The Enterprise of Socratic Metaethics
Adrian M. S. Piper

Rationality and Power

That human beings have the potential for rationality and the ability to cultivate it is a fact of human nature. But to value rationality and its subsidiary character dispositions - impartiality, intellectual discrimination, foresight, deliberation, prudence, self-reflection, self-control - is another matter entirely. According to Nietzsche, this fact of human nature becomes a value when it is valorized by a "slave morality" that assigns highest priority to the character dispositions of rationality and the spirit at the expense of natural human instincts. Like a good *Untertan*, I intend to do exactly that in this project. I am going to take it as a given that if a person's freedom to act on her impulses and gratify her desires is constrained by the existence of others' equal, or more powerful, conflicting impulses and desires, then she will need the character dispositions of rationality to survive. The more circumscribed one's freedom and power, the more essential to survival and flourishing the character dispositions of rationality and the spirit may become.

And I am going to presuppose as well that if such a person's power to achieve her ends is limited by a distribution of scarce social or material resources often less than fair or favorable to herself, then she may well find the character dispositions of rationality and the spirit to be a needed source of strength and solace. On these assumptions, the valorization of the character dispositions of rationality and the spirit that typify a "slave morality" does not express mere sour grapes, as Nietzsche sometimes suggests in his more contemptuous moments. Nor does it merely make a virtue of necessity, although it does at least do that. It expresses the recognition of an intrinsic good whose value may be less evident to those for whom it is less necessary as an instrument of survival:

> How long will you wait to think yourself worthy of the highest and transgress in nothing the clear pronouncement of reason?... Therefore resolve before it is too late to live as one who is mature and proficient, and let all that seems best to you be a law that you cannot transgress… This was how Socrates attained perfection, attending to nothing but reason in all that he encountered. And if you are not yet Socrates, yet you ought to live as one who would wish to be a Socrates.[1]

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[1] Epictetus, *Enchiridion* LI. I have consulted two translations: P. E. Matheson (Oxford: Clarendon Press), reprinted in Jason L. Saunders (ed.) *Greek and Roman Philosophy after Aristotle* (New York: Free Press, 1966), p. 147, and George Long (Chicago: Henry Regnery, 1956), pp. 202-3.

Think of these injunctions as conjointly constitutive of the Socratic ideal. As the product of biographical fact, Epictetus' loyalty to the Socratic ideal - and in particular his injunctions to "transgress in nothing the clear pronouncement of reason," and to "atten[d] to nothing but reason in all that [we] encounte[r]" are an expression of wisdom born of the personal experience of enslavement. They attest to the valuation and cultivation of rationality as the weapon of choice for the unempowered to use on their own behalf. They both underwrite Nietzsche's analysis of reason and the spirit as central values of a "slave morality," and demonstrate how that "slave morality" may have a kind of dignity that *übermenschlichen* views lack.

For if a person's freedom and power to act on his impulses is greater, then he may well find the indulgence of emotion, spontaneity, instinct, and the manipulation of power more attractive; and development of the character dispositions of rationality correspondingly less necessary, interesting, or valuable. After all, such individuals have at hand other reserves - of wealth, status, influence and coercion - on which to draw to achieve their ends. The ends which the character dispositions of rationality and the spirit may themselves inspire therefore may be accorded correspondingly less importance, if they are noticed in the first place. For such individuals, the Socratic ideal is no ideal at all.

Philosophy as an intellectual discipline is fundamentally defined and distinguished from other intellectual disciplines by its loyalty to the character dispositions of rationality, and so to the Socratic ideal. Anglo-American analytic philosophy is committed to these values with a particularly high degree of self-consciousness. Whatever the content of the philosophical view in question, the norms of theoretical rationality define its standards of philosophical exposition: clarity, structure, coherence, consistency, fineness of intellectual discrimination. And as a professional and pedagogical practice, philosophy is ideally defined by its adherence to the norms of rational discourse and criticism. In philosophy the appeal is to the other's rationality, with the purpose of convincing her of the veracity of one's own point of view. It is presumed that this purpose has been achieved if the other's subsequent behavior changes accordingly.

This presumption is fueled by philosophy's unsupervised influence in the political sphere - of Rousseau on the French Revolution, Locke on the American Revolution, Marx on Communism, Nietzsche on the Second World War, Rawls's Difference Principle on Reaganomics. In the private and social sphere, rational analysis and dialogue may just as easily give way to unsupervised imbalances in power and freedom, paternalistic or coercive relationships, or exploitative transactions. But even here philosophy may have its influence: in turning another aside from an unethical or imprudent

course of action, or requiring him to revise his views in light of certain objections, or altering his attitudes toward oneself, or influencing others to accommodate the importance of certain philosophical considerations through compromise, tolerance, or mutual agreement.

In both spheres, then, the attempt rationally to persuade and to conduct oneself rationally toward others is an expression of respect, not only for their rationality, but thereby for the alternative resources of power - coercion, bribery, retaliation, influence - they are perceived as free to use in its stead. Toward one who is perceived to lack these alternative resources, no such respect need be shown, and raw power may be displayed and exercised more freely. For, as Hobbes reminds us,

> [h]onourable is whatsoever possession, action, or quality, is an argument or sign of power… And therefore to be honoured, loved, or feared of many, is honourable; as arguments of power… To speak to another with consideration, to appear before him with decency, and humility, is to honour him; as signs of fear to offend. To speak to him rashly, to do any thing before him obscenely, slovenly, impudently, is to dishonour.[2]

Hobbes is wrong to think that treating another with respect is nothing but an expression of fear of the other's power. But he is surely right to think that it is at least that. On Nietzsche's refinement of Hobbes's analysis, the appeal to reason expresses respect for another's rational autonomy to just and only that extent to which it simultaneously expresses fear of the alternative, nonrational ways in which that autonomy may be exercised. On Nietzsche's analysis of rational conduct, Hobbes and Kant may both be right.

So philosophy's traditional commitment to the Socratic ideal is one quintessential expression of a "slave morality" that acknowledges the danger of unrestrained instinct and the use of power in its service; by varying degrees it constrains and sublimates instinct, impulse, and the manipulation of power into a rational exercise of intellect and will that brings its own fulfillments:

> The ignorant man's position and character is this: he never looks to himself for benefit or harm, but to the world outside him. The philosopher's position and character is that he always looks to himself for benefit and harm. The signs of one who is making progress are: he blames none, praises none, complains of none, accuses none, never speaks of himself as if he were somebody, or as if he knew anything. When he is hindered, he blames himself… He has got rid of desire, and his aversion is directed no longer to what is beyond our power [i.e. the

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[2] Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ed. Michael Oakeshott (New York: Collier, 1977), pp. 75, 74.

body, property, reputation, office, and, in a word, everything that is not our own doing] but only to what is in our power [i.e. thought, impulse, desire, aversion, and, in a word, everything that is our own doing] and contrary to nature. In all things he exercises his will temperately.[3]

The philosopher, according to Epictetus, foregoes the gratification of desire and acquisition of external goods and power for the sake of cultivating the character dispositions of rationality. Seeing that these two alternative frequently conflict, she "atten[ds] to nothing but reason in all that [she] encounter[s]." The centrality and universality of the character dispositions of rationality to the discipline of philosophy, enduring over eighteen centuries, may explain why almost all philosophers, regardless of their express philosophical views on the value of rationality, try to muster the resources of rational argumentation, analysis, and criticism to defend those views. The consistency and sincerity with which they try to live up to the Socratic ideal bespeaks the seriousness of their intent to avoid the dormant alternatives.

Rationality as Philosophical Virtue

The priority accorded to the character dispositions of rationality in the practice of philosophy receives a more contemporary formulation in the following Anglo-American analytic version of the Socratic ideal:[4]

[G. E.] Moore … invented and propagated a style of philosophical talking which has become one of the most useful and attractive models of rationality that we have, and which is still a prop to liberal values, having penetrated far beyond philosophical circles and far beyond Bloomsbury circles; it is also a source of continuing enjoyment, once one has acquired the habit among friends who have a passion for slow argument on both abstract and personal topics. When I look back to the Thirties and call on memories, it even seems that Moore invented a new moral virtue, a virtue of high civilization admittedly, which has its ancestor in Socrates' famous following of an argument wherever it may lead, but still with a quite distinctive modern and Moorean accent. Open-mindedness in discussion is to be associated with extreme literal clarity, with no rhetoric

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[3] Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ch. xlviii, note 1; see also ch. I.

[4] The following discussion of Anglo-American philosophical practice has benefited from comments by Anita Allen, Houston Baker, Paul Boghossian, Ann Congleton, Ruth Anna Putnam and Kenneth Winkler, as well as by members of the audience at the 1994 Greater Philadelphia Philosophy Consortium symposium, "Philosophy as Performance" at which these remarks were originally presented.

and the least possible use of metaphor, with an avoidance of technical terms wherever possible, and with extreme patience in step-by-step unfolding of the reasons that support any assertion made, together with all the qualifications that need to be added to preserve literal truth, however commonplace and disappointing the outcome. It is a style and a discipline that wring philosophical insights from the English language, pressed hard and repeatedly; as far as I know, the style has no counterpart in French or German. As Nietzsche suggested, cultivated caution and modesty in assertion are incompatible with the bold egotism of most German philosophy after Kant. This style of talking, particularly when applied to emotionally charged personal issues, was a gift to the world, not only to Bloomsbury, and it is still useful a long way from Cambridge.[5]

The writer is Stuart Hampshire, and in this passage he describes as an historical fact a more recent ideal of philosophical practice, which speaks to some of the motives and impulses that attract many into the field. The essence of the ideal remains Socratic: clarity and truth as a goal, with patience, persistence, precision, and a nonjudgmental openness to discussion and contention as the means.

Hampshire is right to describe this ideal as a "new moral virtue… of high civilization." It is a moral virtue because it imposes on one the obligation to subordinate the egocentric desires to prevail in argument, to shine in conversation, or to one-up one's opponent to the disinterested ethical requirements of impartiality, objectivity, and rationality in discussion. And it is a virtue of high civilization because it is not possible to achieve this virtue - or even to recognize it as a virtue - without already having cultivated and brought to fruition certain civilized dispositions of character, tastes, and values that override the desire to prevail. Thus this moral virtue stands at the very center of a "slave morality" that sublimates the desire to prevail to the imperatives of reason and the spirit. These imperatives, in turn, find expression in what Mill calls the higher pleasures of the intellect and moral and aesthetic sensibility. They presuppose the victory of "slave morality" in subjugating instinct and the exercise of power to the rule of reason and its attendant ethical values of fairness and impartiality in thought and action. This virtue of high civilization, then, presupposes both its participants' rationality and also their achievement of an equitable balance of power - however the material and social instruments of power may be distributed.

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[5] Stuart Hampshire, "Liberator, Up to a Point," *New York Review of Books* XXXIV/5 (March 26, 1987), pp. 37-9.

Thus this ideal can have meaning only for someone for whom basic psychological and spiritual needs for self-worth, and moral needs for the affirmation of self-rectitude are not so pressing that every dialectical encounter with others - whether written or conversational - is mined for its potential to satisfy them. So when we say of such a person that he is civilized, we may mean, among other things, that in conversation he is disposed to be generous in according credibility to his opponent's view, gracious in acknowledging its significance, patient in drawing forth its implications, and graceful in accepting its criticism of his own. Someone who has mastered this new moral virtue of high civilization is someone for whom philosophical practice expresses an ideal of personal *civility*, a civility made possible only by the control and sublimation of instinct, impulse, desire, and emotion.

The higher pleasure of doing philosophy in the style Hampshire describes is then the disinterested pleasure of thinking, considering, learning, and knowing as ends in themselves, and of giving these pleasures to and receiving them from others involved in the same enterprise, in acts of communication. Plato was surely right to suggest that we are driven to seek erotic pleasure from others by the futile desire to merge, to become one with them. Erotic desire is ultimately futile for reasons of simple physics: we are each stuck in our own physical bodies, and you cannot achieve the desired unity by knocking two separate physical entities together, no matter how closely and repeatedly, and no matter how much fun it is to do the knocking.

Intellectual unity with another is a different matter altogether, however, and the kind Hampshire describes is particularly satisfying because it does not require either partner to submerge or abnegate herself in the will or convictions of the other. It does not require sharing the same opinions, or suppressing one's own worldview, or deferring or genuflecting to the other in order to achieve agreement. Rather, the enterprise is a collaborative one between equals who pool their philosophical resources. By contributing questions, amendments, refinements, criticisms, objections, examples, counterexamples, or elaborations in response to the other's philosophical assertions, we each extend and enrich both of our philosophical imaginations past their individual limits and into the other's domain. There are few intellectual pleasures more intense than the *Aha-Erlebnis* of finally understanding, after long and careful dialogue, what another person actually means - unless it is that of being understood oneself in that way.

The ground rules for succeeding in this enterprise are ethical ones. By making such assertions as clearly as I can, I extend to you an invitation to intellectual engagement; and I express trust, vulnerability and respect for your opinion in performing that act. I thereby challenge you to exercise your trained philosophical character dispositions - for impartiality, objectivity, and

rationality - in examining my assertions; and to demonstrate your mastery of the enterprise in the act of engaging in it. This is the challenge to perform, in the practice of dialogue and conversation, at the ethical level made possible by our basic human capacities for language, logic and abstraction; and to bring those capacities themselves under the purview and guidance of our conception of right conduct. By engaging in the enterprise of philosophical dialogue, we challenge each other to observe the ethical and intellectual obligations of philosophical practice.

In this enterprise, I have failed if you feel crestfallen at having to concede a point, rather than inspired to elaborate upon it; or ashamed at having missed a point, rather than driven to persist in untangling it; or self-important for having made a point, rather than keen to test its soundness. After all, the goal of the enterprise is to inspire both of us with the force of the ideas we are examining, not to make either of us feel unequal to considering them, or smug for having introduced them. Too often we conceive of moral virtue as having to do only with such things as helping the needy, keeping promises, or loyalty in friendship - as though performing well in these areas relieved us of the obligation to refrain from making another person feel stupid, ashamed or crazy for voicing her thoughts; or ourselves feel superior for undermining them. When teachers fail to impart a love of philosophy to their undergraduate students, or drive graduate students, traumatized, out of their classes and out of the field, it is often because these elemental guidelines for conducting the enterprise - guidelines that express the simple truth that a love of philosophy is incompatible with feeling humiliated or trounced or arrogant or self-congratulatory for one's contributions to it - have been ignored. So this enterprise presupposes a basic and reciprocal respect for the minds, ideas and words of one's discussants, a respect that is expressed in attention to and interest in what they have to say.

Kant's concept of *Achtung* captures the intellectual attitude involved in this moral virtue of high civilization. The term is usually translated, in Kant's writings, as "respect"; and the object of *Achtung* is usually assumed to be exclusively the moral law. But Kant's account of reason in the first *Critique* makes quite clear that the moral law is not separate from the workings of theoretical reason more generally, but rather an application of it to the special case of first-personal action. We feel *Achtung* toward all the ways in which reason regulates our activity, both mental and physical. Moreover, in the *Groundwork* Kant makes it equally clear that he is not diverging from an important common, vernacular meaning of the term, which is closer to something like "respectful attention." When you and I are trying to get clear about the implications of a statement one of us has made - when we are fully engaged in the activity of "wring[ing] philosophical insights from the English language, pressed hard and repeatedly" - *Achtung* is what we feel for the

intellectual process in which we are engaged and the insights we thereby bring forth.

And when Kant says that *Achtung* "impairs [*Abbruch tut*] self-love," he does not mean that *Achtung* crushes our egos or makes us feel ashamed of being the self-absorbed worms we know we are. He means, rather, that the value, significance, and power of the thing that compels our attention compels it so completely that we momentarily *forget* the constantly clamoring needs, demands and absorptions of the self; the object of our respectful attention overwhelms and silences them. For that moment we are mutually absorbed in the object of contemplation, or in actively responding to it - by acting, or by articulating it, or by evaluating its implications, or by reformulating or defending it - rather than trying to mine the discussion for transient satisfactions of our psychological cravings for self-aggrandizement. *Achtung* is an active, conative response to an abstract idea that overrides and outcompetes our subjective psychological needs as an object worthy of our attention.

These are the rare moments of intellectual self-transcendence in which together, through "extreme literal clarity, with no rhetoric and the least possible use of metaphor, with an avoidance of technical terms wherever possible, and with extreme patience in the step-by-step unfolding of the reasons that support any assertion made, together with all the qualifications that need to be added to preserve literal truth," we succeed in fashioning an idiolect subtle and flexible enough to satisfy and encompass all of the linguistic nuances we each bring to the project of verbally communicating our thoughts to each other. It is then that we achieve the only genuine unity with another of which we are capable. Alcibiades' drunken and complaining encomium to Socrates was also a eulogy to his own transient victory in achieving - even momentarily - the intellectual self-transcendence Socrates demanded.

Power and Philosophical Practice

Now I said that Hampshire described this Anglo-American update on the Socratic ideal as itself a historical fact. But is it? Here is a competing description of the same historical circumstance, from a rather different perspective:

> Victory was with those who could speak with the greatest appearance of clear, undoubting conviction and could best use the accents of infallibility. Moore… was a great master of this method - greeting one's remarks with a gasp of incredulity - Do you *really* think *that*, an

expression of face as if to hear such a thing said reduced him to a state of wonder verging on imbecility, with his mouth wide open and wagging his head in the negative so violently that his hair shook. "*Oh!*" he would say, goggling at you as if either you or he must be mad; and no reply was possible. Strachey's methods were different; grim silence as if such a dreadful observation was beyond comment and the less said about it the better… [Woolf] was better at producing the effect that it was useless to argue with *him* than at crushing *you*… In practice it was a kind of combat in which strength of character was really much more valuable than subtlety of mind.[6]

Here the writer is John Maynard Keynes. Where Hampshire saw the character dispositions of rationality in full flourishing, Keynes sees psychological and emotional intimidation. Where Hampshire saw the flowering of a moral virtue of high civilization - the flowering, in Nietzsche's terms, of "slave morality," Keynes sees little more than a less-than-subtle power struggle among *Übermenschen*, driven by the instinct to win social status, even at the cost of philosophical integrity. Who saw more clearly? The answer is important for calling into question whether the character dispositions of rationality are as central to philosophical practice as they are purported to be; and so, more generally, whether the character dispositions of rationality *can be* as central to the structure of the self as I, in this project, argue they are.

There can be little doubt that Hampshire's version of the Socratic ideal of philosophical dialogue requires of us a standard of intellectual and moral conduct to which most of us are, most of the time, intellectually and morally inadequate; and so that the ideal of rationality so valorized by a "slave morality" may be - for us - little more than that. Here the moral inadequacy exacerbates the intellectual inadequacy. It is difficult enough to keep in mind at one time more than a few steps in an extended and complex philosophical argument, or fully appreciate the two opposing views that must be reconciled, or grasp the point of your opponent's criticism as he is voicing it while you are mentally both formulating your refutation of it and refining your view so as to accommodate it. But these purely intellectual limitations are made so much worse by what Kant calls "certain impulses" of "the dear self" that obscure or interfere with the clarity and sure-footedness of the reasoning process: the need to be right or amusing at another's expense, the need to prove one's intelligence, the need to triumph, or to secure one's authority, or to prove one's superiority, or mark one's territory; or more viciously, the need

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[6] John Maynard Keynes, "My Early Beliefs," in *Two Memoirs* (New York: Augustus M. Kelley, 1949), pp. 85, 88, quoted in Elizabeth Anderson, *Value in Ethics and Economics* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993), p. 121.

to intimidate one's opponent, to attack and crush her, shut her up, express one's contempt for her, exact revenge, teach her a lesson, or force her out of the dialogue. All of these needs exist on an ethical continuum, from the merely regrettable or pathetic at one end to the brutal or sadistic at the other. The essence of our moral inadequacy to Hampshire's Socratic ideal of philosophical conduct is our temptation to use even the limited skills of philosophical dialogue we have as a tool of self-aggrandizement or a weapon to bludgeon our opponent, rather than to arrive at recognizable truths we can both embrace.

This temptation finds vivid expression in certain familiar philosophical styles most of us have encountered at one time or another. For example, we have all at some point surely met - or been - the *Bulldozer*. The Bulldozer talks at you, at very great length, rather than to you; and seems to understand by "philosophical dialogue" what most people understand by "lecture." Indeed, Bulldozers may make excellent lecturers, and lecturing is an excellent training ground for bulldozing. The Bulldozer expounds at length his view, its historical antecedents, and its implications; anticipates your objections to it, enumerates each one, complete with examples, and refutes them; explains the views of his opponents and critiques them; and no doubt does much, much more than this, long after you have excused yourself and backed away with a muttered apology about needing to make a phone call. Sometimes the Bulldozer seems almost to induce in himself a trance state by the sound of his own words, and seems impervious to your ineffectual attempts to get a word in edgewise. And should you momentarily succeed in getting a word in edgewise, rest assured that there will not be many of those. For any one of them may set off a further volcanic eruption of speech in the Bulldozer, a shower of philosophical associations that must be pursued at that moment and to the fullest extent, relentlessly, wherever they may lead.

There is something alarmingly aimless and indiscriminate behind the compulsiveness of this performance, as though it were a Senate filibuster without a motion on the floor; as though the Bulldozer's greatest defeat would be to cede even the tiniest corner of verbal territory to someone else. Of course the experience of "conversing with" a Bulldozer is extremely irritating and oppressive, since one is being continually stymied in one's efforts to join the issues under scrutiny and make intellectual contact with one's discussant. But I think it is not difficult for any of us to imagine how it feels to *be* a Bulldozer, to feel driven to surround oneself stereophonically with the ongoing verbal demonstration of one's knowledge; to blanket every single square inch of the conceptual terrain, up to the horizon and beyond, with one's view of things; to fend off alien doubts, questions, and interjections of data into one's conceptual system by erecting around oneself a permanent

screen of words and sounds so dense and wide that nothing   and no one can penetrate it. Of course the Bulldozer himself may not think he is thwarting philosophical contact with others but instead enabling it; and may believe, even more tragically, that if he just says enough, he will surely command agreement in the end.

Then there is the *Bully*. Whereas the Bulldozer performs primarily for the sake of self-defense, the Bully performs more aggressively, in order to compel others' silent acquiescence. She may deploy familiar locutions designed to forestall objections or questions before they are raised: "Surely it is obvious that…" or "It is perfectly clear that…" or "Well, I take it that…" The message here is that anyone who would display such ignorance and lack of insight as to call these self-evident truths into question is too philosophically challenged to be taken seriously; and the intended effect is to intimidate the misguided into silence.

For example, I resorted to some of these bullying techniques earlier, in my discussion of Kant. "Kant's account of reason in the first *Critique* MAKES QUITE CLEAR that the moral law is not separate from the workings of theoretical reason more generally," I claimed; and "in the *Groundwork* Kant MAKES IT EQUALLY CLEAR that he is not diverging from an important common, vernacular meaning of the term *Achtung*." In both of these cases, I tried to double the barrage of intimidation, by brazenly combining claims of self-evidence with an appeal to authority. Why? Because even though I know these views to be controversial, I wanted you to swallow them on faith, for the moment, without questioning me, so I could go on and build on those assumptions the further points I wanted to make. Elsewhere[7] I do argue that a careful and unbiased look at the texts will support them. But I did not want to have to defend them here, or allow this General Introduction to the Project to turn into an exercise in Kant exegesis. So instead I finessed them through an attempt at intimidation; by insinuating, in effect, that ANYONE WHO'D TAKEN THE TIME TO STUDY THE TEXTS CAREFULLY could not fail to agree with my interpretation; and that any dissent from it would reveal only the dissenter's own scholarly turpitude. This is not philosophy. This is verbal harassment.

This kind of bullying may have many causes. It may result from a deficiency of "extreme patience in step-by-step unfolding of the reasons that support any assertion made." For Hampshire does not notice that this moral virtue of high civilization may be best suited to a mild, placid, even phlegmatic temperament, and may be largely unattainable for those of us who tend toward excitability, irritability, or an impatient desire to cut to the

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[7] *Kant's Metaethics*, in progress.

chase. But this does not excuse the indulgence of these tendencies at another's expense. After all, part of the point of philosophical training is to learn, not merely a prescribed set of texts and skills of reasoning, but also the *discipline* of philosophy. We are required to discipline our dispositions of attitude and motivation as well as of mind in its service. This is no more and no less than cultivation of the character dispositions of rationality requires.

Philosophical bullying may also result from a negligence encouraged by the structural demands of professionalism. Excelling in any of the various branches of philosophy demands specialization. This may lead us to underestimate the importance of securely grounding with "step-by-step unfolding of the reasons that support" those parts of our views that lead us into other philosophical subspecialties - as, for example, political philosophy may lead into philosophy of social science, logic may lead into philosophy of language, epistemology may lead into philosophy of science, metaethics may lead into philosophical psychology, or any of these may lead into metaphysics or the history of philosophy. And since the scarcity of jobs and limited professional resources often places us in a competitive rather than a collaborative relationship with our colleagues in other subspecialties, we may be tempted, on occasion, simply to ignore, dismiss, or bully our way out of the kind of careful attention to foundations that Hampshire recommends.

Furthermore, most of us entered this field because we needed to make a living doing something (true *Untertanen* that we are), and enjoyed doing philosophy enough to want to make a living doing it. As with any job on which our economic survival depends, we often have to balance the quality of our output against the time or space we have in which to do it. We are here to ply our trade, to speak authoritatively to the designated issues. And if what we have to say depends on unfounded or insufficiently argued assumptions, then (at least for the time being) so much the worse for those assumptions, and for those innocents who, not understanding the rules of the game - the allotted speaker time, the maximum acceptable article length, or the limited market demand for fat, ponderous books such as this one - would attempt to exercise quality control by calling those assumptions into question.

The Bully becomes a morally objectionable *Überbully* with the choice of more insulting or hurtful terms of evaluation, and with the shouting, stamping of feet, or even throwing of objects that sometimes accompanies his attempts to drive home a point. This performance shades into unadorned wrongdoing when these tactics of verbal include insinuated threats of professional retaliation or clear verbal abuse. Suggestions that holding a certain philosophical position is not conducive to tenure or reappointment, or that one will he dropped from a project for challenging received wisdom, or that raising objections to a senior colleague's view is offensive and

inappropriate; as well as familiar locutions such as "Any idiot can see that…;" or, "That is the most ridiculous argument I've ever heard;" or, "What a deeply uninteresting claim;" or, "How can anyone be so dense as to believe that…?" are all among the Überbully's arsenal of verbal ammunition. Philosophers have been publicly and professionally humiliated for having argued a view that, in their critic's eyes, marked them as dim-witted, ill-read, poorly educated, lazy, devious, evasive, superficial, dull, ridiculous, dishonest, manipulative, or any combination of the above. Whereas the Bulldozer prevents you from contributing to the dialogue, the Überbully uses you and your philosophical contributions as a punching bag, trying to knock the stuffing out of them and scatter their remains to the wind.

It is tempting to explain this grade of lethal verbal aggression as an expression of arrogance or boorishness. But there is more to it than that. Like the Bully, the Überbully attempts to demolish you through verbal harassment, not rational philosophical analysis - in clear violation of the canonical rules of philosophical discourse. All we need to do is ask why either brand of bully feels the need to resort to these thuggish tactics when the canonical ones are available, in order to understand their brutal performances as an exhibition of felt philosophical inadequacy that expresses fear of professional humiliation. The frequency with which shame and fear emerge in these forms measures the suitability of the practice of philosophy to stand as a testimonial to our achievement of the Socratic/Hampshirean "moral virtue of high civilization," thereby as a testimonial to the victory of "slave morality," and thereby as a testimonial to the centrality of reason in the structure of the self.

There is also the philosophical style we may describe as the *Bull*. This one works best on students, or on colleagues who work in a different subspecialty than oneself. Like the Bulldozer and the Bullies, the Bull is designed to discourage questioning or dialogue, and silence dissent. The Bull may spew forth, with a great and rapid show of bombast, a torrent of technical or esoteric terminology, or inflated five-syllable abstractions. Or she may issue - again with no apology and much pomp - several incoherent, inconsistent, or mutually irrelevant assertions, and appear surprised at any suggestion of paradox. Or she may answer your pointed questions with a barrage of vague philosophical generalities that seem not to engage the issues at all. And the Bull may borrow some tactics from the Bully, in suggesting that any failure to grasp the overarching point of these turgid non sequiturs is merely a distressing symptom of your own philosophical incompetence. In this way the Bull uses the specialized tools of her trade to exclude you from participation in the private club to which she lets you know she belongs. The not-so-subtle message the Bull intends to communicate is: No Trespassers. Unlike the Bull's other philosophical utterances, this one is clear, easily

grasped, and usually elicits compliance. It is not easy to remain involved in a discussion in which the suspicion quickly grows that one's discussant is talking nonsense.

And finally there is the *Bullfinch*, who simply flies away home. The Bullfinch avoids philosophical dialogue altogether, by declining to subject his views to philosophical scrutiny. Convinced of their veracity yet concerned to preserve their inviolability, the Bullfinch withdraws from philosophical engagement with unconverted others. Rather than argue his views, the Bullfinch at most will explain where he stands, ignoring retorts, criticisms, or opposing views by refusing to acknowledge their philosophical worth. The Bullfinch is more likely to view his own beliefs as so self-evidently true that it is beneath him to have to articulate or expose them to unconverted others in any form; and his opponent's beliefs as dangerous enough to justify getting rid of her at any cost. Thus the Bullfinch defends the sanctity of his convictions by refusing to defend them at all, instead retreating into silence, backhanded Machiavellian maneuvers, or flight. Or he may resort to cruder tools of psychological intimidation - of the sort Keynes describes - as more appropriate to his opponent. By refusing to engage in rational dialogue even as a weapon of intimidation, the Bullfinch thus approaches most nearly the explicit conduct of Nietzsche's Übermensch, for whom displays of power completely replace the Socratic ideal of rationality, and so express most clearly his unqualified contempt for his philosophical opponents.

Philosophy, Power, and Historical Circumstance

These brief character sketches do not exhaust the styles and strategies of intimidating philosophical practice, and there are more lethal ones than these: to treat philosophical contributions from others as though they had not been made; or as though they had been made by someone of higher professional status; or as autobiographical rather than philosophical in import; or as symptoms of mental illness; as well as the more subtle variants Keynes describes. The common motive that underlies all of these styles of dialogue is a desire to establish and maintain hierarchical *übermenschlichen* superiority, by silencing philosophical exchange rather than inviting it. This motive is not entirely foreign to any of us. But it is meant to stifle the exercise of rationality. As such, it is, in effect, an effort to obliterate the point and practice of philosophical dialogue altogether. It is worth asking what it is about the practice or profession of philosophy in general that kindles such an impulse to obliterate it; and how it is that this impulse can co-exist within the same field of inquiry as Hampshire's Socratic ideal. For this impulse does not signal

merely our moral and intellectual inadequacy to the ideal. It expresses the lethal and ultimately suicidal desire to eradicate it.

We have certain external procedural devices for cloaking this suicidal impulse. There is the authoritarian device, of supplying spoken discussion with a strong-willed moderator; and the democratic device, of scrupulously invoking Robert's Rules of Order to govern every verbal contribution; and the juridical, testimony-cross-rebuttal-jury deliberation device, of the standard colloquium format. But if we were as civilized as Hampshire's description supposes, we would not need any of these external devices. We would not need a moderator to end filibusters or umpire foul balls because no one would be tempted to hog the allotted time or hit below the belt. We would not need Robert's Rules of Order because no one would be tempted to disrupt or exploit it. And we would not need the standard colloquium format because that format formalizes a dialectical procedure to which we would adhere naturally and spontaneously, as do Aristotle's temperate men to the mean and Kant's perfectly rational beings to the moral law. These devices are muzzles and restraining leashes designed to rein us in, not merely from expressing our philosophical enthusiasms too vehemently or at excessive length; but rather from too obviously lunging for the jugular under the guise of philosophical critique.[8] Sometimes it is as though in our serious philosophical activity we needed to be monitored and cued from the wings by an instructor in the basics of philosophical etiquette. It is as though there were no internalized voice of intellectual conscience to guide our philosophical behavior at all.

How is this lack of philosophical self-discipline to be understood? How are we to understand the frequent identification of personal and professional well-being with having at least temporarily obliterated one's philosophical enemies, and of personal and professional failure with having lost the war? And how are we to understand our own self-deception and lack of insight into the egoistic motives and meaning of such philosophical behavior - as though a punishing philosophical workover that verbally dices one's opponent into bite-size chunks were cognitively indistinguishable from the "cultivated caution and modesty in assertion" that Hampshire rightly applauds? Should we say that if we are incapable of practicing rational self-restraint and self-scrutiny in the circumscribed and rarified arena of philosophical dialogue, there is small hope for doing so in more complex fields of social interaction? Or should we say, rather, that it is because the philosophical arena is so small and morally insignificant that we have devoted so little attention to habituating ourselves to proceed in a temperate

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[8] So much for Hampshire's injunctions against metaphor.

and civilized manner; and that our übermenschlichen barbarity here has no practical implications for our rational moral potential elsewhere?

The latter response is inadequate on several counts. First, the concept of rational philosophical dialogue as establishing metaethical conditions for comprehensive normative theory is too central to the moral and political views of too many major philosophers - Rawls, Hare, Dworkin, Rorty, and Habermas among them - to be dismissed as morally insignificant. If we cannot even succeed in discussing, in a rational and civilized manner, what we ought to do, it is not likely that we will succeed in figuring out what we ought to do, much less actually doing it. Second, talk is cheap; talk is the easy part of moral rectitude. If we can ever hold our tongue, choose our words, and exert ourselves to understand another and communicate successfully with her when our self-interest is at stake, then we may cultivate the rational disposition to do those things. The question then becomes whether we are less inclined to cultivate it when it is our purely philosophical interests that are at stake; and what that might reveal about the ability of philosophy - and so rationality - to give point and form to our lives. Certainly there are those for whom philosophy is merely an intellectual game.

Third, philosophy as the rational discipline *par excellence* has fashioned its own identity through the centrality of its involvement in the most elemental and universal ideals of human life: ideals of the good, the true, and the beautiful; of equality, rationality, and grace. These are the ideals that inspire the young to study philosophy, and that often sustain our allegiance to it as we grow older. That the intellectual skills with which we pursue research into these ideals can be so easily perverted by the Bulldozer, the Bullies, the Bull, and the Bullfinch in the service of the bad, the false, and the ugly is no minor matter. How a profession self-defined by its rationality and its idealism can generate suicidally self-repressive and self-abasing styles of practice demands explanation.

Earlier I suggested that part of the explanation is to be found in the economic conditions that have come to characterize the profession of academic philosophy since the late 1960s. These conditions have encouraged a possessive and authoritarian attitude toward philosophical ideas that is incompatible with the obligations of philosophical practice as Hampshire enumerates them. We have seen that these include a commitment to clarity, precision, and care in the development of an argument or view; and a methodological caution that eschews easy answers for the sake of a coherent thesis that is fully cognizant of significant objections and alternatives to the view being defended. But these obligations must compete with the mounting difficulty of finding long-term or permanent jobs in the field.

Up to the early 1960s philosophy was a small, homogeneous, economically secure academic enclave. As would befit a community of *Übermenschen*, Stevenson's emotivism vied with Ross's and Pritchard's intuitionism and Moore's non-naturalism as the metaethical views of choice. Kantian, rationality-based metaethical views were not in the competition. With Johnson's Great Society programs of the mid-1960s, philosophy began to open its doors to younger scholars showing the ethnic, gender, and class diversity that has always been representative of the population of the United States. But those programs in higher education funded this expanded academic population only briefly. Since then the resulting scarcity of jobs has become an increasingly serious problem for younger philosophers, newcomers and legatees alike. It has been a central professional fact of life since the late 1970s. Those of us who entered the professional side of the field as graduate students in the mid-1970s had studied, benefited from, and taken as models philosophical writings that uniformly predated this dearth of professional opportunities. But we had also received a letter from the American Philosophical Association, routinely sent to all aspiring graduate students, advising us that very few jobs were likely to be available upon receipt of the Ph.D. Under these circumstances, such aspiring graduate students have had three choices: (1) ignore the letter; (2) ignore those aspects of their previous philosophical training that conflict with it; or (3) try to adapt in ways that will allow them to compete successfully in the field. Clearly, the student who is both rationally self-interested and committed to philosophy will choose (3), and most who have survived professionally have done so.

For the most part the results have not been auspicious for the health of the field. The methodological caution that is essential to doing good philosophical work has been too often supplanted by an intellectual and philosophical timidity that is the antithesis of it. Understandably concerned to ensure their ability to continue and succeed professionally in the discipline to which they are committed, many younger philosophers in the past few decades have grown increasingly reluctant to fulfill the demands of the Oedipal drama that is essential to the flourishing of any intellectual discipline. In order to break new ground, younger thinkers must strive to study, absorb, elaborate, and then criticize and improve upon or replace the authoritative teachings on which their training is based. Otherwise they fail to achieve the critical independence and psychological and intellectual maturity that enable them to introduce new, stronger, and more comprehensively authoritative paradigms in their turn. Strawson's early critique of Russell's theory of descriptions, for example, or Rawls's rejection and displacement, as a young man in his early thirties, of Moore's philosophy of language-based metaethics, or Kripke's and Barcan Marcus's early repudiation of Quine's constraints on quantificational logic, or Kuhn's displacement of Popper's

philosophy of science in the early 1960s, are only a few of the available contemporary models for playing out this drama in philosophy.

The obligations of philosophical practice as Epictetus and Hampshire enumerate them - and as Socrates exemplifies them - create an ideal context in which all of the characters in this drama can thrive. In attending only to the quality of philosophical contributions and not to the hierarchical position of those who make them, the "style of philosophical talking" Hampshire describes calls forth the best philosophical efforts of all parties, regardless of rank or stature. Careful, patient, and rational philosophical discussion is the great equalizer among discussants, the great leveler of professional hierarchy.[9] So younger philosophers can feel secure in the conviction that in subjecting the views of their elders to searching scrutiny and possible refutation, they are only doing what the obligations of philosophical practice demand.

This ideal of equality in rational dialogue comes into direct conflict with a reality in which professional survival is a scarce commodity doled out as reward in a zero-sum game. Where philosophical error translates as professional failure, the avoidance of professional failure requires the concealment of philosophical error at all costs. Under these circumstances there can be little place for the rational criticism and analysis of views, and so little place for unconstrained give-and-take among rational equals. These practices must be replaced by a system of patronage of the unempowered by the empowered, and mutual aggrandizement of the empowered by one another. It is because rational philosophical dialogue recognizes no professional hierarchy that other, extra-philosophical or even anti-philosophical measures must be invoked to maintain it under circumstances in which hierarchical status is the surest index of professional survival.

Philosophy as an academic discipline is correspondingly unusual in the obsessiveness and rigidity with which the character and composition of its traditional professional hierarchy has been guarded since the 1970s. In this traditional hierarchy, criticism from peers is received as an honor, whereas criticism from subordinates is resisted as insubordination; and novices,

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[9] Indeed, there are few other fields in which the intellectual activity that centrally defines the discipline is so thoroughly inimical to professional hierarchy. Even in the natural sciences, such a hierarchy is justified to some extent by the training, experience, and accumulation of information and methodological resources required in order to ascend to its pinnacle. Only in philosophy (and perhaps mathematics) is it possible for some unschooled pipsqueak upstart to initiate a revolution in the field with an offhand, "Here's a thought!" issued from the safe haven of the armchair. Kripke's early work in modal logic would be an example; Parfit's on personal identity would be another.

newcomers, provisional members, and interlopers tend to rank among the lowest subordinates of all. Accordingly, the more they diverge - in thought, appearance or pedigree - from the tradition, the closer to the bottom of the hierarchy they are likely to be found, and the more blatant the exercises of power that keep them there. Correspondingly more attention has been given to Kantian, rationality-based metaethical views since the 1970s, and many newcomers, provisional members, and interlopers - including particularly large numbers of women - are to be found among their proponents.

Younger thinkers who choose to diverge or defect rather than conform philosophically embark on a dangerous Oedipal drama in which they must confront and face down the wrath and resistance of their elders in order to prevail. By finally rejecting the views of those whom they have studied and by whom they may have been mentored and protected in the beginning stages of their career, younger scholars will often provoke disapproval, rejection or punitive professional retaliation from those who feel betrayed by their defection. They may risk their professional survival, advancement, and the powerful professional networks which the authoritative support of their mentors has supplied. This is of course an exceedingly painful and intimidating prospect for all concerned, elders and prodigal sons[10] alike. It is nevertheless necessary in order to advance the dialogue and ensure the intellectual health of the discipline.

The elders will survive this defection with their stature intact, as did Russell, Moore, Quine, and Popper; and eventually come to recognize their own example in that of their defectors. After all, they, too, were once defectors, and took the terrible risks they now discourage their own disciples from taking. Thus, those disciples need to demonstrate their respect for their elders, and the depth of their influence as role models, by similarly having the attachment and commitment to their own ideas, the energy and courage to probe their deepest implications, and a confidence in their value firm enough to impel them to this confrontation, despite the clear dangers to their professional self-interest. Otherwise these ideas become little more than disposable vehicles for promoting professional self-interest, of questionable value in themselves.

One might argue that this brand of naive intellectual bravado is in mercifully short supply under the best and most professionally secure of

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[10] I use this expression advisedly, since those who survive the confrontation are overwhelmingly male. The field numbers approximately 15,000 members. At last count, women occupied 8 percent, and African-American women 0.001 percent, of all tenured positions. The punishments inflicted for their philosophical insubordination are correspondingly more virulent.

circumstances. But nerve fails all the more quickly as the threat of professional extinction becomes more real; and this failure of intellectual nerve has by now so completely pervaded the field of philosophy that it has generated its own set of professional conventions: a virtual culture of genuflection, relative to which merely to embark on the confrontation with one's elders is a serious and sometimes fatal breach of etiquette. So, for example, when I was a junior faculty member, a very senior and very eminent colleague reprimanded my efforts to defend the position developed in this project by informing me that it was "not [my] place to have views"; I once had a paper accepted for publication on the sole condition that I excise my critique of a major figure in the field; and had one rejected because a single negative referee's report, although acknowledged by the editor to be incoherent and self-contradictory, came from an important personage. Rather than take on the major thinkers, many have been encouraged or coerced to avoid the Oedipal confrontation altogether. The great, ongoing contentious debates that extended from Plato through Kant, Fichte, Hegel, Schopenhauer and on to the Vienna Circle, Russell, Wittgenstein, and Habermas seem to have been all but silenced by the repressive dictates of professionalism.

These genuflective norms of etiquette undergird the recommendations of professional self-interest, by encouraging and rewarding excessive deference to philosophical authority, by discouraging forthright argumentation and critique, and by undermining the intellectual and professional confidence of younger philosophers in their ability to develop their own views independently and survive confrontation with their elders. They thereby infantilize the unempowered, by stripping them of the very resources most essential, in the long term, to their own survival and flourishing: the character dispositions of rationality. It then would be unsurprising to discover that, when the unempowered were rewarded for their obedience with professional empowerment, the character dispositions of rationality were given both less exercise and less philosophical weight.

These norms of genuflection, necessitated by economic imperatives, create the authoritarian conditions under which the Bulldozer, the Bullies, the Bull, and the Bullfinch flourish. Like other artifacts of the culture of genuflection, they function to protect canonical or insecure philosophical territory using anti-philosophical weaponry, when pure philosophical dialogue itself is too subversive of established hierarchy or received interpretation to be tolerated. And through practice, repetition, and professional reward, these repressive philosophical styles are transmitted as role models from one generation of graduate students to the next, as legitimate modes of philosophical discourse. Ultimately they supplant the legitimate and civilized modes of philosophical discourse Hampshire

describes with self-aggrandizing displays of power and domination, and corrupt the quality of philosophical ideas accordingly. In replacing the obligations of philosophical practice with the imperatives of professional survival, these styles bespeak more than our egoism. They bespeak our inability to transcend structural conflicts between the democratic prerequisites of a genuine philosophical meritocracy and the consequences of a market economy.

Philosophy as Exemplar of Rationality

Western philosophy has always found its source of value in its identification with rationality, originally the systematic rational inquiry practiced by Socrates. But as other disciplines - the natural sciences, psychology, sociology, political theory, anthropology - have gradually seceded from the formal discipline of philosophy and formulated their own rational methodologies, philosophy has repeatedly sought outside itself for its defining exemplar of rationality, and so for its source of intrinsic value. Up through the nineteenth century, Anglo-American analytic philosophy ignored the defection of the natural and social sciences and identified rationality with empirical rational inquiry, i.e., with scientific methodology. Traditional epistemology began to be upstaged by the newly emerging subspecialty of philosophy of science. At the beginning of this century, the melding of logic and mathematics of Russell and Whitehead's *Principia Mathematica* provided philosophy with another exemplar of rationality with which to identify: one of logical rigor, symbol, and system. Traditional speculative metaphysics received a corresponding boost in status at the same time that it took a drubbing from Logical Positivism. After the Second World War, philosophy turned to Frege, Wittgenstein, and Chomsky for yet another exemplar of rational philosophical method as linguistic analysis. Linguistic anthropology and sociology received correspondingly more attention from philosophers of language. And since the 1970s, philosophy has increasingly turned back to the sciences - this time to the emerging field of cognitive science - for its exemplar of rational methodology. The philosophy of mind and theory of action have flourished accordingly. Trade relations have thus run in both directions: the discipline of philosophy has exported and diversified its early conception of rationality as systematic Socratic inquiry into newly emerging research disciplines; and these, in turn, import back into the discipline of philosophy more highly specialized conceptions of their own.

The more the discipline of philosophy has succumbed to the political, economic, and professional pressures just described, the more stridently it has insisted upon these externally imported exemplars sometimes singly,

sometimes in tandem - as centrally definitive of the field and the practice of philosophy. And the more the discipline of philosophy as the practice of rationality *par excellence* has been threatened from any and all directions, and the more the specialized conceptions of rational methodology have proliferated, the more tenaciously philosophy has held onto its self-identification with rationality as such, adjusting its source of value according to how in particular rationality is conceived.

In the end, however, it is only philosophy's original identification with the systematic rational inquiry of Socrates - Epictetus' injunction to

> transgress in nothing the clear pronouncement of reason… to live as one who is mature and proficient, and let all that seems best to you be a law that you cannot transgress… [to] attend to nothing but reason in all that [you] encounte[r]… to live as one who would wish to be a Socrates.[11]

that remains impervious to defection, attack, or nonrational alternatives. It is impervious to defection because emerging fields that have defected have taken rational Socratic inquiry with them as their minimal foundations. It is impervious to attack because any such attack must presuppose its methods in order to be rationally intelligible. And it is impervious to nonrational alternatives because no such alternative competes with it on its own ground. Philosophy's greatest challenge, then, is to live up to its traditional, Socratic self-conception: conduct in all spheres that gives centrality to the character dispositions of rationality.

Under the historical circumstances earlier described, it is impossible to avoid calling into question the present-day adequacy of philosophy to meet this challenge, and so, its right to insist on its self-definition as an exemplar of rationality. Hence it is impossible to avoid questioning whether the character dispositions of rationality can be as central to the structure of the self as they seemed to be for Socrates and Epictetus. The problem would seem to be not that we so often violate Epictetus' injunction to "transgress in nothing the clear pronouncement of reason," but rather that we so often transgress that clear pronouncement in precisely those areas of conduct in which reason is purported to reign supreme. One explanation would be that philosophers have been guilty of self-serving pretensions to rationality all along; and that philosophical practice has never consisted of anything more than psychological intimidation and the flouting of power imbalances under the guise of rational dialogue. According to this view, Epictetus' entreaties would be addressed precisely to those in need of rationality as an inspiring ideal by which to modulate largely nonrational behavior.

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[11] Epictetus, *Enchiridion* LI, footnote 1.

But another possibility is that we must rather take special care now, in this particular historical and cultural epoch, to defend the centrality to philosophy of those character dispositions of rationality the exercise of which have been so traditionally definitive of its practice. It might be that these dispositions, and so the traditional practice of philosophy itself - and so its adequacy as an exemplar of rationality - are now under particularly severe attack, from both inside and outside the discipline, by concerted attempts to defend traditional power relations against the destabilizing effects of rational Socratic interrogation. The displacement of rationality from a central functional and valuational role in the way the structure of the self is conceived signals a move away from the "slave morality" that valorizes the character dispositions of rationality as essentially constitutive of human survival and flourishing. This displacement also signals a move toward alternative, *übermenschlichen* norms of behavior that implicitly condone freer and more blatant exercises of power in the service of desire, instinct, and emotion. It is no accident that this Gestalt shift occurs at an historical juncture when such exercises and displays of power are increasingly necessary to defend conventional social arrangements - both inside and outside the academy - against rational Socratic interrogation by individuals and communities traditionally disempowered by them. But it is then doubly ironical that the character dispositions of rationality themselves should be marshalled by some philosophers to justify them.

The philosophical use of reason to justify unreason then obliges those philosophers who explicitly value reason, rational interrogation, and the character dispositions of rationality more generally, as intrinsic goods, to defend them in turn. It requires us to reaffirm and protect these intrinsic goods as essential and definitive of philosophical practice, regardless of the express philosophical views on which they are honed. It requires us as well to realize these values in our philosophical practice, regardless of the professional repercussions. And it requires us to disregard those repercussions as secondary to the preservation of rational integrity. That is, the philosophical task is to demonstrate the deeply entrenched necessity of rationality to coherent thought and action, independently of the express metaethical views or valuation of rationality any particular philosopher might hold. That is my task in this project.

The Enterprise of Socratic Metaethics

In ethics, we distinguish between a *normative* and a *metaethical* theory. A normative moral theory tells us what we ought to do, and why. Thus it traditionally utilizes such prescriptive terms as "ought," "should," "good,"

"right," "valuable," or "desirable" (I offer an analysis of such terms in Volume II, *A Kantian Conception*). This is the *practical* part of a normative theory, also known as *casuistry*. Such a theory also contains a *value-theoretic* component that enlists certain states, conditions, or events that explain what is good, right, or desirable: friendship, for example; or love, or reason, or integrity. Value theories differ with respect to both content and structure (I say more about these distinctions in Volume I, chapter I).

By contrast, a metaethical theory seeks to unpack the metaphysical presuppositions of a normative theory: to what sorts of entities, if any, its prescriptive terms refer; whether it can be objectively true or not; what its scope of application might be; what conception of the agent, rationality, or human psychology it presupposes. Thus a metaethical theory is descriptive and analytical where a normative one is prescriptive and hortatory.

By comparison with the putative centrality of rationality to the practice of philosophy itself, the metaethical views philosophers expressly defend show wide variation in the role each assigns to rationality in the structure of the self. Here the value and function of reason ranges from the central to the peripheral, and the prominence of nonrational elements in the structure of the self varies accordingly. At one extreme, consider Subjectivism. Subjectivism essentially rejects truth and objectivity as possible goals for intellectual discourse on any subject. But any judgment in the categorical indicative mood implies - whether rightly or wrongly - the truth and objectivity of the judgment, including the judgment that truth and objectivity are impossible. So if that judgment, that truth and objectivity are impossible, is itself true and objectively valid, then it is false and objectively invalid. If it is false, then its negation, i.e., that truth and objectivity are not impossible, is true. So the truth of subjectivism implies its falsity. If, on the other hand, Subjectivism is neither true nor false, then it refers to nothing and expresses at best the speaker's emotional despair about the possibility of communication - a condition treated better in psychotherapy than in intellectual discourse. If this paradox of judgment strikes you as in any way troubling, or as detracting from the intelligibility of Subjectivism, then you have already accepted intellectual criteria of rational consistency that imply an aspiration to objective validity and truth. Only when these criteria are presupposed can meaningful or coherent discussion, on any topic whatsoever, proceed.

A fortiori, any judgment of specifically moral value aspires to be more than a mere emotive expression of the speaker's momentary feelings. It aspires to objective validity, and we signal this by stating our views publicly, defending them with evidence or reasoning, and subjecting them to critical analysis in light of standards of rationality and truth we implicitly accept. So, for example, suppose someone walks up to you and punches you in the nose.

Your verbal reaction will surely include the statements that he had no right to do that, that his behavior was unwarranted and inappropriate, and that you did nothing to deserve it. It is not likely that you will then go on to add that of course these are just your opinions which have no objective validity and that there is no final truth of the matter. Rather, you express your beliefs in categorical indicative judgments, which you of course presume to be true, and which you can defend by appeal to facts you take to be obvious and values you take to be equally obvious. Of course, some of your presumptive judgments may be mistaken or false. But this does not entail that there is no fact of the matter as to whether they are or not.

The project of moral communication has not only to do with letting others know what we think, but also trying to command their acknowledgment that we are right. Those of us committed to the Socratic ideal prefer to command this acknowledgment through rational dialogue rather than emotional rhetoric, dissimulation, psychological manipulation, or threats of professional or social rewards withheld or punishments inflicted for dissenting. That is, we do our best to "live as one who would wish to be Socrates," rather than as a Bulldozer, Bully, Überbully, Bull, or Bullfinch. By relying on the force of rational dialogue to win agreement with our moral convictions, we try to command not only others' assent, but also their intellectual respect. In rational discussion, analysis, and argument, we reach beyond the circle of the converted to try and convert the unconvinced. We express respect for the rationality of the unconverted by appealing to it, rather than to their emotional, psychological, or social vulnerabilities, to convince them. And we receive the best confirmation of the truth of our moral convictions when others are rationally convinced, rather than manipulated or coerced or deceived, into adopting them. Call this the enterprise of *Socratic metaethics*. Socratic metaethics grounds moral convictions and judgments in the Socratic ideal of rational dialogue as a means for arriving at moral truth.

Within the enterprise of Socratic metaethics, there are many ways to proceed. One that has a long historical pedigree is what I will call Antirationalism.[12] In earlier historical periods this approach has emerged variously in normative theories such as Intuitionism or the Moral Sense Theory of the British Moralists. (Similarly, Virtue Theory claims allegiance to Aristotle, but on extremely shaky exegetical grounds.) As developed in the philosophy of Sir David Ross, Intuitionism stipulates the existence of an innate faculty of moral intuition, consultation of which tells us what moral

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[12] This is Thomas Nagel's term to characterize variants on the same group of views as I discuss here. See his *The Possibility of Altruism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975), p. 8. Chapter III of Volume I is devoted to a study of this work.

principles we ought to follow in action.[13] More recent Antirationalists such as Annette Baier, Lawrence Blum, Michael Stocker, or Susan Wolf hark back to British Moral Sense Theorists such as Shaftesbury, Hutcheson, or the Hume of Book III of the *Treatise*, by repudiating the governing role of moral principle and instead appealing to moral emotion or sentiment to guide action.[14] (Similarly, the Noncognitivism of Gibbard, Raz, and Anderson reject the rationality of moral principle, but then resurrect rationality as a prescriptive criterion for moral emotions and attitudes.) In all cases, moral guidance is given by a nonrational component of the self: we ought to perform those actions we intuitively know to be right, or, respectively, feel most deeply. No consistent Antirationalist normative view can have a developed practical or casuistical component, because what any particular individual ought to do depends on her particular intuitions, feelings, or desires - not on impartially conceived principles. Nevertheless, the value-theoretic parts of these views are articulated and developed within the impartial normative constraints of Socratic metaethics.

The following discussion will contain much on the failings of Antirationalism. Here I call attention to just one reason why it is unpalatable *in practice* to anyone seriously interested in the enterprise of Socratic metaethics as a distinctive philosophical methodology. This is that it appeals to the authority of a first-personal, inaccessible experience in judging, not only what *one* should do, but what should be done *simpliciter* under particular circumstances. In consulting only one's moral emotions or intuitions about how to interpersonally resolve some hypothetical or actual moral problem that bears no obvious relation to one's own circumstances, one presumes to legislate how others should behave or feel on the basis of a moral foundation which is cognitively inaccessible to them, and therefore inaccessible to their evaluation.

Suppose, for example, that I discover that my best friend is dealing drugs to minors and decide, on the basis of my feelings about him, to protect our friendship rather than betray it by turning him in to the police. There is a great deal you and I may discuss about such a case. But without knowing,

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[13] Sir David Ross, *The Right and the Good* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1938).

[14] Annette Baier, *Moral Prejudices* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994); Lawrence Blum, *Friendship, Altruism and Morality* (Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1980); Susan Wolf, "Moral Saints," *Journal of Philosophy* 79/8 (1982); First Earl of Shaftesbury, "Selections" in *The British Moralists: 1650-1800* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969); Francis Hutcheson, *Illustrations of the Moral Sense* (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press); Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, ed. L. A. SelbyBigge (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), Book III.

and without being able to experience directly the particular nature and quality of my feelings for this person, you may find my behavior simply indefensible. You may acknowledge and sympathize with the deep bonds of friendship and loyalty I am feeling, but find it nevertheless impossible to condone my claim that I just could not bring myself to destroy them by turning him in. You may think that no friendship, no matter how deep or meaningful, should count for so much that it outweighs the right of minors to be shielded from drug addiction before they are mature enough to make a rational choice. And since I cannot convey to you the direct quality of the experience of my friend on which my feelings are based, there is little I can say to defend my decision. Perhaps I may expect your pity or sympathy for my dilemma, but I cannot expect your respect or agreement. So unless you find me particularly compelling as a role model on nonrational grounds (say, my crucial presence in your upbringing; or my charisma, or broad sphere of social or professional influence; or your desire to stay in my good graces), I can provide you with no reason why the principles on which I acted (and even Antirationalists act on principles, even if they don't think about or formulate them) should govern your behavior under similar circumstances.

This is not a peculiarly Kantian objection. Unless a principle on which I act is formulated partially, i.e., with indexical operators, proper names and definite descriptions, we presume it to apply impartially; that is the way language works. Terms and principles have general application to the scope of referents they denote, unless their scopes are restricted explicitly by stipulation or fiat or context. So, for example, if I tell you that dogs are susceptible to gastric tortion, I am either mistaken or else using the term "dog" in an idiosyncratically restricted sense, to refer specifically to large dogs with cylindrical stomachs. Similarly, if I tell you I feel that friendship should come before social welfare, you will naturally take me to be doing more than merely emoting my personal feelings about this particular friend. You will naturally take me to be expressing a judgment that applies not only to my own behavior in this case, but to anyone's who must weigh the relative priority of friendship and social welfare. But since I am merely telling you what I feel, and since what I feel is not directly available to you, I offer you no available justificatory basis for evaluating the applicability of this principle to your behavior. Unless you have some special reason to be impressed with my feelings, you have no reason to be impressed with the principles on which I act. Antirationalism, then, subverts in practice the enterprise of Socratic metaethics on which it relies, by appealing to interpersonally inaccessible moral states to justify its moral judgments.

Ross's Intuitionism was couched in a metaethics that attempted to avoid this outcome, and contemporary Antirationalism may adopt a similar strategy. Ross argued that the principles we morally intuit as the outcome of

careful and considered reflection on the circumstances in question were objectively valid, in the same way that mathematical intuitionists argue that the objects of mathematical intuition, such as the basic truths of arithmetic, are objectively valid. But this makes intuition, as well as its objects, even more cryptic and cognitively inaccessible than before. What if we have different moral intuitions about the same case? What if yours puts social welfare ahead of friendship? How do we determine which one of us is morally defective, and in what respect? The difficulty Intuitionists face in claiming an objectively valid status for the moral judgments they make is that intersubjective agreement can provide the only evidence for the mysterious mental capacities required to make them; and this, of course, makes the enterprise of Socratic metaethics itself unnecessary. Where rational dialogue becomes necessary to addressing the unconverted that lie outside one's circle of sympathizers, Intuitionism has nothing to say.

Contemporary Antirationalists might adopt a similar strategy, by claiming a certain veracity for moral emotions, based on their authenticity as a forthright expression of a person's most centrally defining values and projects. This would resolve Antirationalism into a species of Subjectivism: if a certain judgment authentically expresses my centrally defining values and projects, it is true, at least for me. I do not think this is an interesting use of the term "true," and will not pause to rehearse any more of the elementary objections to Subjectivism. Suffice it to raise the obvious problem, analogous to that faced by the Intuitionist, of how to dispose of the authentic feelings and judgments of the unconverted; or of a stormtrooper or lynch mob. Otherwise the basic objection stands: Antirationalism appeals for its persuasive power on interpersonally inaccessible moral states, and thereby sabotages the enterprise of Socratic metaethics on which it relies.

By contrast, *Rationalism* takes the enterprise of Socratic metaethics seriously as a methodological presupposition of *all* metaethics. The method of Rationalism is to try to justify a moral theory or principle by appeal to reason and argument as the currency of interpersonal communication. A Rationalist seeks to lead her reader or listener from weak and mutually acceptable premises to a substantive conclusion as to the most convincing substantive moral theory or principle, by way of argument, analysis, critique, and example interpersonally accessible to both. A Rationalist may appeal to imagination, personal experience, or certain feelings or perceptions or intuitions as reasons for or against a particular view; but she views reason - not the feelings or perceptions or intuitions or other responses invoked as reasons - as the final arbiter of rational dialogue.

In this undertaking, Rationalism is neither broadly democratic nor narrowly fascistic. A Rationalist does not try to gain adherents for her view

by oversimplifying the theory or the arguments, or by obfuscating them with neologisms or inflated prose or grim silence in order to intimidate others into accepting it. In appealing to reason, Rationalism addresses itself only to those who are willing to exercise theirs. It does, however, assume that all competent adults can do so, *regardless of culture or environment*. In this, it is more democratic than Antirationalism, which demands intersubjective concurrence in substantive moral judgment as the only convincing evidence of the truth of those judgments, when in fact there is no necessary connection between intersubjective concurrence and truth at all. For these among other reasons, Rationalism defines the critical perspective adopted in this project. The argument proceeds by appeal to reasons and critical analysis, and most of the philosophers discussed here proceed similarly in defending their views - regardless of the substantive content of those views.

Rationality and the Structure of the Self

The main focus of discussion in both volumes of this project is with two competing branches of Rationalism that differ with respect to the role each assigns to rationality in the structure of the self. Both branches agree upon the Socratic metaethical enterprise as a philosophical methodology. Both agree, as well, on the necessity of providing a metaethical conception of the subject as agent, as a foundation for making normative claims about what subjects as agents should do. And both agree upon the necessity of explaining what they think moves subjects as agents to act, and in what they think acting rationally consists. But each branch deploys different models of human motivation and rationality as the shared, weak metaethical premises on the basis of which to argue for these normative moral claims. The first branch is what I will call the *Humean conception of the self*, the second the *Kantian*. Thus both Humean and Kantian conceptions in fact count as varieties of Rationalism according to this taxonomy, regardless of the Antirationalist content some Humean views may have.

By a "conception of the self," I mean an explanatory theoretical model of the self that describes its dynamics and structure. A conception of the self is to be distinguished from a *self-conception*, which is the same as a "personal self-image." The latter expresses the way or ways in which an individual thinks of himself, for example, as nice, well-intentioned, grumpy, loyal, fastidious, etc. It typically plays a normative role in individual psychology: we try to live up to the ideal individual we conceive ourselves to be, and regard negative attributes as flaws or deviations from that ideal. Thus a self-conception is part of one's normative moral theory. By contrast, a conception of the self plays a descriptive, metaethical role in moral theory: it identifies and describes the

kind of individual to whom the theory purports to apply. For example, a moral theory that urges general conformity to the Golden Rule on the grounds that it best enables each individual to promote her self-interest implicitly identifies those individuals to whom the theory is addressed as desiring to promote their self-interest. Similarly, a moral theory that recommends actions governed by the dictates of reason presupposes reason as a significant motivational factor in the relevant agents.

Traditionally, moral philosophers who write systematically and discursively always begin by describing their conception of human subjects as agents before they tell you what they think those agents ought to do. That is, they preface their normative claims with a metaethical conception of the self to which those claims are intended to apply. If they did not, we would have no way of gauging whether or not we ourselves were intended subjects of the theory. A conception of the self, then, provides a metaethical account of the psychological facts about human agents considered as subjects of normative moral principles.

My question in this project will not be that about which normative moral theory is uniquely correct. It will be the more foundational question of which metaethical conception of the self underlying normative moral theories provides the most accurate account of the psychological facts. If a moral theory's underlying conception of the self is fallacious or largely inaccurate regarding the psychology of human nature, the question of the theory's validity for human beings can scarcely arise.

A conception of the self as I define it comprises two parts: first, it includes a *motivational model*. This explains what causes the self to act, and how. It identifies those events and states within the subject that constitute its capacity for agency; and it explains how, under certain specified conditions, those capacities are realized in agency. So, the motivational model in a conception of the self is an explanatory and causal model. Second, a conception of the self includes a *structural model*. This describes and charts the conditions of rational coherence and equilibrium within the self. It depicts that state of the self in which it functions as a unified psychological entity, and maintains psychological balance and integrity among its cognitive and conative components. Taken together, the structural and the motivational models explain what a unified subject is and how it is transformed into responsible agency.

The Humean and the Kantian conceptions of the self are each grounded to some extent, although not entirely, in the writings of Hume and Kant respectively. The first is the prevailing conception: Humean premises concerning motivation and rationality are widely accepted in such disparate fields as psychology, economics, decision theory, political theory, sociology,

and, of course, philosophy. I believe that this conception is misguided in several respects, and in Volume I of this project I try to say why. The second branch of Rationalism in moral philosophy is less popular: Kantian premises regarding motivation and rationality are accepted in some areas of moral philosophy and social theory, but are not widely shared outside them. I believe that the full power of this conception of the self has not been sufficiently explored or exploited, and in Volume II I will try to begin to remedy this.

Relative to the enterprise of Socratic metaethics, my fundamental objection to the Humean conception of the self, and consequent allegiance to the Kantian, can be summarized quite simply: by insisting on desire as the sole cause of human action, the Humean conception of the self diminishes our conception of ourselves as rational agents, by failing to recognize or respect the ability of rational analysis and dialogue, as described above, to influence our behavior, even as it deploys and depends on them in philosophical discourse. This immediately raises the question, unanswerable within the traditional framework of metaethics itself, of what Humean moral philosophers take themselves to be accomplishing by discursively and rationally elaborating their views in print. If rationality is incapable of changing minds or motivating action, as Humeans frequently claim, what is the point of rationally defending their views in books and articles? Or is the point merely to get tenure and attract disciples motivated similarly by careerist considerations to adopt and promulgate one's views? Whereas Antirationalism subverts the enterprise of Socratic metaethics in practice while relying on it in theory, the Humean conception of the self subverts Socratic metaethics in theory while relying on it in practice.

We know from the historical examples mentioned earlier, as well as from personal experience, that the practice of normative moral philosophy often is not futile, its substantive views not motivationally impotent, and its practical consequences often far from inconsequential. The challenge is then to identify the metaethical conception of the self, rationality, and motivation that best explains its practical import. Are normative moral theories always adopted merely as a matter of convenience, in order to justify substantive policy decisions whose true *raison d'être* is the perpetuation of self-aggrandizing power relationships? Are they imported merely to legitimate pre-existing desires, sentiments, and political or social agendas, as the Humean conception implies? Or is it at least possible that they may themselves inspire and motivate the implementation of alternative agendas, disinterestedly and independently of the immediate self-interests and biases of their proponents? More concretely put: can reason itself inspire individuals other than Socrates to act and sacrifice in the service of rational social ideals?

Suppose it should transpire that the Humean conception of the self is, in fact, the most accurate explanatory model we can formulate. This would mean that, across nations as well as communities, subcultures, and individuals, human beings were *not* capable of marshalling the reserves of rationality to transcend the pursuit of self-interest, the gratification of desire, and the expression of instinct and emotion, in a shared vision of the good in the realization of which all can cooperate. Then all of our lives - not only those of the unempowered - would soon become even more nasty, brutish, and short than they have been in recent decades. It is here that Kant joins Hobbes in rejecting Nietzsche's *Übermensch*. A social order (however well serviced by *Untertanen* blinded by "slave morality") in which all fully empowered citizens were free to wield that power in the service of their instincts and desires would be no viable social order at all.

And *a fortiori*: should it transpire that philosophers were not capable of marshalling the character dispositions of rationality, so well exemplified by Socrates and described by Epictetus and Hampshire, to transcend the pursuit of professional self-aggrandizement in a shared vision of rational philosophical practice in which all could participate as equals, our professional practice would diverge more and more completely from the Socratic ideal of philosophical activity that led most of us to it, and poison our commitment to that activity accordingly. A philosophical practice in which all fully empowered participants were free to exploit that power in the service of personal desires would be no Socratic enterprise at all. This is the consequence to which the veracity of the Humean conception of the self would lead.

If, on the other hand, rational considerations can cause a change of mind or heart, then why should it not cause a change in behavior as well? A Kantian conception of the self acknowledges the motivational influence of rational argument on action from the outset. In speech and writing, Kantian moral philosophers exploit rationality unapologetically through appeals to conscience and reason, and reminders of who and what we are and where our responsibilities as rational agents lie.

The Humean conception is engendered by, but is not identical to, Hume's own conception of the self. Nor is it clear that it is embraced in its entirety by any one of its adherents. Rather, different facets of it are pressed into service to do different philosophical jobs: to explain behavior, for example; or predict preferences; or to analyze moral motivation, or freedom of the will. Thus the picture I shall sketch is a composite one, drawn from many different sources. This conception has been refined and elaborated to a high degree of detail in decision theory and the philosophy of mind, and its theoretical simplicity and apparent explanatory potency is attractive. But it has resulted in simplistic

approaches to the understanding of human behavior in the social sciences, and it has generated enormous problems for moral philosophy.

This, shortly put, is the first, critical part of the view I shall try to defend, in three lines of argument: critical, historical/exegetical, and substantive. In Volume I, I offer *critical* arguments that enumerate some of the major internal and functional defects of the prevailing Humean conception of the self, with an eye to later highlighting the superior comprehensiveness, explanatory force, and suitability for moral theory of its suggested rival. Thus Volume I essentially is devoted to complaining about other people. I also offer *historical/exegetical* arguments to demonstrate the limitations of Hume's own conception of rationality, and its imperviousness to face-saving charitable exegeses, in Chapters XI and XII.

The second, *substantive* part of this project that comprises Volume II argues that after having devoted two and a half centuries of attention to the Humean paradigm, it is now time to move on to a sustained consideration of the historically more recent, alternative conception of the self Kant proposed in response to these problems (which he, unlike us, saw right away). I suggest that we continue more deliberately the glacial process of collaborative refinement and elaboration of this alternative conception already begun, not only in Kantian moral philosophy, but in certain branches of cognitive psychology and social theory as well. My efforts in this project differ from those of most contemporary Kantian moral philosophers, in that I assume that Kant's moral writings by themselves are insufficient for developing a foundational conception of the self for moral philosophy. I believe that such a conception must be grounded in the conception of the self Kant actually develops in the *Critique of Pure Reason*. I adumbrate that conception, and make the case for the untapped richness of Kant's own conception of rationality and its potential as a resource for contemporary metaethics, in the first chapter of Volume II. Elsewhere[15] I offer a more extended treatment that explains in greater detail What Kant Really Meant.

The historical/exegetical arguments of Chapters XI and XII in Volume I and Chapter I in Volume II situate both the Humean conception and its rival in their proper historical contexts. The critical arguments and the historical/exegetical arguments are intended to motivate us to rethink our commitment to the prevailing paradigm, first by pointing out defects in its present formulation, and second, by scrutinizing the extent to which we may validly appeal to the authority of history and tradition in support of that formulation, and in support of the proposed alternative.

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[15] In Volume II, footnote 7.

I then put Kant's conception to work in a contemporary form in the remaining chapters of Volume II, in a concerted campaign for the "slave morality" candidate. I build on the conclusions of Chapter I to offer substantive metaethical arguments that articulate and develop the motivational and structural models of the self that I claim undergird not only the range of moral theories most appropriate to the psychological facts about human beings, but also, therefore, our factual assumptions about the explanation of human behavior. Here the main theses are that the formal requirements of rational coherence structure the self, are a necessary condition of unified agency, and impose formal constraints on the range of ends human agents can rationally adopt.

Thus I claim that theoretical reason is motivationally effective in action, hence that the Humean model of motivation - the belief-desire model - is incomplete. I claim also that theoretical reason does imply substantive constraints on final ends that differentiate rational from irrational ones, hence that the Humean model of rationality - the expected utility-maximizing model - is incomplete. I argue that reason can therefore justify a certain *range* of normative moral theories as rational final ends, and can motivate us to adopt them. However, reason cannot show any one of these theories to be uniquely rational, nor that it is to be implied by the requirements of reason itself, as so many philosophers have thought. Rather, the appeal to reason, on which we as philosophers implicitly rely, presupposes a view of ourselves as socialized moral agents who are theoretically rational and therefore morally responsible.

This conception of the self opposes not only the Humean dictum that rationality is impotent to determine the ends we seek. It also opposes the Antirationalist stance that treats rationality in action as an impediment to personal authenticity. It implies that the Kantian conception of the self explains our actual moral behavior, including our reflective philosophical behavior, better than the prevailing Humean alternative, and that therefore it provides a more realistic and appropriate justificatory foundation for moral theory. These substantive arguments are intended to present an alternative way of conceptualizing our own behavior and conscious life as better suited not only to our aims in moral philosophy, but to explanation of the psychological facts as well.

I do not expect that any of these lines of argument will necessarily compel all, or perhaps even most, Humeans and Antirationalists to see the error of their ways or reform them accordingly. For in the end these arguments presuppose the *value* of rationality as the defining element in the structure of the self. They presuppose that one is prepared, not only to recognize rationality as definitive, but to valorize its character dispositions, as a "slave morality" does. As in any philosophical disagreement, philosophical

opponents may ascribe to the same consideration cited as a reason a very different weight, and what is conclusive to one may be irrelevant to another, namely:

The Kantian	*The Antirationalist*	*The Humean*
But X is *irrational*!	But X is *irrational*!	But X is *irrational*!
But Y is *counterintuitive*!	**But Y is *counterintuitive*!**	But Y is *counterintuitive*!
But Z is *unsatisfying*!	But Z is *unsatisfying*!	**But Z is *unsatisfying*!**

So even if I succeed in making a plausible case that reason has that centrality, I have still relied on and presupposed the value of the very capacity I mean in my argument to valorize. A real Antirationalist who disparages the value of rationality will therefore accord little value to my rational arguments that rationality has value. If my reader is a real Humean for whom rationality has value but no motivational efficacy, my arguments will then provide no motivation to rethink his values, no matter how persuasive they are. Perhaps only Hobbes's astute - and rationally persuasive - observations on the necessary transience and instability of accumulated power might lead him to reconsider the value of the Socratic ideal.

Note
This essay serves as the introduction in each volume of a two-volume work (nearing completion) entitled Rationality and the Structure of the Self, Volume I: The Humean Conception and Volume II: A Kantian Conception. A planned third volume, Kant's Metaethics, will appear separately. I am grateful to Professor Naomi Zack for her interest in the project's overview and motivation laid out in the following discussion.

See the figure in the Appendix to this chapter for the author's schematic location of her project of Socratic metaethics. [Ed.]