Begging & Power*

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Abstract:

Much philosophical work has examined both imperatival and non-imperatival forms of address that aim to motivate others to action. But one such kind of address has received relatively little attention: begging. This is partly surprising as begging, both as an individual act and as a widespread social practice, raises acute, yet difficult to articulate, moral and political concerns. In this paper, I identify a central form of the phenomenon which constitutively involves communicating one's *relative powerlessness* as a means of motivating one's target to act. I argue that this form of begging is present in a number of cases that animate many of our pre-theoretic normative worries about begging. I argue that when begging of this kind is bad for the beggar herself, this is so because either (i) the invoked powerlessness is bad for the beggar and thereby gives the action a negative evaluative meaning, or (ii) the invoked powerlessness is good/neutral, but the act of begging precludes or replaces valuable ways of interacting that the parties have reasons to care about in the context. In a slogan, the badness of begging revolves around power and helplessness.

Key Words: Begging, Normative Address, Power, Inferiority, Requests

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Much philosophical work has examined both imperatival and non-imperatival forms of address that aim to motivate others to action. But one such kind of address has received relatively little attention: begging. This is partly surprising since begging, both as an individual act and as a widespread social practice, raises acute, yet difficult to articulate, moral and political concerns. Just a little time spent in a city where begging runs rampant gives one the sense that there's something deeply regrettable about people prostrating themselves in this fashion. And looking beyond so-called "street-begging", other instances of the phenomenon raise our moral hackles.

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Imagine someone abjectly begging the cruel despot to spare their child's life. Even if there's no other way to save the child, might there be something bad about engaging another in this way, something that leaves a normative residue one could reasonably regret?

In this paper, I identify a kind of begging that involves communicating that one is powerless relative to the beggee (in some way) as a means of motivating the latter to act. Through the act, individuals bring their helplessness to bear on their interactions with others. While not all instances of begging, as a linguistic/conceptual matter, may have this feature, I claim that this kind of begging is a central form of the phenomenon that is both widespread and of particular interest insofar as it animates many of our intuitive normative worries about begging. I then defend the following as an explanation of why it's bad for the beggar herself to beg in this way:

> *Normative Claim*: When the paradigm form of begging is bad for the beggar, that's because either (i) the invoked powerlessness is bad for the beggar and thereby gives the action a negative symbolic meaning they have reason to regret, or (ii) the invoked powerlessness is good/neutral, but the act of begging precludes or replaces valuable ways of interacting that the parties have reasons to care about in the context.

The paper proceeds as follows. §1 deals with three preliminary tasks. §1.1 argues for the superiority of a paradigm-based approach to begging over a linguistic/conceptual analysis which may be impossible but is, more importantly, unnecessary in the context. §1.2 identifies our paradigm form and poses the *Badness Question*: When begging is bad, in the considered paradigm form, why is that the case? §2 introduces the central concept of my explanatory story, *relative powerlessness*, and characterizes its descriptive and normative features. In §3, this concept is used to answer the *Badness Question* by examining several instances of the paradigm form. §4 explains how the paradigm form of begging differs normatively from other forms of motivational address including requests, prayer, and exchange. Finally, §5 discusses several ways in which communicating one's relative powerlessness can motivate one's target.

1. Setting the Stage

1.1 A Paradigm-Based Approach to Begging

It's natural to think that any philosophical investigation of begging must begin with conceptual analysis that yields necessary and sufficient conditions for the speech-act. How else, so the thought goes, could we satisfactorily pick out our target and distinguish it from other kinds of address like asking, ordering, and so on? But there are several reasons to be wary of the conceptual-definitional approach for our present purposes. First, contemporary work on other speech-acts, like coercive threats, suggests it won't be easy to give such an analysis for begging.[1] Why is that? Perhaps the problem is practical insofar as the correct conceptual definition of begging is extremely complicated and it's difficult to know which linguistic intuitions should be privileged.[2] Alternatively, the task would be impossible if our concept of begging is held together only by family resemblances.

Second, the definitional approach may be unnecessary given that our present inquiry is primarily normative rather than linguistic/conceptual; we're interested in understanding the main normative roles that begging plays in our social lives. But since conceptual analysis seeks the "highest common denominators" which unite all instances of the relevant phenomenon, there's no guarantee that it'll pick out the normatively most interesting ones.[3] To illustrate the point, suppose that Traveler has missed an important flight and frantically says to the ticketing agent, *"Is there anything you can do to get me on another plane? I'm begging you!"* This utterance seems linguistically coherent, and so it might count as an instance of begging that should be accommodated by an acceptable conceptual definition. But this utterance doesn't raise any obviously interesting normative issues, at least not ones that would likely shed light on our worries with street-begging.

Instead of a conceptual-definitional approach, I suggest we adopt a *paradigm-based approach* that seeks to identify a central and paradigm form of the phenomenon.[4] This form will be central not just in the sense that it occurs in many cases we linguistically classify as begging, but also in the sense that it animates many of our pre-theoretical normative worries about the phenomenon. From there, we can explain the disvalue of engaging in tokens of that type and thereby cast light on the normativity of begging. And from there, the explanation can be used to

[1] See e.g. Nozick's (1999) account of coercion and Wertheimer (1987) for discussion.
[2] See Wertheimer (1987, 181).
[3] See Wertheimer (1987, 181); Fricker (2016, 166).
[4] I closely follow Fricker (2016) in the articulation and application of this approach which is useful when the phenomenon of interest has philosophically important features that aren't necessary conditions.

draw normative contrasts with other forms of address (e.g. requesting and exchange) even if they share descriptive features with the paradigm of begging. So the paradigm-approach can, at the very least, highlight some important normative contours of a complex practice without undertaking a potentially impossible definitional project. [5]

1.2 Powerlessness as Paradigm & the *Badness Question*

I begin with an insight from Munoz-Dardé & Martin (2018, 134) who say, "in order to entreat someone [via begging], it is not enough for the beggar simply to indicate that he or she has a need...For the beggar to be effective, their needs must be suitably displayed so that the donor both has the keen feeling of lack on the part of the beggar and a sense of their own ability to act so as to make good the lack in a way that no one else is saliently placed to do."[6] Put another way, we can pick out a paradigm form of begging that constitutively involves communicating one's *relative powerlessness* as a means of motivating one's target to act as you beg them to.[7] The claim that begging often revolves around power disparities aligns well with common thoughts about the practice. For example, begging is often used when you're at another's mercy or when you're helpless to some degree; it's typically a means of last resort. And those who are significantly self-reliant would seem to not have much need for begging apart from some rather unusual preferences. Consider also Kant's enjoinder to "not to be a parasite or a flatterer or (what really differs from these only in degree) a beggar."[8] But a common kind of parasitism involves an organism that cannot survive separately from a host on which it feeds.

Furthermore, some clear examples of begging seemingly involve this kind of motivational mechanism. Consider the following:

> *Street-Begging*: Jones is unhoused and cannot find stable employment. Unable to secure government-provided shelter due to overdemand, he has to sleep on the

[5] Similar ideas appear in (Pallikkathayil, 2011, 2) and (Kolodny, 2017, 89).
[6] Munoz-Dardé & Martin may be read as identifying a necessary conceptual condition for begging. I would be willing to accept that as a claim about begging in general. But for the purposes of my argument, it's enough that it be a constitutive condition of our paradigm form of begging.
[7] Since I will be concerned primary with this paradigm of begging and not with begging *per se*, it would perhaps be best to mark that explicitly throughout by naming the paradigm "power-based begging" or something similar. But I'll forgo that to avoid cumbersome exposition.
[8] Immanuel Kant, *The Doctrine of Virtue*, Chapter II, Section III, Subsection 12.

street. During the day, he sits outside an upscale law firm holding a sign reading, *"Homeless and hungry, any food or money will help."*

Assault: Villain assaults Victim in order to steal his wallet. A scuffle ensues but Villain subdues Victim. Enraged by Victim's tenacity, Villain draws his gun and presses it to the back of Victim's head. Feeling the gun's barrel, Victim cries out, *"Please take mercy on me!"*

Breakup: Husband and Wife have had significant problems in their marriage for some time. They've tried addressing their issues, but things haven't improved, and Wife eventually says, *"I tried so hard, but I can't do this anymore. I'm leaving you."* Husband kneels and says, *"Please don't leave, I'll be nothing without you."*

A couple clarificatory points are worth mentioning here. First, communicating one's relative powerlessness can be done more or less explicitly and operate through conventional understandings. The street-beggar can of course say, *"Need food and incapable of getting it myself."* But in many modern contexts, holding a sign reading, *"Need food"* communicates that the beggar lacks resources to meet their own needs. We don't read it as, *"If you don't help, I can handle it myself."* Even simply asking for change while wearing shabby clothes can communicate the relevant message. Second, communicating one's relative powerlessness involves representing oneself as such. That means that one can beg without being powerless in any relevant way. Suppose that a well-off journalist wishes to document responses to begging and sits on a sidewalk holding a sign reading, *"Homeless, please help."* He's falsely communicating that he lacks resources to address his plight and yet there seems to be an important sense in which he's begging in virtue of representing that he lacks such resources.

Shifting focus now, the idea that there's something pro tanto bad about begging, for the beggar herself, seemingly guides some of our thinking about the normativity of begging. We tend to view begging as pro tanto regrettable in some way. And if begging is often used as a means of last resort, that would also suggest that there's something pro tanto bad about it for the beggar. More strongly, we might even view it as shameful as suggested by Kant's comparison with parasitism. Consider also Aristotle's (*Rhetoric Book II*, 1386a17-1386b9) remark that the pharaoh

Amasis "did not weep…at the sight of his son being led to death but did weep when he saw his friend begging" for the latter sight was pitiful and the former merely terrible. This suggests that there's something special about begging, at least in some of its forms, that warrants distinctive and negative evaluative responses. And these ideas align with our paradigm cases. Something seems pro tanto bad, for an individual, in begging another to spare their life, to continue in a relationship with them, or for a few dollars on the street. Given that, we can pose the *Badness Question*: When begging is bad, in the considered paradigm form, why is that the case?

Some further clarificatory points are in order. First, these thoughts don't commit us to thinking that begging is *always* pro tanto bad. Even if there's something bad involved in our guiding cases that's worth understanding, there may be other instances of the phenomenon, at least as a conceptual matter, that aren't bad in the same way or aren't bad at all. That was the point of the Traveler example above. Second, the fact that it's pro tanto bad to beg in our paradigm cases doesn't entail that beggars have all-things-considered reason to not beg. If begging is the only way of avoiding death, then that's probably what you have most reason to do. But that doesn't preclude the act from leaving a disvaluable normative residue. Third, it might be that begging is bad in our paradigm cases for fundamentally different reasons. But as a methodological matter, we should aim for as much explanatory unification as possible at the outset.

The badness of begging might be explained by a reductive approach.[9] According to this view, begging's badness can always be explained completely without essential reference to the act itself. Begging would then be akin to an infant's cry in merely marking an underlying problem. So the reductionist believes that there's something bad about being destitute but this exhausts the badness of street-begging. Attractive as reductionism may be, it cannot adequately explain the badness in our guiding cases. Take street-begging first. Suppose that some society contains two groups of people with each person achieving the same welfare level (bracketing the extent to which welfare depends on the mechanisms of receiving goods). Persons in the first group attain their welfare level by having aid from charitable institutions hand-delivered to them while those in the second group attain it by begging on the street.[10] It seems rational to prefer being in the first group, but the reductionist cannot explain that since the individuals have identical starting and ending

[9] From here on and unless otherwise noted, "badness" should be read as "badness for the beggar herself."
[10] It is perhaps possible to both beg and receive aid from charitable institutions (perhaps the former might even be a means to the latter). But it's surely possible to receive such aid without beggary. Thanks to an anonymous reviewer for clarifying this point.

welfare levels. Consider also the following: an unhoused man in my university town would refuse assistance from anybody who didn't first laugh at a joke he told. His preference for *quid pro quo* exchange isn't obviously irrational; instead it seems to show that there's something additionally bad about begging for aid that goes beyond the badness of the beggar's underlying condition.[11]

Similar problems for reductionism arise when considering our other two cases. Take *Assault* and suppose that Villain leaves Victim alone after the begging. It seems rational for Victim to prefer winding up in that condition via another causal route. It would be preferable for either a tree branch to fall on Villain thereby giving Victim time to escape or for Victim to gain the upper hand in the scuffle. Similarly, suppose in *Breakup* that Husband's begging moves Wife to continue the relationship. It seems rational for him to prefer that her decision be prompted by another kind of interaction or be made for different reasons. He might pledge to change things that threaten their partnership and convince her to try again in light of his new commitment. And even if Wife were to remain steadfast despite the begging, it seems rational for Husband to prefer that he had let things go by saying, *"That's not what I want, but I understand your position."* The preliminary conclusion then is that when begging is bad, it's bad *qua* speech-act and so the action must figure essentially in an explanation of the badness. But importantly, rejecting reductionism doesn't mean that the badness of begging cannot depend on socially contingent factors.[12] As I'll discuss later, begging is sometimes bad partly because of contingent stigmatizing social meanings associated with the action. That would make the badness of this kind of begging extrinsic to the act. But even if the badness is extrinsic to the act in virtue of depending on contingent factors, that doesn't mean that the act itself cannot play an essential explanatory role. In rejecting reductionism, I maintain that when begging is bad, it is bad *qua* action and for its own sake.[13]

2. Relative Powerlessness

We've picked out a paradigm form of begging in terms of a relational concept, *relative powerlessness*, that we must now characterize both descriptively and normatively. As a descriptive matter, relative powerlessness comes in at least two forms (I remain neutral on whether there might

[11] I'll say more about begging and exchange in section 4.
[12] Thanks to an anonymous reviewer for pointing to a need for clarification. I elaborate further in § 3.2.
[13] Consider in this regard the possibility of extrinsically finally valuable goods as discussed in Korsgaard (1983).

be others) corresponding to a rough distinction between abilities to harm and abilities to benefit.[14] First, *X*'s being powerless relative to *Y* can consist in *Y* having the power to interfere in *X*'s choices or to invade *X*'s body or property where *X* cannot unilaterally determine whether *Y* exercises that power.[15] The "unilateral determination" element captures the idea that powerlessness is compatible with ordinary forms of influence but not something like mind-control. If you can fully determine my actions via mind-control, then my interfering/invading is not truly sensitive to my will but rather yours only. But if you can exert strong influence over me regarding whether I'll interfere/invade, my own will still has a role to play which is necessary for powerlessness. Second, *X*'s being powerless relative to *Y* can consist in *Y* having resources/abilities at her disposal such that *Y* can withhold or provide goods to *X* that *X* cannot secure for herself without additional costs or without another's aid. This kind of powerlessness need not involve asymmetric abilities to interfere in another's choices, body, or property. If Child cannot go to college without Father's financial support, she's powerless relative to him, with respect to the good of higher education, even though this relation doesn't involve an ability to interfere in choice or invade body/property.

As characterized, powerlessness is a descriptive relation. But our normative hackles are often raised by differences in power which can render some inferior to others in a way that we have reason to care about. But how should the normative character of relative powerlessness be understood? Why and why might it be a bad thing? According to one view, powerlessness is always bad for the "lower" person, but this badness can be outweighed by other kinds of goods. But this seems implausible and perhaps fetishizes the values of self-reliance and independence. Children are powerless relative to their parents in many ways, but it's doubtful there's something pro tanto bad about these relations. Similarly, individuals may legitimately structure their romantic relationships such that one person is the breadwinner and thus enjoys some greater power relative to the other. But again, if this is mutually agreed upon and acceptable to the parties, there need not be anything bad here at all.

According to a second more plausible view, powerlessness is pro tanto bad only if certain "tempering" factors are absent where such factors transform the relation so that it's not bad at all and perhaps positively valuable (Kolodny, 2023, 98). Such tempering factors do not simply

[14] My thinking about these issues has been heavily influenced by Kolodny's (2023, 91-97) treatment of asymmetries of power. In what follows I'll sometimes leave out the "relative" qualifier.
[15] This idea is similar to Republican domination [see Pettit (2012)] and also Kantian ideas of unfreedom [see Ripstein (2009); Stilz (2009)].

outweigh the pro tanto badness of powerlessness but rather determine its basic normative character in the context. A third view denies that powerlessness, abstractly considered, is in general bad and instead focuses on the kinds of reasons people have for regretting or welcoming various relations of this kind (Viehoff, 2019). There's no need to decide here between the second and third view. They are both attractive and some cases seem to fit one model more neatly than the other.

So what are some ways in which powerlessness may be pro tanto bad for the "lesser" person? First, there are instrumental reasons insofar as those with lesser power may be less inclined to develop important skills or exercise their capacities. Second, powerlessness can be non-instrumentally but extrinsically bad when it results from the absence of basic forms of valuable agency and autonomy, as is the case for people with advanced dementia. Third, powerlessness can be bad when it negatively affects the values or meanings of one's choices in the context. So for example, a parent has power over their adult child when the former has the unilateral ability to select their child's marital partner. Even if the parent selects a spouse that their child would have chosen for themselves, this power relation can suggest, at least in many contexts, that the child isn't a competent and autonomous adult capable of making significant choices about their life (Scanlon, 1998, 253-253). Similarly, if my research projects are dictated by the University's board of trustees, then my body of work, even if excellent, may not properly reflect my thoughts about what's philosophically important.

Fourth, powerlessness can be bad for the "lower" person when it's associated with either unwarranted negative appraisals or the lack of warranted positive appraisals. So suppose that Husband cannot work and requires support from Wife who enjoys greater power relative to him. This might not be pro tanto bad. But suppose that she comes to think of him as "not a real man" and more like a child. Or suppose that she fails to positively regard him as a contributing member of their partnership. Both responses are pro tanto bad for Husband and infect the underlying power relation thereby making it bad in the context. Fifth, powerlessness can be bad when the "superior" exercises (or is disposed to exercise) their power in certain ways or for certain reasons. Suppose that I ride the elevator each day with my hulking colleague who, given the disparity in our strengths, could easily kill me in the enclosed space. There doesn't seem to be anything bad about this bare vulnerability. But suppose that he exercises his power one day simply because my singing irks him. His actual exercise of power for particular reasons produces a badness that goes beyond the inflicted harm. And this would be true even if, by some miracle, I managed to evade his attack.

The fact that I'm vulnerable to him in virtue of his greater power isn't concerning if he's resolutely disposed to not exercise it, say because we're close friends or because he's a morally good person.[16] Consider also a parent who agrees to pay for their child's education but only if they pursue a college major they hate. The conditional exercise of power can be bad for the child even if they enjoy the pre-law major and end up better off overall.

In other cases, someone being disposed to exercise their greater power for certain reasons can be bad for the "lower" person even if the power is unexercised. Imagine being around a group of Mafiosi who will harm you if you aren't appropriately deferential. You might be confident that they won't exercise their power because you know what not to do. Still, you might feel some unease with being relatively powerless in this situation even if you're basically guaranteed to avoid actual harm. Their disposition to exercise their power in certain ways and for certain reasons can produce a pro tanto relational badness.[17] Sixth and finally, powerlessness can be bad if the superior embraces their greater power or lords it over the inferior (Herman, 2021, 142; Kolodny, 2023). It's one thing to have greater relative power than another; that need not be bad at all. It's another thing to take pleasure in that relation for its own sake or to make a show of being more powerful. It's humiliating when the school bully gleefully reminds you that he can take your lunch money whenever he wishes.

There's much more to explore here but enough has been said to return to the *Badness Question*. It's worth stressing though that the normative character of powerlessness revolves around several factors including (i) the nature of the relevant goods/abilities that figure in the power relation, (ii) the background relationship of the parties and its associated norms/values, (iii) the contingent social meanings of being powerless relative to others in various ways, and (iv) the relational goods of having our lives intertwined with those of others. This variation is important for understanding the different reasons we have for caring about power relations in different contexts; and such variation makes the concept of relative powerlessness a useful theoretical tool for understanding the normative dimensions of begging.

[16] Here I agree with Kolodny (2023, 274) and disagree with the Republicans who see domination as problematic regardless of how the dominator is disposed to exercise its will in realistically close possible worlds.

[17] The badness of powerlessness can be ameliorated by the presence of a coercive enforcement scheme. I'm not much concerned by the fact that random people on the street can assault me because their dispositions are regulated, to some extent, by the state's coercive power.

3. Answering the *Badness Question*

As an answer to the *Badness Question*, I propose the following *Normative Claim*: When the paradigm form of begging is bad for the beggar, that's because either (i) the invoked powerlessness is bad for the beggar and thereby gives the action a negative evaluative meaning, or (ii) the invoked powerlessness is good/neutral, but the act of begging precludes or replaces valuable ways of interacting that the parties have reasons to care about in the context. Put another way, begging either introduces a distinctive badness or precludes/replaces important forms of goodness. One might object that clause (i) of the *Normative Claim* is inconsistent with the previous rejection of reductionism. If the invoked powerlessness is bad for the beggar, doesn't that fully account for the badness of begging? No, because basing an interaction on a particular condition can sometimes bring about additional forms of badness not provided by the condition itself. Recall the earlier Kantian comparison between flattery and begging. Suppose that you're a very great philosopher and I'm not so great. At a party I start fawning over you by saying things like *"Your last book was wonderful; I could never write anything like that."* I haven't spoken falsely, but once I've engaged you in this way, new evaluations are possible (e.g. that I'm being obsequious) which means that the normative characters of interpersonal interactions can depend on background conditions without being wholly explained by them. Similarly, it's one thing to be powerless relative to another in some regard; but it's another thing to bring that powerlessness to bear as a basis for motivating them to act in some way. That involves relating to them *on certain terms* which colors the engagement in a potentially regrettable way.

3.1 *Assault* & *Breakup*

Consider *Assault* in which Victim begs for his life. Victim is powerless relative to Villain insofar as (i) Villain has the power to kill Victim and (ii) Victim lacks the ability to unilaterally prevent Villain's exercising that power. And this is bad for Victim given that Villain is disposed in the moment to exercise that power for morally repugnant reasons (i.e. that Victim dared to fight back). Exercising one's power in this way involves treating Victim as a moral inferior, as someone's whose interests don't count in the way they should. So apart from the harm that Victim faces, he has another reason to regret his condition. And when Victim begs Villain to spare his life, he invokes this power disparity to motivate Villain to refrain. Even if Villain takes pity on Victim in light of the begging and leaves him be, Victim has reason to regret his action. He won't

be alive because he overpowered Villain or because Villain had a moment of moral insight. Rather, he'll be alive because he marshalled the power disparity in order to motivate Villain to spare his life. Because of this, there is an important sense in which, via begging, *he* relates *to* Villain as if he were a moral inferior.

To be clear about the idea here, it's one thing to face the kind of harm that could just as well be imposed by a falling boulder. It's a further badness for another to be willing and disposed to impose that harm on you for certain reasons. That involves treating or seeing you as a moral inferior. And it's still another thing to take that position of powerlessness and attempt to use it as a motivational basis for them to satisfy their moral requirement. That gives your action a specific meaning in the context. Someone who refused to beg for their life might be irrational all-things-considered, but they have a fitting basis for pride insofar as they would be refusing to relate *to* the aggressor as a moral inferior. The symmetry that comes into play via begging is normatively significant

Victim's begging Villain to spare his life may also be bad for Victim because the performance precludes Victim from performing other kinds of valuable address. Notice that Victim is begging for something he has a right to. Many philosophers think that there's an intimate connection between being a rights-holder and the possibility of performative claiming. To claim that one has rights is, as Joel Feinberg (1970, 251) puts it, "to make an assertion that one has them, and to make it in such a manner as to demand or insist that they be recognized." Claiming something in this way requires taking oneself to have the normative standing to express demands that have conclusive practical import for the addressee and being disposed to respond with angry resentment if they don't act appropriately. And claiming what's yours by right is good for a person insofar as it expresses a sense of self-respect and affirms one's equal moral status. The standing to claim is valuable because of the goodness that it makes possible. If Victim were to respond to the gun being pressed against his neck with something like *"You have no right to do this! I demand that you stop"*, he would, at the very least, embrace his status as a moral equal and interact with Villain on that basis.

So Victim's begging can be bad for him because it prevents him from realizing the good of claiming. But there are different ways of fully developing this thought. On one approach, begging and claiming are incompatible in that begging constitutively involves expressing that you lack a right to the thing begged for. This might be supported by the thought that it seems strange

for a beggar to respond with angry resentment to a beggee's refusal to aid. But a problem for this view is that the utterance *"I have a right to live, but you have the gun so I'm begging that you spare me"* seems felicitous even if somewhat odd. So it's perhaps difficult to maintain that begging precludes claiming because the former constitutively involves expressing that you lack a right.

On a second approach, begging doesn't express that you lack a right to the thing begged for but rather expresses that you're waiving your normative standing to complain if the beggee doesn't acquiesce.[18] This view can accept that the utterance *"I have a right to live, but I'm begging that you spare me"* is linguistically coherent while also explaining what's amiss about a beggar expressing resentment when the beggee doesn't aid. Given the relation between self-respect and complaining about immoral treatment, waiving the standing to complain can be bad for the waiver. Still though, it would be a problem for this view if *"I have a right to live and I'll be angry if you harm me, but still you have the gun so I'm begging that you leave me be"* comes across as linguistically coherent.

On a third and final approach, the act of begging implicates that one isn't trying to motivate the other via claiming. Here's a basic characterization of one form of implicature: An utterance *U* with propositional content *P1* implicates a proposition *P2* (in a context) just in case (1) someone who hears *U* in that context is entitled to believe that *P2* is true, (2) *P1* and ~*P2* are semantically consistent, and (3) *P1* doesn't semantically entail *P2*. So if you ask how my students did on the exam and I reply, *"Some passed"*, you're entitled to believe that not all my students passed even though (i) [Some passed] is semantically consistent with [All passed], and (ii) [Some passed] doesn't semantically entail [Not all passed]. This can be extended to speech-acts in the following way: the performance of a speech-act *S1* (in a context) implicates that another speech-act *S2* isn't being performed just in case the party at whom *S1* is directed is entitled to believe that *S2* isn't being performed even though *S1* and *S2* can coherently and simultaneously be performed in the context.

Does begging implicate that one isn't claiming? To me it seems like it does. When I'm begged at, it feels like I'm being afforded discretion about whether to acquiesce which suggests that I don't take myself to be subject to a claim. Also, the oddness of *"I have a right to live, and I resent your treatment, but you have the gun so I'm begging that you spare me"* might be best

[18] Thanks to Collin O'Neil for this suggestion.

explained by the assumption that *"I'm begging that you spare me"* has a cancellable implicature. In this way, the oddness of this phrase parallels the oddness of *"Some of my students passed the exam and, in fact, all of them did."* One can cancel the common implicature of *"Some of my students passed"* by adding the second clause thereby yielding a coherent but unusual sentence. So suppose that Victim's begging implicates that he isn't claiming. If that's correct, and individuals have reasons to care about making claims, then begging is bad here because of what it precludes. There's a good way for Victim to relate to Villain in the face of the threat, namely by standing up for himself and asserting his status as a moral equal via claiming. But begging, in virtue of its implicature, prevents that from taking place. This allows us to accept the intuitively plausible thought that there's something distinctively bad about begging for something you have a right to (Anderson, 1999, 313).

Now consider *Breakup* which is importantly different from *Assault* in that Husband has no right, moral or otherwise, that Wife continue the relationship. There are two compatible explanations of why Husband's begging is bad for him. First, there might be an underlying power disparity that's bad for Husband and which is invoked in the address. Now one might reject this because Husband's relative powerlessness doesn't seem bad for him given the reasons for which Wife is disposed to end the relationship. The value of many romantic partnerships requires that each party have the unilateral power to terminate the relationship for personal reasons. So things are quite different here as compared with *Assault* in which Villain is disposed to exercise his greater power for morally repugnant reasons. But there's some room for pushback. It might be that, in many contexts, there is something bad for Husband about being, as he says, "nothing" without Wife. Perhaps there's something bad for him about having a sense of self-worth or purpose that's this contingent on her affection or their relationship. And if that's correct, then marshalling that as a means of motivating her to stay with him can give an expressive badness to the interaction and potentially taint the relationship, which he presumably has reason to care about for his own sake, moving forward.

Second, his begging might be bad for him not because it invokes a bad power disparity, but because, via the action, he's attempting to conduct the relationship on terms that are inconsistent with its ideal form. Given that he has reason to be part of a well-functioning relationship (and even to end it on good terms), he has reason to regret his begging. To develop this idea, consider the fact that the final value of various intimate personal relationships can be

realized only if the parties' interactions satisfy certain constraints. So, for example, Samuel Scheffler (2015, 25) argues that each member of an appropriately egalitarian personal relationship will have a standing disposition to treat the other person's equally important interests as playing an equally significant role in influencing decisions made within the context of the relationship. In a similar vein, Philip Pettit (2001, 67) discusses "discursive interaction" which occurs "when people attempt to resolve a common discursive problem – come to a common mind – by reference to what all parties regard as inferentially relevant considerations or reasons." Discursive interaction can take many forms including (i) providing and/or weighing in on the significance of reasons favoring a proposed course of action, (ii) proposing new courses of action, and (iii) accepting another's proposal on the basis of acceptable reasons. And to be willing and able to engage in discursive interaction with one's partner about relationship-relevant decisions is to have (and endorse) each other's finally valuable status as a co-contributor and co-reasoner. Discursive interaction provides the basis for relating to one another as equals, in one sense, rather than inferiors.

Now notice that Husband has many alternative ways of responding to Wife's announcement that involve (or at least are consistent with) appropriate discursive interaction. He might have tried to change her mind by saying, *"I know that we don't spend much time together because of my job but I want to change that."* He might also have accepted her decision by saying *"I want to keep trying but understand that's not what's best for you."* But when he begs her to stay with him, he's attempting to motivate her on the basis only of his powerlessness and significant need, and he's ignoring things that matter for maintaining the egalitarian character of the relationship, namely reasons concerning her own equally important interests. He's pointing out that he's helpless and can't bear to go on without her. And their asymmetric desires for the relationship's continuation can be a source of badness. But Husband seems to be trying to exploit this underlying asymmetry of vulnerability in trying to motivate Wife to change her mind.

All of this helps explain the sense that there's something concerningly manipulative about his action. And if Wife were to stay with him, the relationship would be tainted by the process through which this came about. Put another way, if his begging is effective and he gets what he aims for, he gets something bad, for him, along with it. This isn't to say that the stain couldn't be removed. If she decides to take pity on him and keep the relationship going, she might well come to feel happy about her decision. So given (i) that he has reason to want, for his own sake, the

relationship to be conducted on certain terms if it's to properly realize its value, and (ii) his begging precludes or inhibits the relationship from being conducted on such terms, his begging is bad for him and for Wife.

To stress the central idea: the point isn't simply that he's *abandoning* discursive engagement and thereby not striving to realize a relational ideal. Rather, he's *replacing* appropriate discursive interaction with something else and trying to get Wife to make a crucially important relationship-based decision for the wrong kinds of reasons. The latter introduces something distinctively concerning. To see this, notice that Husband can merely refuse to engage in discursive interaction in a way that seems less bad. Suppose he simply sulks upon Wife's announcement and refuses to engage. This is a bad response given the value of the relationship that provides grounds for regret. But if he's not trying to influence her by sulking, then his action is quite different from begging. Suppose, however, that he sulks *in order to get* her to decide differently. Now his action is much closer to begging and bad in a similar way. But that's not problematic for my view. Many different actions might share importantly similar normative features. That was part of Kant's point about the similarity between begging and flattery. Of course, one can go beyond begging and do something even worse such as threatening *"Stay with me or I'll kill myself."* Making such a threat involves serious moral wrongdoing that provides grounds for Wife's resentment.

3.2 *Street-Begging* and its Ilk

Turning finally to *Street-Begging* and similar instances, a few preliminary caveats are in order. First, street-begging might be a locus of many bads, not all of which matter for the normative character of the act itself. Second, as I'll argue, the normative significance of street-begging, as an individual act or social practice, will depend on social contingencies (e.g. whether it's part of a legal caste system). Third, there may be important differences between instances of street-begging even within a particular social context. But even with those points acknowledged, we can still illuminate the normativity of street-begging within familiar circumstances.

So take street-begging that occurs within urban areas of the United States and other western industrialized nations? What forms of relative powerlessness might be in play that can be communicated through the act? At a basic level, typical street-beggars, to varying degrees, lack important resources, abilities, opportunities that are enjoyed by the better-off. Street-beggars are

often monetarily impoverished and lack access to stable living conditions, reliable means of transportation, educational opportunities, and other important goods. They often don't have adequate opportunities for reasonably paying jobs that would allow for the development and exercise of their personal skills. And many street-beggars suffer from debilitating physical and mental conditions while lacking access to adequate healthcare. And some of these features seem present the case of *Street-Begging*. The list could go on, but the point is that the absence of such resources, opportunities, and abilities means that the typical street-beggar is powerless relative to those who are better-off with respect to many basic goods. And the degree of powerlessness is heighted by the fact that many modern U.S. cities don't have the social infrastructure needed to provide basic goods to many people who have to live on the street. Of course there's a spectrum here; not every street-beggar has no home and no job, but that doesn't threaten the basic point.

But what normative significance do these forms of relative powerlessness have? One idea is that the typical street-beggar's relative lack of power renders them significantly less autonomous, in one sense, than the better-off. One degree-based form of autonomy involves, as Joseph Raz (1986, 154-155) puts it, the ability to shape one's life and determine its course through "adopt[ing] personal projects, develop[ing] relationships, and accept[ing] commitments to causes, through which [one's] personal integrity and sense of dignity and self-respect are made concrete." Being autonomous requires possessing certain mental capacities, enjoying an adequate range of opportunities, and having access to various resources (including perhaps some forms of personal property). Consider having a home, which is important not just because that means you won't freeze on the street, but also because it provides a secure location for rest and the private pursuit of one's projects and relationships. The fact that street-beggars lack important resources, abilities, and opportunities means that they lack autonomy to a significant degree and that they are significantly less autonomous than many of their fellow citizens. Given the value of living an autonomous life and having the conditions needed for that, the fact that street-beggars are powerless relative to those they beg at marks them as social inferiors in way they have reason to regret.

Beyond that, the comparative lack of autonomy is bad for additional socially dependent reasons. First consider the common American sentiment that the United States is the "land of opportunity" in which anyone can make it if they try. The prevalence of this sentiment means that the beggar's relative powerlessness carries with it a variety of social meanings including (i) that

they're not competent adults capable of determining the course of their own lives, and (ii) that their circumstances are their own fault and indicate some lack of virtue. Note that it isn't necessary that everyone in society takes such a view of street-beggars for their condition to have these social meanings; rather all that's needed is that enough people in society view them as such so as to make stable the practices of treating and seeing them in certain ways (Scanlon, 2018, 27). Second, the street-beggar's relative powerlessness is often partly due to social injustice. Granted their conditions may result partly from their own choices, but when such choices are conditioned by and situated within an unjust social framework, their relative powerlessness is bad for them for an additional reason. In fact, it seems that begging would be unnecessary in a society in which resources were fairly distributed. Begging might not even strike us as a bad form of interaction if each had access to resources sufficient to lead a minimally decent life.[19]

Third, the street-beggar's relative powerlessness might be contingently associated with another negative response, namely a failure to see or treat them as an individual (Williams, 1973, 236; Eidelson, 2013; Kolodny, 2023, 111-112). There's an unfortunate tendency within contemporary American society to see the abjectly poor and helpless as mere furniture in our social world or simply as vectors of need that impinge on our lives in a way that's similar to seeing an injured animal in the woods. The better-off often see them as just a surface to which a certain label is attached ("the poor and helpless") rather than as distinct autonomous agents with their own conceptions of the good and particular virtues. And this is bad for them regardless of whether they see themselves in that light. Fourth, the street-beggar's powerlessness is often taken by others in society to signify that they are less eligible, capable, and deserving of participation in valuable personal relationships, at least with people who aren't already mired in a similar plight.

Fifth and finally, the street beggar's relative powerlessness means that they, in contrast to better-off citizens, are unable to play a valuable co-contributory role within their society and thereby unable to stand in a valuable reciprocal relationship with their fellow citizens. It's plausible that there's something distinctively and finally valuable in being a contributing member of a complex cooperative social network which sustains a common framework of life among persons who aren't intimately related to one another (Scheffler, 2018, 15). Valuable social cooperation need not be restricted to participation in market transactions or economic labor. Instead, valuable cooperation covers a broad range of activities which contribute to the intellectual,

[19] Thanks to an anonymous reviewer for this point.

social, and emotional climate of one's community (Shiffrin, 2004, 1664). The capacity to contribute in these ways partially defines one sense of being an equal amongst others and provides the basis for an intrinsically valuable form of self-respect (Shiffrin, 2004, 1668; Stark, 2012). One need not make some incredibly significant contribution (e.g. develop a vaccine) in order to realize this form of value. Rather, all that one needs to do, although this is no insignificant task, is something that matters and that involves them doing their part given whatever talents and temperaments they have.

So to recap, I've canvassed some differences in resources, abilities, and opportunities which make street-beggars powerless relative to those they typically beg at. And I've given reasons for thinking that these forms of relative powerlessness are bad for the street-beggars themselves by describing a certain ideal of autonomy and outlining the negative social meanings that often attach to such forms of relative powerlessness. To complete the story, the act of begging acquires a negative evaluative significance such that engaging in the act itself is bad for the street-beggar when they communicate that they are powerless as a means of motivating others to act. To put it metaphorically, the beggar's act, in virtue of its communicative dimension, involves cloaking oneself in the negative relation (*"I am this, please help"*) and attempting to transact on that basis.

It's crucial to remember that the badness of begging, on the proposed account, will sometimes depend partially on contingent social meanings associated with the action.[20] One might take that to mean that I endorse a kind of "Symbolic View" in which the badness of begging is always tied to stigmatizing social meanings that are contingently associated with the action. As purported support for such a view, one might imagine the *Holy Beggar Society* in which the poorest are thought to be the holiest with sincere beggars being closest to the divine. People in this society aid beggars to the extent that the beggars can survive but not enough to rise out of their condition; after all, remaining a beggar is the holiest one can be so the non-beggars would be motivated, for the beggars' own sakes, not to help them so much that they no longer need to beg. There are a few things to say about this case as purported support for the Symbolic View. First, I accept that in *Holy Beggar Society* there would be one respect in which begging isn't bad when compared to the kind of begging found in many modern Western societies. That's because certain contingent social attitudes (e.g. that poor beggars are unvirtuous) aren't present. The absence of such attitudes means that the act lacks a negative meaning that it has in familiar circumstances. Second, I claim,

[20] Thanks to an anonymous reviewer for helpful comments that necessitated the following discussion.

in line with the thoughts about autonomy discussed above, that there is something bad, even in *Holy Beggar Society*, about lacking the kinds of resources, opportunities, and capabilities that are enjoyed by the better-off, *regardless of prevailing social attitudes*. So that at least is still present in *Holy Beggar Society* and makes begging bad even if everyone (beggars included) think of what they're doing as holy.[21] Third and finally, the Symbolic View cannot be correct as a complete answer to the *Badness Question*. Insofar as we seek a unified explanation, as much as possible, of our paradigm form of begging's badness, the Symbolic View cannot handle certain cases. Consider *Assault* again. I don't think that the presence or absence of any contingent social meanings would make Victim's begging for his life to be spared not bad for him. It's always bad to beg for what you have a moral right to.

With that alternative addressed, three further objections are worth considering. First, one might object that very few instances of street-begging involve communicating one's relative powerlessness. Instead, features like being a veteran, a single mother, or simply being down on one's luck are often put forth as the motivational basis of the attempted transaction. But while many street-beggars highlight such features, it's natural to interpret this as attempts to mollify some of the badness of begging and generate further sympathy. The street-beggar doesn't simply indicate that she's a mother who needs help; rather the points often is that she's a mother who cannot provide for her children without unreciprocated aid. That's what's salient in the context. The point of highlighting her motherhood is perhaps to humanize herself and get others to see her as an individual and thereby combat the tendency to attach a negative social meaning to her plight.

A second objection claims that all the same underlying power disparities are present in a situation in which there's no street-begging because the basic needs of the destitute are met through charitable institutions and social services. Therefore, so the objection goes, whatever's bad about street-begging has nothing to do with the act itself. There's a kernel of truth in this objection in that it correctly acknowledges that the badness of begging is important dependent on the beggar's underlying condition. But this doesn't preclude the act itself from introducing an additional source of moral concern. Even keeping fixed the underlying power disparities, it seems preferable to not have to transact with one's fellows face-to-face in terms of those concerning power dependencies.

[21] Also, one might wonder whether the inequalities in *Holy Beggar Society* are consistent with the demands of justice. If fair equality of opportunity is not secured, then there will be a basis for the badness of begging regardless of how esteemed people take the practice to be.

Of course there's something bad about being in an unjust society and having to rely on charity to have your basic needs met. But it seems to be an additional badness to "wear that on your sleeve" so to speak in your dealings with your fellow citizens.

But one might respond with another worry that goes as follows: the relevant comparison isn't between begging and acts of charity; rather the problem for my view is that it doesn't explain why begging is additionally bad when compared with unprompted acts of pity (e.g. leaving some change by a sleeping unhoused person on the street). But while this might be something the unhoused person has reason to regret, it's bad in an additional way for them to invoke the underlying power disparity through an act of their own agency. Again, a comparison with obsequious behavior will help. Suppose that everyone in grad school thinks I'm quite the fool and snickers about me at parties. This is bad for me. But suppose that, knowing how they think of me, I play into that at the party and "act the fool." Isn't this clearly worse in a distinctive way because of how I've taken on the role through my agency? If that's correct, the same thought applies to begging and explains why it involves an additional badness beyond that which might be involved in someone simply taking pity on you.

4. Other Forms of Address: Requests, Prayer, & Exchange

Even though we've set aside the project of giving a conceptual-definition of begging that would sharply distinguish it from other forms of address, it's important to say something about how it compares to some of them as a normative matter. Take requesting first. Now it'd be mistaken to think that requests never involve communicating one's relative powerlessness. Consider *Laptop*: Smith has a work project in the morning and his laptop goes on the fritz. Not knowing anything about computers, he calls up his friend Sarah, an experienced IT technician, and says, *"Could you help me? I'm hopeless with this stuff while you're great."* (Gläser, 2019, 33). But that's not a problem as I don't claim that communicating one's relative powerlessness as a means of motivation is sufficient for begging. So given that and the paradigm of begging we've been considering thus far, can any interesting difference between requests and begging be drawn?

It seems that we appreciate some normative difference between ordinary requests and begging. In an episode of the television show *Mad Men*, Don Draper is starting a new advertising agency and tells his protégé Peggy Olsen to come work for him. When she resists, he says, *"I'm not going to beg you,"* to which she responds, *"Beg me? You didn't even ask me."* So what's the

difference here? It's important to recognize that while relative powerlessness may be invoked in ordinary requests between friends, romantic partners, and colleagues, that powerlessness might not be bad in the context given the background relationships of the parties or preclude them from interacting in ways they have reasons to care about. In *Laptop*, Smith is just not very good with computers while Sarah is. That fact isn't normatively significant for their relationship in the context given that Sarah isn't lording her abilities over Jones or anything like that. Nor is there anything bad for Jones in invoking that power disparity and their friendship as a basis for asking for help. That's just part and parcel of ordinary forms of valuable friendship. So as a normative matter, some of our judgments about whether someone is asking or begging for aid are sensitive to the underlying normative significance of the invoked power disparity. Now suppose that Sarah responds, *"It's quite an easy fix, and I have to take my child to dance practice,"* and Smith responds in turn, *"No really, I'm just all thumbs with this stuff, would you please come help me."* There's a sense in which Smith has shifted into something more like begging. He's still emphasizing the relative powerlessness and presumably doing so in order to motivate Sarah. But now there's seems to be something bad about continuing to press Sarah in this way. Smith should, it seems, accept her legitimate response and try to handle the problem on his own. And this line of thought also explains the *Mad Men* case because Don, given his almost pathological obsession with freedom and independence, resists begging because he doesn't want to invoke any powerlessness (*"I need you to succeed"*). But what Peggy's pointing out is that he could have, at least in principle, asked her – as a friend, colleague, and mentor – to come and build something together at his new agency. What Don failed to see what that there's a good way to ask without showcasing regrettable helplessness and need.

Turning now to prayer, it's possible to communicate one's powerlessness relative to God while engaging in petitionary prayer. So again, can anything illuminating be said about how begging differs from prayer without conceptual definitions of each? I suggest that, as with many ordinary requests, communicating one's powerlessness relative to God need not be bad for the devout person. Why? I suspect that among many of the faithful, there's nothing bad about being powerless relative to God. And many might consider God to be a supreme benevolent provider such that your valuable relationship with God depends precisely on being powerless relative to Him (in every way) and invoking that as a sign of respect.

And finally, to say something about exchange, it's also possible to communicate one's relative powerlessness as part of an exchange proposal. Suppose that Farmer says to Merchant, *"Would you sell me a tractor for less than the advertised price? I don't have enough money and won't be able to harvest my crops this season without one."* There are a couple things to say about such a case. First, as with ordinary requests among friends, there need not be anything bad about the underlying relative powerlessness so there's nothing to taint the attempted transaction. Second, it seems like attempting to transact by offering something in return has an ameliorative effect on any purported badness associated with the address. To see this, recall the earlier example of the unhoused man who refuses assistance unless you laugh at one of his jokes. A plausible interpretation of his seemingly rational preference for exchange rather than begging is that the former involves mutual benefit. There is an attempt to negate background relations of powerlessness by transacting on a kind of equal footing where each has something to offer the other. And it seems reasonable for him to prefer a transaction in which he has some contributory role for that alters the meaning of the engagement in a positive way.[22]

5. How can Begging Motivate?

In this final section, I consider the *Motivational Question*: What kinds of motivational responses are characteristically prompted by our paradigm of begging? This doesn't concern the empirical issue of how actual people tend to react to begging. Rather the question is one of analytic moral psychological and concerns what kinds of motivational responses are intelligible or fitting given what the paradigm of begging constitutively involves. Now one answer to the *Motivational Question* seems obvious: benevolence (Smith, 1976, 33; Munoz-Dardé & Martin, 2018, 134). If benevolence is an emotion that responds to a threat to another's well-being out of a concern for their own sake (Darwall, 1998), then seemingly begging can prompt this response by presenting us, in especially acute ways, with significant needs that are difficult to ignore. Now I don't deny that begging can intelligibly motivate via benevolence for it clearly involves, at least in part, presenting a need. But it'd be surprising if this were the *only* motivation that begging rendered intelligible or, more strongly, the one that it constitutively aimed at.

[22] Simply proposing a particular exchange might, in some contexts, give rise to common knowledge that one or more of the parties cannot procure the relevant goods without the exchange. One might thereby be admitting to being relatively powerless in some regard. But this would be importantly different from our paradigm of begging if the power disparities aren't invoked to motivate the transaction.

I suggest three other ways in which begging can motivate via its negative evaluative dimension. First, begging can trigger a kind of second-personal embarrassment on the beggar's behalf which can then motivate the beggee to accede. If I see my drunken colleague embarrassing himself at the party, I might pull him aside just because I can't bear watching anymore. He might not appreciate that he's embarrassing himself, but I can feel embarrassment on his behalf which can have a powerful motivational effect. Similarly, when I recognize a beggar's performance as bad for them, I can be motivated to aid because that's one way, albeit incomplete, of ending the spectacle. Of course I can also scurry away, and we often do that. But one way to end the beggar's "embarrassing" display is to complete your side of the transaction by aiding and thereby, at least partially, assuage the second-personal embarrassment felt by witnessing them beg.

Second, begging can motivate by stimulating something like what Hobbes calls "glory" which basically involves enjoying having more power than others. A terrible tyrant might want some rebels to display their relative powerlessness by begging for their lives even though he's decided to kill them no matter what they do. In the case of street-begging, one might be motivated to aid because it helps one feel powerful in comparison to the beggar. Of course, this feeling might arise even if one refuses to aid; the display might be enough. But in giving aid we can feel glory to a greater degree perhaps. It's one thing, psychologically speaking, to know that one has power, but it's another thing to exercise it. And the pleasurable impact of giving might be even more pronounced if others are around to witness it and marvel at you.

Third, begging might motivate via causing the beggee to see it as an act of self-harm. If begging is bad for the beggar, then one imposes that badness on oneself. I suspect that scenes of self-harm can have especially strong motivational effects. It is one thing to witness a person in pain; it's another thing to see a person inflicting pain on themselves as the latter can often motivate us to a greater degree. Each of these motivational bases – second-personal embarrassment, glory, and witnessing self-harm – operate via either the negative character of begging or its constitutive display of relative powerlessness. And all three motivations can psychologically coexist within an agent and jointly produce a stronger desire to aid than that produced by benevolence alone.

In closing, let me note one final question about begging: Are there any reasons of political morality for eliminating (or minimizing) the social practice of begging that go beyond our reasons for addressing the beggars' underlying plights? While it's commonly thought that the moral evaluation of political institutions is determined solely by principles concerning liberty, equality,

and fairness, there's another possible dimension of evaluation that concerns how institutions incentive citizens to relate to one another (Hussain, 2020). It's one thing to lack access to the goods and opportunities required by principles of fairness; it's another thing to be rationally incentivized to beg and grovel before one's fellows just in order to satisfy certain basic needs. I suspect that these thoughts, when fleshed out, can support an additional objection against social structures which encourage begging, especially as a widespread practice. Setting up charitable institutions which lessen the incentive to beg on the street goes some way towards helping people realize a valuable kind of civic relationship. And these thoughts may even, although much further argument is needed, support the claim that there would be no begging in a fully just society.

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