that, usually, what is finally valuable is considered to be a finally valuable state of affairs, and this thesis certainly does not construe final values as universal properties. For further clarification, I borrow Kim Jaegwon’s proposed notation of states of affairs, namely, [x, P, t], where ‘x’ refers to a substance, ‘P’ a property exemplified by ‘x’, and ‘t’ to time and place.<sup>1</sup> Since I am dealing with final values, and final values are what ‘humans’ value, then by ‘x’ I always assume an instance of a human being, unless I state otherwise. Thus if for instance happiness is finally valuable, then what we mean is that [someone, being happy, t] is a finally valuable state of affairs.

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<sup>1</sup> See Kim Jaegwon’s “Events as Property Exemplifications” (1976).

Now that we know that final values refer to particular states of affairs, here is the structure of my argument:

**(P1)** States of affairs regarding human beings have a function, and their function is to place human beings in certain relations with the spatiotemporal world; and whereas the good state of affairs places the individual in certain relations with the spatiotemporal world in a way that is beneficial to her, the bad places the individual in certain relations with the spatiotemporal world in a way that is detrimental to her.

**(P2)** If (P1), then finally valuable states of affairs place individuals in certain relations with the spatiotemporal world in a way that is beneficial to them.

**(C)** Therefore, finally valuable states of affairs place individuals in certain relations with the spatiotemporal world in a way that is beneficial to them.

**(P3)** If (C), then the claim that finally valuable states of affairs are good because they are good in themselves is false.

**(C1)** Therefore, the claim that finally valuable states of affairs are good because they are good in themselves is false.

Chapter 1 is introductory. It explores what has been traditionally and recently said about the concept of final value. I provide three accounts: the subjective account of final value, the objective, and the intrinsic. While the subjective and the objective account state (correctly) that what is finally valuable is what is extrinsically good, the intrinsic account states (incorrectly) that what is finally valuable is what is intrinsically good.

Chapter 2 presents two objections to the intrinsic account. Peter Geach argues that goodness is a relative property; nothing is said to be *simply* good, or good *period*, but that anything that is good is ‘a good so-and-so’; goodness must be attributed to some *kind* e.g., a *good knife*, a *good man*, a *good state of affairs* etc. If Geach is correct, then since we are concerned about final values, and since final values are states of affairs, then the claim say ‘[someone, being happy, t] is good *period*’ is senseless, unless we amend it to ‘[someone, being happy, t] is a *good state of affairs*’. Thus far I agree with Geach. But he adds that even the phrase ‘good state of affairs’ is void of sense on the grounds that ‘state of affairs’ does not convey a standard of goodness as do for example words such as ‘knife,’ and ‘lawyer’; that is, while the function of knives for example is to cut food and the good knife is then that which cuts food well, states of affairs do not have a function and do not convey a standard of goodness. I disagree with Geach as we will see in chapter 3. Moreover, Judith Thomson agrees with Geach that goodness is a relative property; but

unlike Geach, she thinks that anything that is good is ‘good in a way,’ rather than ‘a good so-and-so’. Since we are concerned about finally valuable states of affairs, Thomson thinks that states of affairs are those kinds of objects that are either *beneficially* good or *detrimentally* bad, and that a good state of affairs then is beneficially good, and I agree. But Thomson does not explain how good states of affairs are good for us; she simply takes the matter for granted, and it is therefore the business of chapter 3 to undertake that explanation.

Chapter 3 builds on the objections raised by Geach and Thomson against the intrinsic account. I agree with them on the claim that goodness is a relative property. Unlike Geach, however, I argue that states of affairs *vis-à-vis* human beings *do* have a function, namely, *to place human beings in certain relations with the spatiotemporal world*. And from this last I deduce a standard of goodness: the good state of affairs is that which places the individual in relations with the spatiotemporal world in a way that is beneficial to her, and the bad state of affairs is that which places the individual in relations with the spatiotemporal in a way that is detrimental to her. If so, then finally valuable states of affairs are good because they are good for us, beneficial to us. My argument, further, explains Thomson’s unexplained assumption that states of affairs bear the properties of goodness-for and badness-for. My argument, therefore, which is built on Geachean and Thomsonian foundations, contributes, in its own fashion, to the objections against the Moorean claim that finally valuable states of affairs are good because they are good in themselves; I argue that states of affairs that concern us are *made* for us to *place* us in certain relations with the spatiotemporal world, relations that are either good or bad for us, and finally valuable states of affairs consist of relations that are good for us.

## CHAPTER 1: FINAL GOODNESS

In this chapter I introduce three accounts on *final value*: (1) the subjective account, (2) the objective, and (3) the intrinsic. While the first account reports that what is finally valuable is what is *subjectively* good for us, and the second reports that what is finally valuable is what is *objectively* good for us, the third account reports that what is finally valuable is what is *intrinsically* good. The purpose of this chapter is to highlight one definition of final value, narrated by the intrinsic account, and with which I have an issue, namely that what is finally valuable is what is good *in itself* or good *period*. This definition, as we will see in chapter 2, is suspicious considering that, *sensibly* speaking, nothing is said to be *simply* good, or good *period*.

### 1.1) The Subjective Account

Colloquially, what is finally valuable is *picked out* as an answer to a particular set of questions addressed to each one of us. Thus I might address my beloved with the question ‘why do you pursue an academic degree?’ and she might reply ‘to be granted a social occupation’. And if I ask her again ‘why do you wish to be granted a social occupation?’ she might reply ‘to be economically independent,’ and so on. The idea is that if I were to keep pressing similar questions to her, at some point she will arrive at a ‘final,’ ‘ultimate’ answer, such as her final desire ‘to be happy’. This ultimate desirable state of affairs therefore is what we might call a *final value*, a state of affairs that is *valuable as an end*, or *valuable for its own sake*. By contrast, those desirable states such as pursuing studies, receiving a job offer, and so on, are *instrumentally valuable*, states of affairs that *are valuable for the sake of something else*.

This colloquial view of final value appears to be grounded on subjectivity. For I can imagine other people being asked the particular set of questions at issue, and yet while one person might halt at the final answer say ‘being wealthy,’ another might surpass it by another final answer say ‘spending wealth on my family’. People, it seems, depending on their level of knowledge and wisdom, will definitely evaluate and choose states of affairs as finally valuable depending on their level of knowledge and wisdom. But suppose that our purpose of questioning people the sequential questions at issue is to arrive at one objective answer; should we then reserve addressing these questions only to people who



seem to us most wise, rational, or virtuous? Should we entrust this subject of final value exclusively to value theorists and moral philosophers? It is quite shocking to realize that even value theorists, together with the virtuous laymen, would genuinely debate amongst themselves on what should be the final value. But leaving the specialists aside for now, I can imagine a rational, virtuous, non-specialist setting her final value to be ‘gratefulness’, while another setting it to be ‘spiritual awakening’, and so on. Therefore, on this account final values are subjectively picked out, and we might label this account as the *Subjective Account of Final Value*. Final values as states of affairs on this view are extrinsically valuable. That is to say, what is finally valuable is what is subjectively valuable as an end, and what is subjectively valuable as an end is what is extrinsically valuable, in the sense that it depends on *my* picked out final value which I think it benefits *my* well-being, and not *our* well-being.

## 1.2) The Objective Account

In his *Nicomachean Ethics* (NE), Aristotle thinks that everyone should or would reach the conclusion that the final good is *happiness*. But, he clarifies, happiness as a term is unclear and has been subjectively ‘identified’ with a number of other goods, such as health, wealth, pleasure etc., (think about the subjective account of final goodness).<sup>2</sup> Aristotle argues that these subjective identifications are grounded on the idea that the common run of people desire to live the life of cattle, of *mere* enjoyment, or what he calls the *appetitive* life. And this suggests that Aristotle is implying that we should not consider the final answers provided by the common run of people to be the final value, and that Aristotle is aiming rather toward an objective answer relying (arguably) on a mixture of sciences: biology, sociology and philosophy, though these perhaps were not distinguished, as they are today, back in ancient Greek philosophy.

There are three ways of human life, Aristotle says, the appetitive, the political and the contemplative. While the appetitive is grounded on egoistic foundations, the political

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<sup>2</sup> Speaking of the ambiguity that the concept of happiness enjoys, being identified with different goods and being elusive, Philippa Foot, in her (2001) *Natural Goodness* describes happiness to be a protean concepts, a changing, malleable, concept. See chapter 6.

is grounded on practical activity (being virtuous toward other citizens) and the contemplative on theoretical activity (e.g., being a philosopher):

“For people seem ... to base their conception of the good—happiness, that is—on their own lives. The masses, the coarsest people, see it as pleasure, and so they like the life of enjoyment. There are three especially prominent types of life: that just mentioned, the life of politics, and thirdly the life of contemplation. The masses appear quite slavish by rationally choosing a life only for cattle” (Aristotle: 2000, 6).

Note Aristotle’s expression ‘to base their conception of the good ... on their *own* lives’; this note suggests that Aristotle is referring to, and rebutting, the argument that what is finally valuable is *subjectively* valuable as an end. Hence, Aristotle does not identify happiness with appetitive or egoistic happiness, and it is a complex issue in Aristotelian studies to resolve whether Aristotle’s final good is political/societal happiness (citizens being virtuous) or theoretical happiness (one being contemplative). Richard Kraut for instance interprets the matter in the following way: the primary final good, for Aristotle, is societal happiness, while theoretical happiness only being secondary, in the sense of being optional for *anyone* who wishes to engage in contemplative activity i.e., philosophy:

“The NE is a political work, and therefore it focuses primarily on the qualities that every citizen should have. For all the importance of theoretical activity ... it is in a sense an optional ideal: one can live well without being a philosopher” (Kraut 1991, 6).

Either way, Aristotle’s NE is meant to argue for an *objective* account on final goodness: that the *telos*, or the *biological purpose* of, or the *virtue* (function) of, human beings, or politicians (political animals), is to realize the objective final good namely *collective happiness* by way of being good at practical reasoning, at acting well at the right time and in the right way, a skill that requires habitual training of being morally virtuous.<sup>3</sup>

In his *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, Kant, like Aristotle, also argues toward an *objective* account on final goodness. But unlike Aristotle, he defines final goodness in terms of *unconditional* goodness. That which is unconditionally good is the final good, and that which is conditionally good is not the final good. Kant believes that happiness, and every other putatively considered ‘final good’, such as intelligence, health, wealth etc., are good only conditionally.<sup>4</sup> Think for example about some criminal being healthy, this criminal would exploit her being healthy in committing, say, grave crimes;

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid. pp. 20-21.

<sup>4</sup> Kant’s *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* p. 4:396.

also, a *happy* serial killer is not equivalent to a *happy* saint. Thus, being happy, intelligent, healthy, and so on, are good only *insofar as* the person who is exemplifying these is also *good willed*. While the good will is a *condition* for other goods to be good, the good will is not ‘good *insofar as*’ but it is itself the requisite condition for other goods to be good, hence considered by Kant to be the final good, a good that is *objectively* valuable as an end.

With Aristotle and Kant, we describe that what is finally valuable is not what is subjectively valuable as an end, but what is objectively valuable as an end, and what is objectively valuable as an end is what is extrinsically valuable, in the sense that it *depends* on whether it objectively benefits *our* well-being. Aristotle sought to explore what is objectively valuable as an end by appealing to the sciences of sociology, biology and philosophy, and Kant sought to explore it by appealing to the philosophical discipline of metaphysics. Let us then label their account as the *Objective Account of Final Value*. Unlike the latter, the subjective account of final value reports that what is finally valuable is what is subjectively valuable as an end, and what is subjectively valuable as an end is extrinsically valuable, in the sense that it *depends* on my picked out, chosen, final value that benefits *my* well-being. What is subjectively valuable as an end is typically explored by asking oneself a particular series of questions based on the form perhaps such as ‘why do I do what I do?’ until one reaches a final answer for a particular final state. Nevertheless, both accounts at issue, I believe, share the belief that final values are good because they are, subjectively or objectively, *extrinsically, beneficially*, good. Let us now introduce G.E. Moore’s definition of final value which is wholly different from what has been stated so far.

### **1.3) The Intrinsic Account**

According to Moore, what is finally valuable depends on the thing in question, or, put differently, what is finally valuable is what is intrinsically valuable. Thus, if X is valuable in itself, then X is objectively valuable as an end. By contrast, Aristotle and Kant would hold that if X is objectively good for us, then X is objectively valuable as an end, and the subjective account of value would hold that if X is subjectively good for me, then X is subjectively valuable as an end. Note that whereas both in the objective and the subjective

account of value X is extrinsically, relationally, good, in Moore's account X is intrinsically, non-rationally, good. And hence we might want to distinguish Moore's account by labeling it the *Intrinsic Account of Final Value*. We will discuss it shortly.

Moore, we should understand, rebuts every definition of final goodness that is 'humanized' or 'anthropocentric,' as those we find in the subjective and the objective account. Moore's definition of final value is 'dehumanized'.<sup>5</sup> Further, we should distinguish between 'objectivity' and 'internality'. Moore thinks that what is intrinsically good is *certainly* objectively good, but what is objectively good is not *certainly* intrinsically good.<sup>6</sup> For instance, grounding the final good on *human purpose*, and if human purpose can *change* in light of different natural laws, the final good at issue would no longer remain finally good and hence it would be proven that it was not objective; but if what is objective it must *in every circumstance* be true, Moore says, then objectivity should be understood in terms of *internality*. Therefore, Moore does not use 'objective' in the Aristotelian and Kantian sense; for him, 'objectivity' means, and is, 'internality'.

Now, for Moore, what is finally valuable as an end is what is intrinsically good, or good *period*. In this sense, he *identifies* final value with intrinsic value; he does not distinguish these two concepts apart:

“Whenever we judge that a thing is ‘good as a means,’ we are making a judgment with regard to its causal relations: we judge *both* that it will have a particular kind of effect, *and* that that effect will be good in itself” (Moore 1903, 22).

By 'good as a means' it is meant 'instrumental goodness'. A kitchen knife for instance is good *as a means* to cut vegetables. Now, Moore adds that the instrumental value of say the kitchen knife will have a particular kind of effect, namely, in this case, vegetables being cut and ready for being cooked and consumed by us. This kind of effect, according to Moore, is good in itself. But the effect in question is also considered a 'final good', and Moore calls it 'good in itself'. In other words, he deems these phrases 'as an end', or 'for its own sake' and 'in itself' to be conceptually equivalent. So, for Moore, instrumental value is causal to intrinsic/final value. Christine Korsgaard notices Moore's contrast between instrumental value and intrinsic value, and she refutes it. The right contrast she

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<sup>5</sup> I borrow these terms 'humanized' and 'dehumanized ethics' from Panayot Butchvarov's "Ethics Dehumanized" (2003), where he characterizes Moore's ethics as dehumanized ethics, *meaning*, pure ethics.

<sup>6</sup> See Moore's "The Concept of Intrinsic Value" (1922) pp. 255-256.

says is between instrumental value and final value, and between extrinsic value and intrinsic value. She says that instrumental and final value are the ways ‘we’ value things, whereas extrinsic and intrinsic value refer to ‘metaphysical’ locations of value.<sup>7</sup> At any rate, according to Moore, what is finally good is what is intrinsically good, and vice versa. Further, Moore gives us a definition of what is for a value to be intrinsic, and note now that ‘what is for a value to be intrinsic’ is equivalent to ‘what is for a value to be final’:

“To say that a kind of value is ‘intrinsic’ means merely that the question whether a thing possesses it, and in what degree it possesses it, depends solely on the intrinsic nature of the thing in question” (Moore 1922, 286).

Thus if ‘pleasure is intrinsically (or finally) good,’ this means that states of affairs of pleasure possesses goodness to some degree; if ‘friendship is intrinsically (or finally) good,’ this means that states of affairs of friendship possesses goodness to some degree; if ‘killing children is intrinsically (or finally) bad,’ this means that states of affairs of killing children possesses badness to some degree; and so on.

For Moore, therefore, what is finally valuable is what is objectively valuable as an end, and what is objectively valuable as an end is nothing but what is valuable in itself, or what is good period. The question now is how do we *know* whether a state of affairs is good in itself (finally good) or bad in itself (finally evil)? Moore argues that goodness is *unanalyzable* on the grounds that it is a *simple property*, and since properties for Moore are interchangeable with concepts, Moore, in other words, argues that goodness is *undefinable* on the grounds that it is a *simple concept*.<sup>8</sup> The general assumption then is that simple concepts, and not complex concepts, are undefinable. In his (1903) *Principia Ethica*, Moore provides the concept of a horse as an example for complex concepts. A horse then is complex because it is composed of the concepts “four legs, a head, a heart, a liver, etc., all of them arranged in definite relations to another. It is in this sense that I deny good to be definable” (Moore 1903, 8). Moore, it should be known, is interested in *real* or *analytic* definitions rather than *verbal* or *nominal* definitions as we find in dictionaries or the art of lexicography. He is interested in definitions that report *real*

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<sup>7</sup> See Korsgaard’s “Two Distinctions in Goodness” (1983) p. 170.

<sup>8</sup> In his “The Nature of Judgment” (1899), Moore claims that “since an existent is seen to be nothing but a concept or complex of concepts standing in a unique relation to the concept of existence” p. 183. By ‘complex of concepts’ Moore refers to the seventeenth century idea of ‘bundle of properties’.

properties about the thing defined, such as the definition of a horse above, or the definition of water being composed of H<sub>2</sub>O. Goodness, according to Moore, is not composed of other properties or concepts; it is, rather, itself a simple concept of which other concepts are composed, and hence undefinable. If we were to ask him how is goodness to be defined, he would reply that goodness is goodness period (Moore 1903, 6). Further, ethical judgments such as ‘pleasure is good in itself’, ‘pleasure is intrinsically good,’ ‘torturing children is bad period,’ and so on, Moore says, are true by *ethical intuition* in the same manner ‘this is my hand,’ or ‘one plus one equals two’ are true by *common sense*.<sup>9</sup> That is, all of us are aware of these unique simple concepts, namely, goodness and badness (Moore 1903, 17).

It is worth asking the question what is it meant or referred to by ‘intrinsic properties’ when Moore states that whether something is finally good depends on its intrinsic properties. Moore was not transparent about this issue. Other Mooreans, such as Michael Zimmerman, do explain the intrinsic properties of states of affairs in terms of the elements ‘x,’ ‘P’ and ‘t’ that we find in the notation of state of affairs [x, P, t].<sup>10</sup> If intrinsic properties of states of affairs do refer to the elements in [x, P, t], where ‘x’ refers to an individual, ‘P’ to a property, and ‘t’ to time and place, then Moore is arguing that whether e.g., [Adam, being happy, t] is finally good *depends on* the unique relation between the properties or concepts: ‘Adam,’ ‘being happy,’ ‘time,’ ‘place,’ and ‘goodness’. Moore confesses, however, that he does not know how to explain why goodness is *not* part of the relation of intrinsic properties and yet it must be so. For, unlike the predicate of goodness, the predicate of yellow for instance is that kind of property that is part of the relation of intrinsic properties it finds itself in. Consider the state of affairs, ‘this big watch being yellow’, or [this watch, being big, t] is being yellow. The intrinsic properties of this last amount to the enumeration of ‘this watch’, ‘being big,’ ‘time,’ ‘place,’ and ‘yellow,’ where ‘yellow’ is part of that relation and the proof is that we can see it; “we are thus to say,” he says, “that predicates of value, though dependent solely on intrinsic properties, are not themselves intrinsic properties, there must be some characteristic belonging to intrinsic properties which predicates of value never possess. And it seems to me quite

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<sup>9</sup> See also Butchvarov’s (1982) “That Simple, indefinable, non-natural Property” p. 75

<sup>10</sup> See Zimmerman’s (2001) *The Nature of Intrinsic Value* pp. 61, 119.

obvious that there is; only I can't see *what* it is” (Moore 1922, 274). That is why, I think, Moore usually calls ethical properties *sui generis* or *unique* or *mysterious* as a kind.

Furthermore, Moore argues that any attempt of analyzing or explaining ethical claims like ‘Adam being happy is good’ in *natural* terms—such as, it is good because it is what the biological purpose of human beings calls for (Aristotle), or because it is what ‘I’ approve of (Hobbes), or what ‘society’ approves of (Hume), or what ‘God’ approves of (Divine Command theories), and so on—we commit thereafter what he calls the ‘naturalistic fallacy’. Goodness, for Moore, is an ethical property, and ethical properties are *distinct* from natural properties. Since the question ‘is whatever pleasurable good?’ is *open*, that is, *meaningful*, then ‘pleasure’ and ‘goodness’ bear different senses; were the question *closed*, meaning, *insignificant* and *obvious*, ‘pleasure’ would’ve been synonymous to ‘goodness,’ but they are not. He concludes, then, by way of his last Open Question Argument, that we commit the naturalistic fallacy if we *reduce, explain, analyze* or *define* goodness in natural terms.<sup>11</sup> By ‘naturalistic fallacy,’ Moore does not mean the fallacy of merely equating ethical properties with ‘natural’ properties, but it is also a fallacy to equate ethical properties with ‘metaphysical’ and ‘supernatural’ properties. The Moorean sense of ‘natural’ in ‘naturalistic fallacy’ is meant to include all of ‘natural (sensible), metaphysical (supersensible), and supernatural (presumably also supersensible)’.<sup>12</sup> By metaphysical properties, Moore means properties that exist in some supersensible world, a world which exists *beyond* the scope of this natural and sensible world; the supersensible world is part of this world but only transcends it.<sup>13</sup> By supernatural properties, Moore refers to things like God’s commands. Note that Moore attributes ‘existence’ to properties that exist *in time*, such as the white color of this page. And things that exist in time, for Moore, exist not only within this sensible world, but also within supersensible worlds, the metaphysical and the supernatural. Considering this, Moore concludes that goodness is not an *existent in time*, it neither exists in our sensible world, nor in some supersensible world; it does not exist but has a *being*, he says. And I am not quite certain about what ‘has a being’ means, especially since if something has a

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<sup>11</sup> See Moore’s (1903) *Principia Ethica* pp. 16, 17.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid* p. 39.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid* pp. 112-13.

being must *be* in a world, and the question is if goodness has a being, then in which world it exists if not in the sensible and the supersensible world? Is Moore implying that goodness exists in some non-sensible world? And if so, then is there such world? How can we even be ‘aware’ of it if it is non-sensible? I leave these interesting questions aside. At any rate, according to Moore, what is finally good is what is good in itself, or good *sans phrase*.

We notice then that Moore’s account of final/intrinsic goodness depicts this last as a *mysterious* property but nevertheless *knowable*. Supposing the charge of the naturalistic fallacy is plausible, and if goodness is nevertheless knowable, why not then attempt to analyze it *not* in *natural* terms, but in *normative* terms? In what follows I present theories that attempt doing just that.

#### **1.4) Final Goodness and Normativity**

The accounts which I present report, like Moore’s, that what is finally good is what is intrinsically good. But whereas Moore *refrains* from analyzing further what is it for a final good to be good in itself, and thus leaves it for ethical intuition to decide, the accounts I present *proceed* further to analyze what is for a final good to be good in itself. I present both what is called Theories of Fitting-Attitude (FA) and what is called the Buck-Passing account of Value (BPA). Some argue that these are distinct, and some argue that BPA is a subset of FA, but this debate need not matter to us.<sup>14</sup> More importantly, both theories of value analyze intrinsic or final goodness in terms of *normative* concepts. But whereas FA analyzes final goodness in terms like ‘fittingness,’ ‘correctness’ and ‘oughtness,’ BPA is distinguished by the fact that it analyzes final goodness in terms of ‘reasons’.

##### **1.4.1) Theories of Fitting-Attitude**

FA accounts derive from Franz Brentano’s account. Brentano argues that “in the broadest sense of the term, the good is that which is worthy of love, that which can be loved with a love that is correct” (Brentano 1889, 18). Note that by ‘love,’ Brentano does not refer to that specific emotion of love, but to a multiplicity of pro-attitudes: to favor, promote, admire, praise, and so on. Brentano therefore analyzes goodness in terms of the

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<sup>14</sup> See Francesco Orsi’s (2015) *Value Theory* about the intricate differences between these theories pp. 8-15.



relationship between the normative concept of ‘correctness’ and the pro-attitude of ‘love’: *something then is finally good simply means that it is correct to love that thing as an end, for its own sake, or for its intrinsic properties.* This is straightforward. Suppose the state of affairs S1: [Ben, torturing children, t]; it seems incorrect to love S1 as an end but it seems correct to hate S1 as an end; further, this correct hatred *reveals* the final evil or the intrinsic badness of S1. Thus, unlike Moore who would claim that S1 is finally bad without further explication, Brentano would claim that S1 is finally bad *because* it is correct to hate it as an end.

Another theory of Fitting Attitudes, one which captures the name of the theory, is provided by Alfred Ewing. He contends that something is finally good is when it is fitting to have a pro-attitude towards it for its own sake (Ewing 1947, 152). We usually use the verb ‘to fit’ to relate one object to another. Thus when I’m at the shoe shop I try ‘shoes’ and check whether they fit my ‘feet,’ or when someone says that ‘the color of my shirt’ fits ‘the color of my shorts’. Another word for ‘fitting’ is ‘matching’. In similar sense, then, my attitudes either fit or do not fit, match or do not match, states of affairs. Consider S1 again [Ben, torturing children, t]. If S1 were to *occur* in front of my eyes, then it does not *fit*, or it is *unfitting*, to have a *pro-attitude* toward S1 for its own sake, but it does *fit*, or it is *fitting*, to have a *con-attitude* toward it for its own sake; S1 therefore is finally, intrinsically, bad.

Let me mention one last theory that analyzes final goodness in terms of the normative concept of *oughtness*. Zimmerman, and many others, claim that something is finally good means that one *ought* to favor it for its own sake, or one is *required* to favor it, prefer it, promote it for its own sake, and so on.<sup>15</sup> Thus if states of affairs involving friendship are finally good, this means that they *ought* to be favored as an end, where ‘ought’ here is not in the sense of *moral obligation*, but that of *fittingness*;<sup>16</sup> that is, something is finally good means perhaps that one ought to feel that it ought to be favored as an end. Although, as we will see later in chapter 2, Zimmerman considers this

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<sup>15</sup> See Zimmerman’s “In Defence of the Concept of Intrinsic Value” (1999); Lemos’s *Intrinsic Value: Concept and Warrant* (1994); Chisholm’s “Defining Intrinsic Value” (1980).

<sup>16</sup> See Ewing’s *The Definition of Good*. (1948) p. 132.

oughtness in question *moral*, that if X is finally good, one is ‘morally required’ to favor X as an end.

#### 1.4.2) The Buck-Passing Account of Value

Following similar course, T.M. Scanlon contends that something is finally good simply means that there is *reason* to favor it for its own sake. Thus if S1 [myself, enjoying being at the beach, t] is finally good, then this means that there is reason for me to favor [myself, enjoying being at the beach, t] for its own sake. According to Scanlon, S1 being finally good is not itself a reason for me to favor S1 for its own sake. What provides me with *reason* to favor enjoying being at the beach for its own sake are rather *further* features and properties, good-making properties, that make S1 finally valuable.<sup>17</sup> Goodness, in this sense, *passes the buck of value* to these good-making properties. It is on the grounds of these good-making properties, such as the warm feeling of the sand, and so on, that supply me with reason to favor [myself, enjoying being at the beach, t] as an end.

In conclusion, both FA and BPA reduce goodness to some normative concept; unlike Moore’s account, FA and BPA *reveal* to us the nature of goodness that is *mysteriously* intrinsic to certain states of affairs *through* our fitting attitudes. States of affairs involving final values (e.g., being pleased, being healthy etc.) are valuable in themselves, and this means, for FA and BPA, respectively, that it is fitting/correct to love such states of affairs for their own sake, and that there is some reason to favor them for their own sake.

#### 1.5) Summary

In this chapter we have provided an overview to the concept of final value. We have distinguished *three* accounts. (A) the Subjective Account of Final Value which defines final value as (1) what is finally valuable is what is subjectively valuable as an end and what is subjectively valuable as an end is extrinsically valuable; it depends on what we personally value as an end. Next, (B) the Objective Account of Final Value. Aristotle and Kant, have, whether correctly or incorrectly, sought to provide accounts of what is *objectively* valuable as an end. For Aristotle, (2) what is finally valuable is what is

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<sup>17</sup> See T.M. Scanlon’s *What We Owe to Each Other* (1998) p. 97.

objectively valuable as an end, and what is objectively valuable as an end is extrinsically valuable; it depends on what our objective biological purpose as human beings is; for Kant, (3) what is finally valuable is what is objectively valuable as an end and what is objectively valuable as end is extrinsically valuable; it depends on what is unconditionally good. Next, (C) the Intrinsic Account of Final Value. We have presented Moore's definition that (4) what is finally valuable is what is valuable *in itself*. Then we have provided some theories that, like Moore, hold that what is finally good is what is good in itself, but unlike Moore they analyze final goodness in normative terms: (5) what is finally good is what is correct to love for its own sake; (6) what is finally good is what is fitting to have a pro-attitude toward for its own sake; (7) what is finally good is what one ought to favor and promote for its own sake; (8) what is finally good is what provides us with reasons to favor it for its own sake; and so on. Let us list these definitions:

- (1) what is finally valuable is what is subjectively valuable as an end.
- (2 & 3) what is finally valuable is what is objectively valuable as an end.
- (4) what is finally valuable is what is intrinsically valuable, or good *period*.
- (5) what is finally valuable is what is correct to love as an end.
- (6) what is finally valuable is what is fitting to have a pro-attitude toward as an end.
- (7) what is finally valuable is what one ought to favor and promote as an end.
- (8) what is finally valuable is what provides us with reasons to favor as an end.

It is now important to remind ourselves with the objective of this thesis. I argue that what is finally good is what is finally good for us, be it subjectively or objectively so. In this sense, I have no issue with (1) and (2 & 3). I have issue with (4) to (8), particularly (4) since (5) to (8) entail (4). Chapter 2 is a presentation of two objections that deny the possibility of things being *intrinsically* good—or *just* good, or *simply* good, or good *period*—by appealing fundamentally to the basics of grammar and common sense; here is the general argument:

**(P1\*)** Moore claims that what is finally good is what is good period.

**(P2\*)** *Generally*, goodness is essentially an *attributive* property (e.g., Adam is not good *period*, but Adam is a *good man*, a *good husband*, *good at chess* etc.)

**(C\*)** Therefore, what is finally valuable is not what is good period.

I believe that the conclusion is sound, and chapter 2 explains the important premise (P2).

## CHAPTER 2: AGAINST GOODNESS PERIOD

Suppose I say to you ‘Adam is good *period*,’ and then you ask me ‘do you mean that Adam is a good husband?’ and I reply ‘no, I mean good period’. Perhaps then you will say ‘Oh, you mean that Adam is a good man,’ but then I reply ‘no I mean Adam is good period’. My responses would obviously strike you queer and meaningless. For we usually attribute goodness to some kind when we engage in everyday discussions. For instance, suppose I am watching football with my friends, and I say ‘Messi is good’; my friends would naturally consider my judgment to mean ‘Messi is a good *football player*’. Similarly, when someone claims this or that state of affairs is good e.g., ‘Adam being happy today is good’; we would naturally interpret the speaker to mean ‘Adam being happy today is good *for Adam or for so-and-so*’. But suppose we were to ask this person, ‘do you mean Adam being happy today is good for Adam or for so-and-so?’ and suppose she replies ‘no, I mean Adam being happy today is good period,’ wouldn’t her response strikes us meaningless? Peter Geach and Judith Thomson think so; they think in general that there is no such property as *goodness period*. For Geach, something ‘being good’ is always ‘being a good so-and-so’; for Thomson, something ‘being good’ is always ‘being good in a way’. In section 2.1, I present Geach’s argument that if the adjective good is always understood attributively, then the property of goodness is essentially *relative*. Accordingly, ‘[x, P, t] is good period’ is meaningless, unless we take it to mean ‘[x, P, t] is a good state of affairs’. But even this last, Geach thinks, is meaningless (and I disagree). In section 2.2, I present Thomson’s objection to goodness period. She also believes that goodness is a relative property, but unlike Geach she holds that all goodness is *goodness in a way* rather than *goodness of a kind*. In this sense, even ‘[x, P, t] is a good state of affairs’ requires qualification, for all goodness is goodness in a way; and states of affairs, Thomson assumes and never explains, are those things that are either *beneficially* good (good for us) or *detrimentally* bad (bad for us). In chapter 3, I explain and defend this assumption.

### 2.1) Geach: being a good so-and-so

Geach demonstrates in his (1956) “Good and Evil” that goodness is a *relative* property, rather than one that is *free-standing* (i.e., good *period*) as Moore believes it to be. Arguing from the subject of grammar, whilst fusing his grammarian argument with basic logic,

i.e., basic principles of inference, Geach concludes that 'good' is *always* an adjective that is 'logically,' or 'understood as,' attributive; that when we say 'this is good *period*,' what we always mean in fact is 'this is a *good so-and-so*'.

Now adjectives are grammatically used in two ways: predicatively and attributively. Thus in 'this car *is red*,' 'red' is used predicatively; in 'where is my *red book*?' it is used attributively. Geach supplies us with a test in which we can run adjectives and check whether they are 'logically' attributive or predicative. Here is the Geachean test. He contends that if we cannot logically split the claim 'This is A B', where 'A' is an adjective and 'B' a noun, into 'This is A' and 'This is B', this should demonstrate to us that 'A' is *always* an adjective that is logically attributive. Examples are needed now, and before moving to the adjective 'good,' let us consider 'short'. Can we logically split the claim say 'Sun is a short giraffe' into 'Sun is short' and 'Sun is a giraffe,' that is, can we split these assertions without running into 'unsound' inferences? Let us check:

- (P1) Sun is a short giraffe
- (P2) If Sun is a short giraffe, then Sun is short and Sun is a giraffe
- (C) Therefore, Sun is short
- (P3) Sun is an animal
- (C1) Therefore, Sun is a short animal

The conclusion (C1) is valid but *unsound*, for giraffes are not short animals, but tall indeed in relation to the height of animals. The culprit is (P2). It is our splitting of 'sun is a short giraffe' into 'Sun is short' and 'Sun is a giraffe', or in other words it is our treatment of 'short' predicatively, that generated the valid conclusion (C) which in turn lead us, together with P3, to the unsound conclusion (C1). This reveals to us that 'short' should not have been treated predicatively; it reveals to us that it is not logical to split up the claim 'Sun is a short giraffe' into 'Sun is short' and 'Sun is a giraffe'. Therefore, 'short' is always a logically attributive adjective; the correct usage of 'short' is always 'X is a short so-and-so'. In the same fashion, Geach argues that the adjective good is never logically predicative. Consider the following example:

- (P1) Adam is a good husband
- (P2) If Adam is a good husband, then Adam is good and Adam is a husband
- (C) Therefore, Adam is good
- (P3) Adam is a soccer player and Adam is a father

(C1) Therefore, Adam is a good soccer player and Adam is a good father

Again, (C1) is valid but *unsound*. The premises (P1), (P2), (C) and (P3) are not sufficient to establish the conclusion (C1). Adam might well be a good husband but also a bad soccer player and a bad father. The culprit again is (P2). We should not have split the claim ‘Adam is a good husband’ into ‘Adam is good’ and ‘Adam is a husband’, since by doing so we run into *unsound* inferences. Therefore, ‘good’ is always an adjective that is logically attributive, ‘being good’ is always ‘being a good so-and-so’; being good as a husband is different from being good as a father, and these are different from being good as a chess player, and so on.

By contrast, the assertion ‘Adam is a white man’ can logically split into ‘Adam is white’ and ‘Adam is a man’. For suppose now that Adam is also a lawyer, it seems that we can infer with soundness that ‘Adam is a white lawyer’. If so then ‘white’ is, unlike ‘good’ and ‘short,’ logically predicative:

(P1) Adam is a white man  
 (P2) If Adam is a white man, then Adam is white and Adam is a man  
 (C) Therefore, Adam is white  
 (P3) Adam is a lawyer  
 (C1) Therefore, Adam is a white lawyer

The conclusion (C1) is valid and sound, and this shows that ‘Adam is a white man’ can logically split into ‘Adam is white’ and ‘Adam is a man’. For ‘white’ can *transpose* to every social role Adam embodies.<sup>18</sup> Whereas Adam’s whiteness remains the same property throughout his social roles, Adam’s goodness does not: being a good husband is not the same as being a good teacher. Therefore, the adjective white is logically predicative, and that of good is logically attributive.

The valuable lesson that Geach wants us to draw from these mentioned arguments is that goodness is always understood as a *relative* property, and e.g., ‘Adam is good

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<sup>18</sup> I borrow this notion of *transposition* from Michael Zimmerman’s 1999 “In Defense of the Concept of Intrinsic Value”.

period' is meaningless, unless we *relate* goodness to a *natural* kind (e.g., is a good man) or to a *social* kind (e.g., is a good lawyer). And let us for now grant Geach's argument.

Now, if 'good' is always 'a good so-and-so,' then Moore's account of goodness period, whose sense is accredited to states of affairs as '[x, P, t] is good *period*,' fails to employ the adjective good in its logical sense. But one way to amend the worry is to simply say that by '[x, P, t] is good period' it is meant '[x, P, t] is a *good state of affairs*'; and so, in this sense it will be said that we have *correctly* employed the adjective good. But Geach censures such attribution of goodness to states of affairs, though he substitutes the word states of affairs for events. He claims that words like 'event' and 'thing,' are void of content and do not 'convey' a standard of goodness, as do words such as 'lawyer,' 'knife' or 'tennis player':

"we cannot sensibly speak of a good event or a bad event, a good or bad thing to happen. 'Event', like 'thing' is too empty a word to convey either a criterion of identity or a standard of goodness; to ask 'Is this a good or bad thing (to happen)?' is as useless as to ask 'Is this the same thing that I saw yesterday?' . . . unless the emptiness of 'thing' or 'event' is filled up by a special context of utterance" (Geach 1956, 41).

This is the Geachean point on which I *disagree* and against which I construct an objection in chapter 3. I *do* think that words like 'event' and 'state of affairs' convey a standard of goodness. For just as we regularly say things as 'this is a good car,' do we not also usually say 'that is a good event,' 'that is good news,' and so on? If so, then 'event,' or 'state of affairs,' must convey, just like 'car' and 'knife,' though in a manner perhaps more oblique, a standard of goodness, and so we ought to make an effort to know just what that standard conveys. I conclude in chapter 3 that the function of state of affairs is to place human beings into certain relations with the spatiotemporal world. And that to say '[x, P, t] is a good state of affairs' is to say in other words that '[x, P, t] involves 'x' (supposing 'x' is a human being) where 'x' is placed in relations with the spatiotemporal world in a way that is beneficial to 'x'.

What is more, it has been argued by Judith Thomson that the Geachean phrase 'a good so-and-so,' like 'good period,' itself requires further qualification. For when we say for example 'this is a good book,' we perhaps mean, given some context, 'this book is *good for* these children, but *bad for* those adults'; 'this book is *good to* read on new year's eve, but *bad to* read in the mornings'; and so on. If this objection is sound, then 'this is a good state of affairs' also requires further qualification, and so it should mean something like



‘this state of affairs is good *for* so-and-so’. Let us then turn to Thomson’s thesis that anything that is good is *good in a way*, rather than *good so-and-so* (Geach), or *good period* (Moore).

## 2.2) Thomson: being good in a way

Thomson posits two general theses: (1) like Geach, she argues that there is no such thing as being *simply* good, and (2) unlike Geach, she adds that all goodness is rather *goodness in a way*.<sup>19</sup> Thus ‘this lawyer is good’ does not simply mean that ‘this lawyer is a good lawyer,’ but rather something like ‘this lawyer is *good at* lawyering corporate case’; ‘*good to* watch defending her cases in court’; ‘*good with* destitute clients’; ‘*good as* a father’; and so on. Thomson argues that there are *first-order* ways of being good and *second-order* ways of being good.<sup>20</sup> The former ways share the following structure: ‘good plus adjuncts’. Thus, if something is good in the first-order way, it is either:

- a) good *to* e.g., look at; this is *enjoyable* goodness.
- b) good *at* e.g., chess; this is *skillful* goodness.
- c) good *for use in* e.g., cutting vegetables; this is *useful* goodness.
- d) good *for* e.g., my well-being; this is *beneficial* goodness.
- e) good *as* e.g., a pillow; this is *relative* goodness.

Of course, it may be argued that this account is inconclusive in that it fails to mention other possible forms of first-order ways of being good. But I need not concern myself with this matter. I shall move on to discuss Thomson’s second-order ways of being good, which are:

- f) being e.g., just, kind etc.; this is *moral* goodness.
- g) being e.g., elegant, eloquent etc.; this is *aesthetic* goodness.

Now, Thomson argues that f) is a ‘second-order’ way of being good, because ‘moral’ goodness *rests* on the first-order way of being ‘beneficially’ good. She claims for instance that citizens *being just is good for* the community.<sup>21</sup> But Thomson does not tell us on which first-order ways does ‘aesthetic’ goodness rest, claiming that she is not concerned about this issue, and so I too leave this aside.

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<sup>19</sup> See Thomson’s “The right and The Good” (1997) p. 278.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid. pp. 277, 279.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid. p. 282.

If Thomson's account is plausible, then all goodness is goodness in a way, and we should forgo the non-relative property of being *good period*. We should, that is, always ask the question 'good in what way?' whenever someone asserts 'such-and-such is good'; we should think of all good things as good either in the enjoyable way, the skillful, the useful, the beneficial, the moral, the aesthetic, or the relative.

Now, granting plausibility to Thomson's account, how are we to read the Moorean claim '[x, P, t] is good period'? While Geach reads it as '[x, P, t] is a good state of affairs' and implies that such reading is meaningless, Thomson claims that states of affairs, or events, are those kinds of objects to which the property of goodness-for, or beneficial goodness, is accredited:

"it seems true, and I will assume it to be true, that goodness-for is always ultimately possessed by events and states of affairs ... Indeed, I will henceforth ignore the differences between events and states of affairs and suppose it true that goodness-for is always ultimately possessed by states of affairs" (Thomson 1992, 97).

Therefore, in light of Thomson's account, 'a good state of affairs' does mean 'a state of affairs that is good for so-and-so,' or 'a state of affairs that is beneficial to us,' where 'a bad state of affairs,' 'a state of affairs that is bad for so-and-so,' or 'a state of affairs that is detrimental to us'. Thus, if [x, P, t] is good, if for example [Adam, graduating from college, t] is good, then it is good *in a way*, in the *beneficial way*; if bad, then bad in the *detrimental way*. All in all, regardless of their differences, both Thomson and Geach think it meaningless to say that [x, P, t] is *good period* or *intrinsically good*; both believe that there is no such property as *goodness period*. Let us then check how the friends of *goodness period* react to such objection. I only focus on one specific reply to Thomson's, there where my interest lies for now.

### **2.3) Reply from Zimmerman**

In his (1999) "In Defence of the Concept of Intrinsic Value", Michael Zimmerman *agrees* with Thomson's thesis that all goodness is goodness in a way, but he *rejects* her other thesis that there is no such property as goodness period. Zimmerman then finds a way to synthesize the matter claiming that for something to be good period is for it to be good in a way, and that is in the 'ethical' way in that one *ought to favor* that thing for its own sake (remember Zimmerman's account of FA in chapter 1). Let us first observe his response to

Thomson's skepticism on the notion of intrinsic goodness, and then discuss his idea that intrinsic goodness is goodness in a way.

Zimmerman believes that Thomson has never actually objected to 'intrinsic goodness' and that she has confused this last with some other property, namely, 'generic goodness'. That is, Thomson, he says, has misread Moore's sense of goodness in *Principia Ethica*, since (correctly) the Moorean writing style therein is quite *loose* regarding 'good' and it seems as if Moore does in fact defend a generic property of goodness i.e., goodness that is common to all good things. Consider for instance these Moorean passages:

**A)** "Ethics is undoubtedly concerned with the question what good conduct is; but, being concerned with this, it obviously does not start at the beginning, unless it is prepared to tell us what is **good** as well as what is conduct" (Moore 1903, 54, emphasis added).

**B)** "But there is another meaning which may be given to the question 'What is **good**?' 'Books are **good**' would be an answer to it ..." (Moore 1903, 54, emphasis added).

**C)** "This, then, is our first question: what is **good**? and What is **bad**?" (Moore 1903, 55, emphasis added).

From A, B and C, one may indeed infer that goodness, thus posited, refers to goodness in its general sense, or what would be in Thomson's terminology, goodness *in no way*. But Zimmerman, and indeed, every defender of Moore's goodness, believe that Moore's sense is not generic, but *intrinsic* (or *final*), and by something being intrinsically good, Mooreans mean something being *good in a way* (remember FA theories and BPA). Zimmerman thinks that for something to be intrinsically good is for it to be 'morally required from us' to favor it and promote it for itself, for its own sake:

"When it is said that pleasure, or knowledge, or beauty, or virtue is intrinsically good and that, for example, activities that promote such states are extrinsically good, what is meant is that all these things are ethically good ... in that there is a moral requirement to favor them (welcome them, admire them, take satisfaction in them, and so on) for their own sakes. That which is intrinsically good is preferable to that which is not, the '-able' here expressing moral worthiness" (Zimmerman 1999, 397).<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> I should note that not all Fitting Attitude Theorists hold that something being intrinsically good means that we ought to favor it, where 'ought' is understood as moral. Unlike Zimmerman, Alfred Ewing distinguishes between oughtness of moral obligation and oughtness of fittingness; Ewing tells us that 'one ought to favor' is oughtness of fittingness, not of moral requirement (Ewing 1948, 132). And I am not sure whether Zimmerman is aware about this distinction.

While generic goodness would be that general property which all good things have in common, intrinsic goodness is then not a general property that is common to all good things, rather, it is proper *only* to certain states, finally good states, such as wisdom, happiness, love etc. These intrinsically/finally good states, Zimmerman thinks, are good in the ethical way in that we are under an *ethical* requirement to *prefer* and *promote* them for their own sake.

Note that if Zimmerman is correct to maintain that intrinsic goodness is goodness in the ethical, normative, way, then it seems that we can explain this ethical way in which intrinsic goodness is goodness in terms of multiple accounts that pertain to the Fitting-Attitudes Analysis and Buck-Passing account of Value. According to Zimmerman, for something to be good period is for it to be ethically good in that we *ought to favor* it for itself; following the same reasoning, Brentano might also reply to Thomson that for something to be intrinsically good is for it to be ethically good in that it is *correct to love* it for itself; Scanlon might also reply that for something to be intrinsically good is for it to be ethically good in that there is reason to favor it for itself; and so on.

Now, away from the conceptual difference between *ethical goodness* and *moral goodness*, let us assume that ‘ethical’ and ‘moral’ refer to the same thing. Then in Thomson’s view what is morally good (or morally required) such as being just, being kind, being generous, *rests on* beneficial goodness e.g., it is *good for* us if the community is just; it is *good for* me if my kinship are generous; and so on. By contrast, in Zimmerman’s view, what is morally good (or morally required) such as the oughtness to favor justice, kindness, knowledge and so on, does not *rest on* beneficial goodness e.g., it is good *period* if the community is just; it is good *period* if my kinship are generous. The question whether final values are *good for us* are then deemed unimportant in Zimmerman’s ethical theory, and Moorean ethical theories in general; their approach to ethics is often called *analytic ethics*, and such approach puts heavy focus on language, excluding thereby the holder of the language.<sup>23</sup> The challenging question to Zimmerman is why *should* we favor good states of affairs over bad states of affairs if it is not for the reason that they are good for us? There is no reason that *interest* us as to why should we favor such-and-such.

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<sup>23</sup> See Butchvarov’s (2003) “Ethics Dehumanized” p. 165.

As Richard Kraut puts it, goodness period is not a *reason-giving property*.<sup>24</sup> Indeed, since we are speaking about states of affairs which doubtlessly *concern us*—e.g., ‘I’ benefit from the state of affairs S1: [myself, being pleased, t], or from S2 [my friend, graduating from college, t], and that is why S1 and S2 are good—I do, therefore, side with Thomson that good states of affairs are relationally good, *good for us*, rather than good *period*. And it is the purpose of chapter 3 to explain why good states of affairs are beneficially good, or good for us. States of affairs regarding us have a function, and their function is to *place* us in certain relations with the spatiotemporal world for some ‘natural’ purpose or for some ‘Divine purpose’. I will assume that it is for some ‘Divine purpose’. If we are placed in good relations and states, then it is us who benefit; and if we are placed in bad relations and states, then it is us who do not benefit. If so, then finally valuable states of affairs are states of affairs in which ‘we’ are placed into *good* relations and states and hence beneficially good relations and states; finally valuable states of affairs are not good in themselves, or good period.

#### 2.4) Summary

Geach and Thomson argue against the property of goodness period. Whatever is good cannot be good *simpliciter*. If something is good according to Geach, it is good of a kind; if something is good according to Thomson, it is good in a way. Our subject matter of the thesis is final values understood as states of affairs. Geach argues that ‘[x, P, t] is good’ is translatable to ‘[x, P, t] is a good state of affairs’. He, however, thinks that words like ‘state of affairs’ and ‘events’ do not convey a standard of goodness as does the word ‘kitchen knife’. That is, while we can state the function of a kitchen knife and deduce thereby its standard of goodness, we cannot do that for states of affairs; and I argue against this in chapter 3. Thomson’s thesis, on the other hand, that all goodness is *goodness in a way* shows to us that there are ways of being good and that states of affairs are good in the *beneficial way* (goodness-for). She, however, only assumes this last and finds it obvious; in chapter 3, I explain how states of affairs are good/bad for us. Finally, we have presented Zimmerman’s reply. Zimmerman agrees that all goodness is goodness in a way, but he also defends the property of goodness period. He contends that goodness period is

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<sup>24</sup> See kraut’s (2011) *Against Absolute Goodness*. The claim that goodness period, unlike goodness for, is a not a reason-giving property is the main thesis of his book.

goodness in a way, namely, that for a state of affairs to be good period is for it to be ethically good in that one *ought to favor* it, *promote* it, for its intrinsic properties, and not for *our* sake. In the following chapter I show that states of affairs regarding human beings have a function, and their function is to place us, human beings, either in beneficial states of affairs or detrimental states of affairs. Thus, if we are placed in the former states, it is good for us, and if we are placed in the latter, it is bad for us. States of affairs concerning us cannot be good or bad in themselves if states of affairs have the function I claim they have, since their function is to put 'us' in states that are good for us or bad for us.

## **CHAPTER 3: FUNCTION OF STATES OF AFFAIRS**

Geach assumes that only social and natural kinds (e.g., knife, man) that convey a standard of goodness on the grounds that they are functional. While we can identify the function of kinds such as ‘knife’ and ‘lawyer’, he assumes that we cannot do the same with kinds such as ‘event’ and ‘state of affairs’. The assumption therefore is that *abstract* kinds, and not *concrete* kinds, do not convey a standard of goodness on the grounds that they do not have a function. I wish in this chapter to demonstrate that there are certain states of affairs, namely, states of affairs concerning human beings, that have a function, and that if so, then states of affairs do convey a standard of goodness. I argue that their function is to place human beings into certain relations with the spatiotemporal world, and that from this we conclude that the good state of affairs i.e., the finally valuable state of affairs, is that which places the individual into relations with the spatiotemporal world in a way that benefits this individual. Therefore, finally good state of affairs are good because they are beneficially good, good for our well-being, rather than good because they are good in themselves.

### **3.1) The Nature of Function**

Discussions about functions, goals, purposes, have their own department in philosophy called *teleology*. Andrew Woodfield writes:

“questions about teleology are, broadly, to do with whether a thing has a purpose or is acting of a purpose, and, if so, what that purpose is. Such questions can be raised with respect to anything: twigs, people, schools, ants, ceremonies, stars, the universe as a whole, et cetera” (Woodfield 1976, 1).

I agree with Woodfield, and if we can raise teleological questions with respect to ‘anything,’ then it is reasonable to raise it about states of affairs. Now, the fundamental concept in which I am interested is not those of purpose, telos, or goal, but that of function, and the natural assumption that comes to mind when we wish to set a definition of what is for something to have a function would be perhaps:

- (1) For something to have a function is for it to have a purpose.

This definition analyzes being functional in terms of being purposeful. But the concept of purpose, to be more precise than Woodfield, usually has to do with ‘voluntary activity’.<sup>25</sup> And if so, then the concept of purpose is related to concepts of reason and free will. We say that it is the *rational* person who sets forth a purpose, or also what is called an end. Contra Woodfield in his quote above, ‘schools’ as such do not have a purpose, rather, it is the ‘directors’ of those schools that have a purpose. Throughout their activity, rational beings set before themselves deliberative purposes. Thus, if one of my purposes, for some practical reason, is to graduate from college, then it might be reasonably said that I am *being purposeful*, or I have a purpose, and so, given the proposed definition above, I am also being *functional*, or I have a function. Note further that while being purposeful is static, fixed, and focused on say one and only one purpose, being functional is dynamic, an activity, toward that fixed purpose. Thus if graduating from college is my *fixed* purpose, my function thereafter is to *work out* the different activities that lead me toward realizing that fixed purpose. Moreover, the question whether animals and plants are purposeful would depend on whether animals and plants set before themselves a purpose. Indeed, ants and bees are perhaps the paradigmatic examples of animals being purposeful and hence functional given their peculiar systematic ways of behavior. Bees for instance function to produce honey, where the production of honey is the fixed purpose. But I will not press the subject of animals further, for I am mainly concerned about us, human beings.

Since discussions on functions and purposes usually invoke the ideas of social roles and artefacts, we should say something about them. It seems that our definition above of what is for something to have a function works well for ‘social roles’ but not so for ‘artefacts’. For a social role to have a function is for it to have a purpose. Social roles, such as being a lawyer, being a physician, and so on, are roles that human beings embody. And indeed lawyers for example who are human beings are rational, and so they set before themselves a fixed purpose according to those social roles; lawyers are purposeful (e.g., to win case X) and so they are also functional (e.g., do their homework about case X, defend the relevant client in court, and so on). On the other hand, artefacts such as ‘knives’, ‘chairs,’ ‘tables,’ ‘schools’, and so on, are also said to be functional, but, according

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<sup>25</sup> See Rosenblueth, Wiener and Bigelow “Behavior, Purpose and Teleology” (1943) p. 19.



to the definition at issue, they are not purposeful; for something to be purposeful is for it to have the rational ability to put before itself a fixed purpose, and certainly a knife for example does not set before itself a purpose, and yet we say nonetheless that these objects have certain functions. Therefore, it seems that the definition of function, namely, *for something to have a function is for it to have a purpose*, only works for rational beings. And so I conclude that *one way* of being functional is to be purposeful.

The function of artefacts seems *sub-functional* in that its function lies *within* the function of social roles. Consider a chef de cuisine for instance. The function of the chef de cuisine is to purposively prepare certain meals. But the chef also uses kitchen knives toward his purpose, and the kitchen knives are also functional in that their function is to cut food. Therefore, we must distinguish between these functions in play. I believe that the correct distinction between the purposive function of the chef de cuisine and the non-purposive function of kitchen knives is that while the latter is sub-functional the former is functional. The sub-functional objects are always used within certain social roles. Thus again take the function of a pen, which is to scribe; now, the pen is also used by a philosopher for example, and a philosopher also has a function, say, to clarify truth. The function of the pen is then sub-functional, and that of the philosopher is functional toward a fixed purpose. We may therefore conclude a definition of another kind of being functional:

(2) For something to be sub-functional is for it to be used by functional/purposeful beings.

So far, I think, whether my account is plausible or not, no one can deny that social roles and artefacts have functions. The difficulty arises, however, when we claim that *everything* has a function. And the usual objection to this last claim is to bring up the counterexample of ‘pebbles’ and ask rhetorically whether these have a function.<sup>26</sup> Now, the religious and the mystical, given that they believe that everything exists for some particular purpose, would argue that indeed pebbles and everything else do have functions, for nothing out there exists in vain. Others would hold that only certain things that are functional such as artefacts and social roles. I do not wish to argue for or defend a particular position. I wish only to make the case that there are ‘certain’ states of affairs

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<sup>26</sup> See Woodfield’s (1976) *Teleology* p. 2

that do have a function. I am not concerned about all states of affairs. The general notation of states of affairs is supposedly [x, P, t]. Now, I am not concerned about any 'x'. I am concerned about a special substance, namely, human beings. I wish to make the case that states of affairs which include human beings have a function (note that henceforth by states of affairs I mean states of affairs regarding human beings, unless I mention otherwise).

### **3.2) The Function of States of Affairs regarding Humans**

Taking into account the two definitions above, the question now is whether states of affairs regarding human beings are functional or sub-functional. Consider for example this state of affairs [a lawyer, won a legal case, t<sub>2</sub>]. Is the latter functional or sub-functional? We have said that the functional is purposive and rational, whereas the sub-functional is not purposive but an artefact made by and used by purposive beings. Indeed, it seems that states of affairs are obviously neither rational beings nor artefacts; however, they *certainly* express relations between rational beings and the spatiotemporal world, and relations between artefacts with the spatiotemporal world. For example, [myself, meeting a friend, t<sub>1</sub>] is a relation between a rational being and the spatiotemporal world, and [a knife, being blue, t<sub>3</sub>] is a relation between an artefact and the spatiotemporal world. Let us now focus on states of affairs regarding human beings. These include in themselves functional and purposive beings, together with certain relations with the spatiotemporal world, namely, exemplified properties, time and place. Therefore, states of affairs include functional rational beings. But if so, then it seems reasonable to assume that states of affairs are functional in a way as well. For one obvious function they possess—which seems 'super-functional,' and we will elaborate on this concept shortly—is to *place* human beings or social roles i.e., a lawyer, a husband, a mother, and so on, *in relations with* the spatiotemporal world; that is, the super-function of states of affairs is to converge us, against our will, with the spatiotemporal world so that it places us, or 'throws' us as the phenomenologists put it, in certain states, and such placement or thrownness results either into beneficial states or detrimental states.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> The expressions of human thrownness was coined by Heidegger in his *Being and Time* (1927), and Sartre in his *Existentialism is a Humanism* (1948) takes thrownness to mean the way our existence relates to the world i.e., suddenly we find ourselves existing, being throw in this world against our will.

I coin the function of states of affairs super-functional to distinguish their function from the function of rational beings, namely, being functional, and that of the artefacts, namely, being sub-functional. So while it is in my power to use sub-functional objects, it is not in my power to, use, or control, super-functional objects such as states of affairs; for instance, I did not choose to be born, nor did I choose when and where to be born, and who my family should be, nor can I choose where to die, nor do I know whom I will meet in the next hour, and so on. States of affairs put us and throw us into certain relations with the spatiotemporal world, and it is sometimes, or if not often the case, outside of our powers, beyond our reach, to control that situatedness the states of affairs put us in. That is why I call it super-functional, in the sense that we do not use them as we use artefacts which are made by us for a purpose, in the sense that *they* use us, put us, place us and throw us, into situations and relations. This account, I think, might be clear if we presuppose a Divine Being; let me explain.

Now, just as we have made artefacts, and we have not made states of affairs, then states of affairs, which are existent abstract objects, can reasonably be thought of as made either by Nature or God for some purpose. And I think that Religion, rather than Brute Nature, has a *better, easier, and palatable* explanation for the super-function of states of affairs. I will rely on it for the objective of this thesis. Like human beings who are functional in the sense of purposive, then God, being the creator of human beings, must also be functional in the sense of purposive. It is mistaken and even queer to think that God is not purposive. God rather has Its divine purposes and hence Its divine functions. Now, if humans are able to create artefacts, sub-functional objects, so that they use them for their purposes, then similarly, the Divine, we can say, creates states of affairs, and this, according to the Divine, is a *sub-functional* object, for It uses them for Its divine purpose. Most religions hold that God puts us into certain states of affairs, into certain relations with the world, to ‘test’ us and ‘see’ how we, human beings, would react to them, that in general whether we are *grateful* or *ungrateful* for the good experiences we have and whether we are *patient* or *impatient* for the miseries we sometimes experience. We can suppose therefore that states of affairs are *made* by God for the aforementioned divine purpose. And note that while states of affairs might be sub-functional objects according to God, they are super-functional according to us. It would also be simple to understand

the idea that states of affairs are functional objects *if* we think about them as sub-functional, as God's creation of a relational system that consists of relating human beings with a spatiotemporal world i.e., [x, P, t], for some divine purpose. Thus, if we suppose this, then [x, P, t], where 'x' is an instance of a human being, and from the point of view of human beings, has a super-function, which is *to place or throw human beings, against their will, in certain relations and states with the spatiotemporal world.*

I do not mean by this account that human beings are not free-willed and that they are *always* being 'thrown' by the Divine into certain relations. Existing humans, after being thrown their first thrownness into this world, that is, after being given birth, they come to possess eventually the power to *choose* and throw themselves into certain relations in which they wish to find themselves. Indeed, we usually say to someone who for example faces a particular problem 'you shouldn't *throw* yourself into that situation!?' 'what a situation you *put* yourself in!'. Being capable of reason, we can choose for example to marry either this person or that person; when to go to the grocery store; where to spend vacations; and so on. Let us call this being-thrown-willingly. But on the other hand there is also what we can call being-thrown-unwillingly, that is, being thrown without consent. Consider this example. I can choose to do groceries this morning, and, in this sense, it will be said that I chose to throw myself *willingly* into the state of affairs say S3 [myself, going to a grocery store, this morning, street X]; further, I could suddenly meet say my ex-wife at the entrance of that grocery store, and this state of affairs say s4 [myself, meeting my ex-wife, this morning, street X] is one that *certainly* I did not choose to throw, and to put, myself in. Thus, there are two kinds of being thrown: being-thrown-willingly and being-thrown-unwillingly. The latter I believe is the *fundamental* way of being thrown, for that is how our thrownness started, we were given birth; we were thrown into existence against our will; we were thrown unwillingly. When I inquire therefore about the function of states of affairs, that is, the logic behind the existence of states of affairs, I have in mind this fundamental way of thrownness, being-thrown-unwillingly. In this sense, the function of states of affairs is super-functional:

- (3) For something to have a super-function is not for it to be used *by* purposive humans (as artefacts), but it is for it to be used *over/on* purposive humans.

States of affairs are used over human beings, and they are there to place and throw them in certain relations with the spatiotemporal world (it would be easy to think about this if we *add* that this is the case for some Divine purpose i.e., to test our actions); and so they have a kind of function, a super-function according to us, while a sub-function according to the Divine.

### 3.3) The standard of Goodness

In the last chapter we have attempted to show that states of affairs have a function, and that their function is super-functional, in the sense that we have no full control over placing ourselves into relations. States of affairs that concern us are there for us to *place us within certain relations with the spatiotemporal world*. While kitchen knives are sub-functional in that they were made by us for us to cut food, we have not made states of affairs, we have rather found ourselves *trapped* inside them, inside relations with the spatiotemporal world; in this vein, states of affairs, I argue, are super-functional.

Let us remind ourselves with the objective of this thesis. I defend the claim that final values are good because they are good for us; and I object to the claim that final values are good because they are good in themselves. Like Geach, I do think that goodness is a relative property, and that if anything is good it is a good so-and-so. Thus '[x, P, t] is good period' is senseless unless we mean '[x, P, t] is a good state of affairs'. Geach, however, argues that 'a good state of affairs' does not convey a standard of goodness on the grounds that 'state of affairs' does not have a function, and I disagree. Thomson, on the other hand, thinks that states of affairs are beneficially good, that if they are good they are good for us. But she never explains why this is so, and it was my intent to explain and argue systematically that states of affairs have a function, and that their function, which now we know it to be a *super-function*, is *to place or throw human beings into certain relations and states with the spatiotemporal world; to place 'x' as a human being into [x, P, t]*. Now we need only to derive a standard of goodness from this aforementioned function, to derive the good state of affairs from the bad.

Now when we say that the sub-function of a kitchen knife is to cut food, we can derive from this the good knife from the bad. While the good knife cuts food *well*, the bad cuts them *badly*. Can we then apply the same reasoning on the function of states of affairs

in question? Let us see. The super-function of states of affairs is to place us into certain relations and states with the spatiotemporal world, and thus the good state of affairs is that which places us into certain relations and states *well*, and the bad is that which places us into certain relations and states *badly*. But this is hardly sensible, perhaps because ‘well’ is not a suitable evaluative adverb for our case in question. Let us then try ‘in a good way’ instead of ‘well’, for while these are surely different they are nevertheless interchangeable such as when we say ‘this musician sings well’ and ‘this musician sings in a good way’. Now, using ‘in a good way’ instead of ‘well’ we acquire the following: the good state of affairs places human beings into certain relations and states in a good way. And it seems to me that ‘placing human beings in a good way’ here means ‘placing human beings in a way that is beneficial’. While musicians are good or bad depending on their *voice* performance, states of affairs are good or bad depending on their *placement* performance. And of course it is not ‘time’ and ‘place’ nor some other property included in states of affairs that benefit or not benefit from these good and bad placements, but it is human beings that benefit. Thus, if I am placed in a state of affairs [myself, P, t], then this state of affairs is either beneficial or detrimental depending on the placement of ‘myself,’ ‘P’ and ‘t’; and if it involves a good placement then it is good for me, if not, then bad for me.

This again makes sense if we presuppose the existence of a Divine Purposeful Being, where states of affairs in which we are included are made for a divine purpose, namely, for the Divine to *see* how we would react once It places us into particular good or bad situations and relations. This suggests that states of affairs are Divine-made abstract objects, indeed, to place us either in states that are *good for us* or *bad for us*, and to see whether we are *grateful* or *ungrateful* for the good relations and chemistries we find ourselves in, and whether we are *patient* or *impatient* for the bad relations and chemistries we find ourselves in. After all, these human *responses* of being patient/impatient and being grateful/ungrateful to states of affairs, to certain relations and states, *reveal* that good states of affairs are good for us (being grateful for it, or being ungrateful for it) and bad states of affairs are bad for us (being patient for it, or being impatient for it).

In light of this account on the function of states of affairs, it seems incorrect to think that good and bad states of affairs are good or bad in themselves. Perhaps that Moore's argument of final values being intrinsically good is true only vis-à-vis other certain states of affairs that do not include 'x' as human beings, and it seems that Moore was threading that way, as Butchvarov puts it, 'Moore's ethics is *cosmological*', hence concerned about cosmological states of affairs.<sup>28</sup> Moore and his friends argue that what is good is good in itself, and they seem to speak about general, cosmological, states of affairs and not just about those that are *particular* to human beings. But as long as 'x' in [x, P, t] refers to human beings, then states of affairs, as we have seen, are super-functional, and their virtue is to place us either in good and beneficial relations or in bad and detrimental relations.

To claim that states of affairs do not have a function is to assume in other words that abstract objects are not functional. But if abstract objects *are* objects after all, then it is possible that they, like any other object, have a function of their own. Indeed, a knife is a concrete object and humans are concrete objects, and we conclude from this that each of them have a function. But why assume, like Geach, that 'only' concrete objects that are capable of being functional? After all, we *know* that things like states of affairs and properties exist, hence we philosophize about them. Why not then make an effort and explore their functions? The function of properties in general for example seem *prima facie* to be 'to exemplify', for what else could their function be if not for their exemplifications? Also, the function of states of affairs, at least regarding human beings, is, as we have proposed, to place us into certain relations with the spatiotemporal world. Moreover, it is also profitable to think beyond the mundane and explore controversial questions such as whether states of affairs have a function. My exploration about the function of states of affairs for example has allowed me to *expand* the concept of function. I have ascertained three ways of being functional: being functional (purposive beings), being sub-functional (artefacts made *by* purposive beings), and being super-functional (objects made *over* some purposive beings against their will). Thus, Geach and his

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<sup>28</sup> See Panayot Butchvarov's "Ethics Dehumanized" (2003), pp. 167-68.

followers have the burden of proof to show why abstract kinds cannot be functional objects.

Supposing that my taxonomy of ‘function,’ ‘sub-function,’ and ‘super-function’ is correct, let us imagine what would be for states of affairs if they were considered not super-functional. If states of affairs are not super-functional from the point of view of human beings (for remember that they are sub-functional from the point of view of the Divine), then states of affairs are either (a) sub-functional from the point of view of human beings or (b) functional. Both considerations however lead us to absurd conclusions. For if states of affairs are sub-functional, meaning if their kind of function is like that of knives and chairs, then we, human beings, would have been able to choose where to be born, and where to die, and whom to meet today, and whom not to meet the day after, and so on. In other words, there would have been no such thing as humans being-thrown-unwillingly, and humans would have had the ability to *always* throw themselves *willingly* into states of affairs. That is, we would have been *in full control* of throwing ourselves into relations and states of our choice. But clearly all this is nonsense. Further, if states of affairs were functional, they would have been purposive and rational, and this is absurd.

### **3.4) Summary**

Geach argues that social kinds (e.g., lawyer) and natural kinds (e.g., man, wolf) have a function, and that abstract kinds (e.g., event, state of affairs) do not. I have attempted to show that there are three ways in which things can be functional: (1) functional, (2) sub-functional and (3) super-functional. While what is functional is what is purposive (e.g., human beings, God, perhaps also wolves and bees etc.), what is sub-functional is what is used by purposive human beings (e.g. knives, chair, perhaps also hands, legs etc.), and what is super-functional is what is neither purposive nor what is used by purposive human beings, but what is outside *our* control, such as states of affairs in which we happen to be included. States of affairs are *over* us in that we find ourselves *in* relations and states. And I proposed that the super-function of states of affairs to be thought of as a purposive creation of the Divine to place human beings in certain good and bad relations so that the Divine ‘test’ human beings and see how they react to them i.e., to see whether humans will show gratitude for beneficial relations and patience for detrimental relations.



The super-function of states of affairs regarding human beings in this light is *to place human beings into certain relation with the spatiotemporal*. And the good state of affairs depends on whether it places human beings in relations with the spatiotemporal world in a way that is beneficial, and the bad depends on whether it places human beings in relations with the spatiotemporal in a way that is harmful. Therefore, to claim that finally good states of affairs are good because they are good in themselves is either (1) to talk about different kinds of states of affairs that do not concern human beings, or (2) to incorrectly disregard the super-function of states of affairs regarding human beings.

## CONCLUSION

The question I have been addressing throughout this thesis is whether what is finally valuable is finally good for us or good in itself. While the subjective account of final value reports that what is finally valuable is what is *subjectively* valuable as an end, and the objective account reports that what is finally valuable is what is *objectively* valuable as an end, the intrinsic account reports that what is finally valuable is what is *intrinsically* good. Unlike the intrinsic account, both the subjective and the objective report that what is finally valuable is what is finally good for us. Therefore, I do not have issue with the subjective and the objective account, since both hold that what is finally valuable is extrinsically good, beneficially good. I have issue rather with the intrinsic account. Geach and Thomson correctly argue against the intrinsic account that goodness is a relative property. Mooreans argue that if  $[x, P, t]$  is finally good then  $[x, P, t]$  is good period. Geach rebuts that ‘ $[x, P, t]$  is good period’ is meaningless, unless we amend it to ‘ $[x, P, t]$  is a good state of affairs’. But even this last, Geach says, is meaningless on the grounds that ‘state of affairs’ does not have a function and so does not convey a standard of goodness. Against Geach, Thomson thinks that even ‘ $[x, P, t]$  is a good state of affairs’ requires qualification; if all goodness is goodness in a way, she says, then good states of affairs must also be good in a way, and their way of being good is, she assumes without explanation, beneficial. Building on these ideas raised by Geach and Thomson, I have sought to argue, against Geach, that states of affairs regarding us are super-functional, and that their super-function is to place human beings in relations with the spatiotemporal world. And from this we derive the meaning of a good state of affairs, namely, that which places the individual in question into certain relations with the spatiotemporal world in *a good way*, in a way that is beneficial to the individual. My argument explains Thomson’s assumption that good states of affairs are beneficially good; and, indeed, it is an objection to the intrinsic account which states that what is finally good is what is good *period*; such account have the burden of proof to show that states of affairs involving human beings do not have the super-function I claim they have.

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## ABSTRACT

Are finally valuable states of affairs intrinsically good (good *in themselves*) or extrinsically good (*good for us*)? G.E. Moore argues that finally valuable states of affairs are intrinsically good. I do not believe that this is the case. Against Moore, I argue that finally valuable states of affairs are good for us *on the grounds* that states of affairs involving human beings have a *function*, namely, to 'place' human beings into certain relations with the spatiotemporal world, and that the good state of affairs is that which places the involved individual into certain relations with the spatiotemporal world *in a good way*, in a way that is beneficial to the individual. Therefore, finally valuable states of affairs are beneficially good, good for us, rather than good in themselves.

I, Youssef Aguisoul

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On Final Value and States of Affairs

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