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ABSTRACT

THE MORAL SELF, MORAL KNOWLEDGE, AND GOD: AN ANALYSIS OF THE THEORY OF SAMUEL CLARKE

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Theology

Submitted for the Degree of D.Phil.

Hilary Term 1984

The principal aim of this work is to ascertain a clear understanding of Clarke's moral theory, one which has suffered from neglect and misunderstanding. The assumption that his 'rational intuitionism' is given little if any epistemological grounding, is shown to be erroneous. This is done by drawing on his extensive work in the Letter to Dodwell and its Defenses. The secondary aim of this thesis is to show the relevance of Clarke's work to contemporary discussions in philosophy of mind, moral theory, and moral theology.

The thesis has four parts. In Part I, the works of Clarke, relevant to his moral theory, are introduced. His influence in the eighteenth century is brought out, both in Britain and on the Continent.

As regards his influence in moral theory, he is the likely goad that moved Hume to formulate 'Hume's Law,' that ought cannot be derived from is.

Part II is an analysis of Clarke's philosophical work on the nature of the 'rational and moral agent.' His views are ascertained, clarified, and presented as the epistemological foundation of his moral theory. One conclusion that follows from this material is that the influential work of Clarke is sharply at odds with the 'historiographic orthodoxy' that views British thought about the problem of knowledge to be progressive refinements of Locke's anti-innatism. The Defences are directed to Anthony Collins, a deist and late disciple of Locke.

There are also three major historical corrections that follow from the study of Clarke's work on the nature of mind. Two ideas that are usually attributed to Joseph Butler are actually Clarke's conceptions, e.g. the distinction between 'the strict' and 'the abstract' (or 'loose') concepts of personal identity, and the notion that memory does not constitute personal identity but rather presupposes and entails it. One other idea, usually attributed to Thomas Reid, is more properly credited to Clarke, namely, the theory of agent-causation. All three of these concepts are extremely important in contemporary philosophy of mind and theory of action. They constitute the epistemological ground of Clarke's moral theory.

In Part III the moral epistemology uncovered in Part II is linked with Clarke's more well known views found in the Discourse. His usually nebulous concept of 'fitness' is assessed and defended against the major criticisms of Hume (in Treatise 3.1.1) and Hutcheson. His often degraded analogy between morals and mathematics is defended, and his views are distinguished from those of Thomas Burnet, another anti-Lockean writer.

In Part IV, the moral theory proposed by Clarke argues for an employment of reason and revelation. It comes under sharp and extensive criticism from the deist Matthew Tindal. His criticisms, however, employ an either/or fallacy that is wholly inadequate as a refutation of Clarke's moral theology.

A comparison of key ideas in the moral theologies (metaphysics) of Leibniz and Clarke is made, and the principle of imitation of the holiness of God is found to be the coherent and full expression of Clarke's moral theology.

LONGER ABSTRACT

The principal aim of this work is to establish a clear understanding of Clarke's moral theory, one which has suffered from neglect and misunderstanding. The assumption, that Clarke gives 'rational intuitionism' little if any epistemological grounding, is shown to be mistaken. The secondary aim of this thesis is to show the relevance of Clarke's ideas to contemporary discussions in philosophy of mind, moral theory, and moral theology. Although Clarke is sometimes mentioned by moral philosophers, he is very rarely acknowledged by contemporary moral theologians. This is so in spite of the fact that Clarke's moral philosophy is consciously constructed so as to refute the moral theories of Hobbes and the deists, while remaining true to traditional Christian theism.

In Part I the largely unknown work and influence of Clarke is introduced. In his own time he bore a high reputation, especially as a philosopher-theologian, and was considered by many to be the intellectual successor of John Locke. The paradox in the association of Clarke with Locke, however, is the fact that Clarke does not fit into the 'historiographic orthodoxy' that views British thought about the problem of knowledge to be progressive refinements of Locke's *tabula rasa*

belief. Quite to the contrary, Clarke debates Anthony Collins, a disciple of Locke, on the nature of the soul. Even more to the point, in relation to the later work of David Hume, Clarke is one of the chief targets of his empiricist attacks. Thus he may be called 'Hume's Heretic,' being largely responsible for the construction of 'Hume's Law.' Although Clarke had heterodox views about the Trinity, he was orthodox in his defence of dualism (as the traditional view of Christian theism), special revelation, and miracles. Unlike Locke he was unwilling to admit any possibility to the notion of 'thinking matter.' Thus his theism, his close association with the ideas of Sir Isaac Newton, his rejection of deism, and his similarities with Leibniz are better measuring sticks by which to understand Clarke than a comparison of him with Locke.

In Part II, Clarke's philosophical analysis of the nature of the moral self, the nature of 'individual personality,' is ascertained, clarified, and presented as the epistemological foundation of his moral theory. The importance of this in terms of Clarkean scholarship is that it overturns the assumption that Clarke has little or no epistemology to offer in support of his 'ethical intuitionism.' Most of this content is drawn from the Letter to Dodwell and its Defenses, but it is also latent in Clarke's arguments in the Demonstration, about the natural immortality and immateriality of the soul.

There are also three major historical corrections, in terms of the more broad history of ideas, that follow from the study of Clarke's extensive work on the nature of mind. Two of these corrections concern ideas that are usually attributed to Joseph Butler but are actually Clarke's conceptions. The first is Clarke's distinction between 'the strict sense' and 'the abstract notion' of identity. The second is Clarke's insistence that memory does not constitute personal identity, but rather presupposes and entails

personal identity. There is one further idea that is rightly credited to Clarke, rather than to Thomas Reid, namely the theory of agent-causation. This is discussed in II.9 and it forms a crucial notion within the metaphysics of Clarke and his view of human liberty. It, in effect, puts Clarke two notches up on Hume and one up on Leibniz. That is to say, for Hume reason is the slave of the passions, for Leibniz a 'sufficient reason' is causally determinative of action (at least on Clarke's interpretation of Leibniz), and for Clarke neither the passions nor reason is necessarily determinative. All three of these concepts are coherently interwoven in Clarke's moral epistemology, and are also extremely important in current discussions in philosophy of mind and the theory of action. The single most important concept, discussed in II.9.ii, is 'the moral inclination', an innate moral tendency of the will that inclines a person to the right and the good without necessitating action. This is an 'ingenious idea' (Rom Harré) on Clarke's part, invoked to protect moral autonomy, freedom of the will, and a moral objectivism that does justice to the theological doctrine of conscience (Rom. 2) and the 'image of God.'

In PartIII, the moral epistemology that is uncovered in Part II is linked with Clarke's more well known doctrine of the 'fitness of things' in the Discourse. The significant explanatory power of the 'moral inclination' in reference to the usually slippery concept of 'fitness' is further justification in support of the interpretation of Clarke being offered. My interpretation of 'fitness' in III.3 is that rightness or obligation is a relation, but it is always that of a moral-agent-in-relation. Consequently Hume's criticism, in Treatise 3.1.1, does not damage the ethical rationalism for which Clarke argues. Hutcheson's criticism is not as significant as Hume's, and suffers from internal difficulties as Raphael has already shown.

Two additional arguments are added to those which spring from Clarke's work. The first argument, in III.3.iv, asks 'Can I forget the difference between right and wrong?' The answer given is that I can as easily forget the difference between right and wrong as I can forget that I am myself. This is taken as collateral support for an innate 'moral inclination.' The second argument added in Clarke's defence, III.4, concerns his frequent analogy between morals and mathematics. Numerous contemporary moral philosophers would dismiss such an analogy because Euclidean geometry is now accepted as having an empirical element which removes it from the pedestal of a priori truth. In response to this it is argued that Clarke's analogy is more properly understood as an analogy between fitness and 'pure mathematics,' and it is simply not the case that pure mathematics has been proven to be an empirical discipline. In fact, 'Platonism...is the dominant attitude in the practice of modern mathematicians.'

After a comparison and contrast is drawn between Clarke's theory and the moral dispositional theory of Thomas Burnet (III.5), and their similar treatment of the argument from relativism is discussed, two branches of particular moral duties are discussed (III.6). Here again it is seen that understanding fitness as a moral-agent-in-relation towards oneself (III.6.i) and towards others (III.6.ii), has significant explanatory power and is further support for the interpretation of Clarke that I am offering.

Finally, in Part IV, Clarke's moral theory is seen to come fully into focus in his moral theology. Indeed, his understanding of the nature of the irreducible moral properties of God (his goodness, justice, equality, and truth) are very strong reasons for Clarke constructing his rational objectivism in the first place.

The major critic of Clarke's argument for the use of reason and revelation in morality, was Matthew Tindal. His criticism is

discussed in IV.2 and is found seriously wanting. Tindal's argument against Clarke is an either/or paradox. Either reason is sufficient for morality or it is not. As Clarke holds that reason is essential, Tindal assumes that reason is all that is necessary, thereby making revelation redundant. Clarke's reply to such a criticism, it is suggested, amounts to showing that Tindal has actually employed an either/or fallacy which is self-defeating and ineffective in getting at Clarke's position.

In IV.3 Clarke's argument for univocal language in God-talk is uncovered, in distinction from the positions of the 'enthusiasts' and the 'School-men.' The enthusiasts are said to deny the goodness of God in practice, and the School-men, if their analogical language is taken seriously, deny the moral attributes of God in principle.

A substantial criticism of Clarke is then offered in IV.4. If his moral objectivism is grounded in the known moral powers of persons (powers which are univocally predicated of God), then his theory of an 'incomprehensible substratum' in which the powers reside creates significant problems. It is argued that a definition of substance simply in terms of essential powers, without 'residence' in any further substratum, is needed in order to preserve the tenability of Clarke's moral theory (and his theory of mind as well).

In IV.5.i Clarke's argument for the moral perfection of God was discussed, and it is compared and contrasted with Leibniz in IV.5.ii. The summation of Clarke's moral theory, reflecting his personalism, comes in the duty of imitating the holiness of God. In this moral relationship alone does a 'frail and finite' moral agent behold Moral Perfection, for the divine nature is goodness itself. But the end of the duty of imitating the holiness of God is not an individualistic enterprise, it is the activity of the Kingdom of God.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to express my thanks firstly to Professor John Macquarrie for initially accepting me for study at Oxford. On my arrival, however, I was straight-away put into the able hands of David Brown. For our numerous discussions, and his great patience, during my first two years of research, I am indebted. His gracious spirit and encouraging manner helped me through the first stages of my work. His constructive criticism of this work has made it much clearer than it would have been otherwise.

During the past one and a half years Gordon Kendal has seen me through to the completion of this thesis, with great ability, patience, and faithfulness. I am very thankful to him for his immense help in straightening out my often confused early versions of the manuscript, and from saving me from numerous blunders in the final draft.

My thanks are also due to Rom Harré for his generousity in reading the entire thesis. He quickly penetrated to the crucial issues at stake, and our discussion over these points was enlightening. He is certainly one philosopher who is not ready to toss Clarke into the dustbin of antiquity.

David Charles has also read portions of this work and conversation with him aided me in getting a fresh perspective on Clarke 'outside' of the eighteenth century.

I am also indebted to Dr. Parry and Mrs. MacDonald who have given me kind assistance in the use of the Oriel College Senior Library.

I would also like to thank Dorothy and Steve Palmquist for their very careful and conscientious work in producing the final copy of the thesis.

Most of all I wish to express my deepest appreciation to my wife, Karen; for her willing spirit to travel across the Atlantic, to leave family behind, yet bring along a toddler and a two month old baby, with a financial base that would shake even the most stout-hearted. Her steady encouragement, support, and ever present smile is a real treasure.

And then, my two boys, Dustin and David, have lightened the burden of research and composition by their winning ways, their effervescent joy, and the excitement created at each and every homecoming after a long day in the books.

This work is dedicated to

K.G.D.

PREFACE

Moral philosophy of the twentieth century is largely dominated by the confrontation of two schools of thought, namely intuitionism and utilitarianism.[1] It is also the case that the great debate in morals during the eighteenth century, 'the golden age of British moral philosophy,' is the mother of the basic concepts that are still in conflict.[2] Hence, it is from this perspective that the neglected work of Samuel Clarke (1675 - 1729) merits consideration. It merits expository consideration because most contemporary interpretations of Clarke are either incorrect or at least incomplete. It also warrants critical consideration, particularly because of the unrecognized relevance of Clarke's Letter to Dodwell and its Defenses to his moral theory. The 'rediscovery' is that of the kernel of Clarke's epistemology, without which his moral theory is quick and easy prey for anyone with an epistemology who asks 'But how do you know that?'

The usual historical context in which Clarke's moral theory is

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[1]W.D. Hudson, A Century of Moral Philosophy (Guildford and London: Lutterworth Press, 1980), pp. 1,170.

[2]The term is adopted from J.L. Mackie, Hume's Moral Theory (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1980), pp. 83-84.

discussed is the eighteenth century

tury, about the place of reason in morals, and the status of the moral sense theory. However, from this vantage point Clarke came too early because the central question was not clearly formulated until Francis Hutcheson's work in 1725 and 1728. But even more damning to Clarke is the fact that the debate over the moral sense theory was an epistemological debate, and if he offers no epistemology he cannot significantly even enter the discussion.

Clarke is normally understood as offering no epistemology per se. Instead he merely offers arbitrary moral axioms. A very careful, and the most scholarly, analysis of Clarke's moral theory is found in an unpublished[3] section of D.D. Raphael's D.Phil. dissertation. He makes the following assessment of his study of Clarke.

> Of epistemology proper there is little or nothing in Clarke. What is needed before ethical rationalism can be free from objection is a re-examination of the theory of knowledge: so long as the empiricist epistemology is left unquestioned, the rationalist case is not secure. For that re-examination we must wait for Richard Price.[4]

It is of course true that Richard Price took direct aim at the precisely formulated epistemological basis of Hutcheson's (and Hume's) version and application of John Locke's empiricism. It is also true that there is little epistemology proper in the only work on morals that most philosophers[5] are likely to read, namely those sections of

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[3]Most of the dissertation is published in D. Daiches Raphael, The Moral Sense (London: Oxford University Pess, 1947).

[4]David Rafilovitch, "A Dissertation on Views concerning the epistemology of morals held by some of the British moralists of the eighteenth century, with especial reference to the anti-empiricist views of Richard Price and Thomas Reid," D.Phil. Thesis, University of Oxford, 1940, pp. 72-73.

[5]It is not assumed that Raphael read only Clarke's Boyle Lectures. Indeed, in his dissertation he makes reference to some of Clarke's sermons.

the Discourse (1705) found in the Selby-Bigge or D.D. Raphael editions of British Moralists. What is not true, however, is that an epistemology proper is altogether absent from Clarke's works. In fact, after the death of Locke, Clarke carried on the most extensive debate in the first half of the eighteenth century on the issue at the heart of the epistemological controversy; the debate on 'the soul', or the nature of a moral agent. This debate was conducted by public correspondence between Clarke and Anthony Collins, the friend and disciple of Locke, but is now nearly lost material and found only in eighteenth century volumes that are generally inaccessible material. But given the epistemological material to be found in this correspondence, Clarkean scholarship requires revising and correction, and only then can proper criticism be made of his proposed moral theory.

There is also a second major adjustment, by way of general introduction, that is called for in contemporary assessments of Clarke's moral theory. That is that his moral theory is actually a moral theology. The often forgotten fact is that even though Clarke wrote prior to Hutcheson (and the latter took him to be a major opponent) and prior to the debate over the moral sense theory, he was in the midst of another even more significant debate, the debate between deism and theism. A mere glance at the full title, if not the complete text, of the Discourse itself (from which Clarke's moral theory is generally known) reveals this fact. In addition to the moral theology of Clarke found dotted throughout Propositions III - XV of the Discourse, there is a wealth of sermons by Clarke in which his moral theology is further developed. Consequently, from the vantage point of Clarke's moral theology, the oft compared work of Price in the Appendix of the Review ('A Dissertation on the Being and Attributes of the Deity'), pales by comparison.

These then are the two chief contributions which this work hopes to make to Clarkean scholarship; work which warrants additional consideration because the foundations of morals are central issues in present day philosophy of religion as well as in moral philosophy, and Clarke's work, I believe, has something worthwhile to contribute.

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PART I

CLARKE IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

I.1 Hume's Heretic

An examination of the chief works of Dr. Samuel Clarke (1675-1729) reveals a concerted, serious, and learned attempt to prove the existence of God via *a priori* reasoning and a lengthy, axiomatic argument to show that the foundation of morality is rationally based and objectively known to every thinking being. Clarke's philosophy is a crystalline and rather rare example of British rationalism, a philosophy which provided a goad and spur to the formulation of British empiricism. E.g., during the last few days of his life, a "lean, ghastly" David Hume revealed to an enquirer that "he never had entertained any belief in Religion since he began to read Locke and Clarke."[1] And a

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[1] *Private Papers of James Boswell from Malahide Castle* Vol. 12, eds. Geoffrey Scott and Frederick A. Pottle, (New York: privately printed, 1931), p. 227. The interview took place 7 July 1776, and seems to imply that Hume gave up on religion while a student at Edinburgh (1723-1725 or 1726). As a student he could select a regular class in ethics taught by William Law - an outspoken opponent of Clarke - and was likely impressed by the literary taste and freedom of thinking of the Rankenian club - which would certainly have debated the metaphysics of Clarke along with Locke, Butler, Berkeley, Shaftesbury, Mandeville, and Hutcheson (See E.C. Mossner, *The Life of David Hume* [Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1970], pp. 48-51; and J. Ramsey, *Scotland and Scotsmen of the Eighteenth Century*, ed. Alexander Allardyce [Edinburgh and London, 1888], I:195-96). Mossner slightly qualifies Hume's comment to Boswell quoted above. "Hume had certainly heard both Locke and Clarke "prelected" upon at college; but the actual reading of

contemporary antagonist of Clarke, Anthony Collins - the close friend of John Locke and his indebted follower - gibed that no one had doubted the existence of God until Dr. Clarke tried to prove it.[2] Such virulent negative reactions to Clarke's philosophy may be congenial to certain twentieth century preferences, but within the eighteenth century Clarke's ideas led directly to the most revered person of the powerful Royal Society - Sir Isaac Newton. Clarke's close friend, William Whiston (Newton's successor in the Lucasian chair of mathematics in

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their works may conceivably have taken place somewhat later" (p. 51; also cf. p. 64). Mossner takes Hume to have Clarke in mind when Hume discusses belief in miracles based on human testimony (pp. 286-87); Norman Kemp Smith in Hume's Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1935) identifies the argument stated and defended by Demea and criticized by Cleanthes, in Part IX of the Dialogues, to owe a great debt to Clarke's (pp. 34, 55). Hume was also well aware of Clarke's Arian avowances. In The Natural History of Religion, ed. A. Wayne Colver, and Dialogues concerning Natural Religion, ed. John Valdimir Price (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1976), p. 79, Hume writes: "Besides, Xenophon, as appears from his Memorabilia, was a kind of heretic in those times, which no political devotee ever is. It is for the same reason, I maintain, that Newton, Locke, Clarke, etc. being Arians or Socinians, were very sincere in the creed they profest: and I always oppose this argument to some libertines, who will needs have it, that it was impossible, but that these great philosophers must have been hypocrites."

Double quotation marks (") are used for shorter quotations. Single quotation marks (') are used to indicate either a phrase already quoted, or to indicate a special sense of a particular term, as the context will indicate.

[2]See Peter Gay, The Enlightenment: An Interpretation; The Rise of Modern Paganism (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1967), p. 326.

Clarke had frequent, informal debates over dinner with Collins, as told by William Whiston, in Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Mr. William Whiston (London: printed for the author) 1749, p. 182: "It must have been about the year 1711; when I was come newly to London, upon my banishment from the university [Cambridge - for his unitarian theology], that Dr. Clarke introduced me into the company of the Lady Caverly, in Soho-Square . . . She had now living with her one Sir John Hubern, a sort of a second-hand husband, but such an one as neither owned her for his wife, nor gave her his name; and in short, as I learned afterwards, was suspected to live with her in fornication: however, she being a believer, loved to have Christians of good reputation come and dine with her, such as she thought Dr. Bradford, Dr. Clarke, and myself; as Sir John Hubern, being an unbeliever, loved to have persons like himself; such as Mr. Collins, and Dr. Tyndal, and where accordingly we used to meet, and to have frequent, but friendly debates about the truth of the Bible and Christian Religion."

Benjamin Franklin, in his autobiography, acknowledged that he became a deist after reading some of the Boyle lectures.

Cambridge) crisply asserts that Dr. Clarke's philosophy was not of his own invention, "it is generally no other than Sir Isaac Newton's philosophy: tho' frequently applied by Dr. Clarke, with great sagacity, and to excellent purposes, upon many occasions."[3] Thus, as can be seen even from such initial references as these, the work of Clarke is one that sought an integration and balance between the emerging physics of the day and theology. Rom Harré broadly states the intellectual milieu of this period, of which Clarke is a clear example:

> . . . in Britain in the eighteenth century discussions on the nature and limitations of knowledge should be seen as balanced between the poles of natural science and theology - knowledge of the world and knowledge of God. The improvement of the former had always to be reconciled with the possibility of the latter. Every discussion of the epistemology of natural science from this period must be understood against the presumption that its author was almost certainly scrutinizing his own reasoning for its theological consequences in the knowledge that so too was every one of his readers.[4]

If Hume is understood as starting a "Newtonian Revolution"[5] that called all certainties into doubt and produced one consistent attitude, namely "that of the perfect secular mind,"[6] he is a "modern pagan"[7]

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[3]William Whiston, Historical Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Dr. Samuel Clarke, Including certain Memoirs of Several of his Friends. The Third Edition (London: Printed for John Whiston, 1748), p. 122.
Voltaire writes, "Newton, being entirely averse to all controversy, and a very great economist of his time, permitted Dr. Clarke, his disciple in philosophy, and at least his equal in metaphysics to enter the lists for him" (Voltaire, Elements of Newton's Philosophy I.1 Works, translated (Dublin, 1772), Vol. XVI, p. 77). Whiston's comment is a bit inflated to imply that Newton did the thinking and Clarke simply took notes.

[4]Rom Harré, "Knowledge," in The Ferment of Knowledge: Studies in the Historiography of Eighteenth-century Science, eds. G.S. Rousseau and Roy Porter (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), p. 15.

[5]Mossner, The Life of David Hume, p. 77.

[6]Stuart Hampshire, "Hume's Place in Philosophy," in David Hume: A Symposium, ed. D.F. Pears (London: Macmillan, 1966), p. 9.

[7]Gay, The Enlightenment, p. 552.

and poles apart from Sir Isaac Newton himself. Or, put another way, Clarke is Hume's heretic. The metaphysics of Clarke are the antithesis of Hume's, and they flower in their contrary moral theories. Physics, philosophy and theology make up an interwoven fabric of the century. Voltaire claimed in the 1730s, "I have not seen a Newtonian who was not a theist in the strictest sense of the word. . . . all of Newton's philosophy necessarily leads to an awareness of a supreme Being, who has created everything, arranged everything freely."[8] Clarke was a first generation Newtonian, and theologized Newtonian physics to the extent of being "heartily assisted"[9] by Newton himself, yet without becoming his puppet. He had risen to high esteem in ecclesiastical, academic, and court circles and could have taken much higher church office had it not been for his Trinitarian controversies.[10]

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[8]Voltaire, Elements of Newton's Philosophy, in OEuvres XXII, p. 403-4. The quotation is taken from Gay, The Enlightenment, p. 142.

[9]Whiston, Memoirs of Clarke, p. 101. Whiston says this in particular reference to the Leibniz - Clarke correspondence, and elsewhere gives further examples of Clarke and Newton co-mingling theological ideas, e.g. pp. 104,122-124. Also, Princess Caroline assured Leibniz that Clarke's letters were not written "without the advice of the Chevalier Newton" (Princess Caroline to Leibniz, 30 Dec. 1715; quoted from Westfall, Never at Rest, p. 779).

[10]Voltaire, who had a very high regard for Clarke, tells a story (Œuvres, 1785, LV, p. 96) of how Gibson, Bishop of London, prevented Clarke's elevation to the See of Canterbury by telling Princess Caroline that Clarke was the most learned and honest man in her dominions, but had one defect - he was not a Christian. Also Bishop Hoadly (Works, I:xiv) notes that it was not any want of merit, interest, or favor of some who were in power that Clarke did not rise higher in the church. "But he had reasons within his own breast, which hindered him either from seeking after, or accepting any such promotion." After Clarke's trial by Convocation he refused any office or position that would require him to consent to the Thirty-nine Articles, i.e. the Nicene Creed.

I.2 Clarke's Works and State of Scholarship

Clarke was highly versed in Newtonian physics, despite the fact that the Cartesian mechanical philosophy was the established philosophy at Cambridge, and that his eminent tutor, Mr. John Ellis (later Sir John Ellis, being knighted along with Isaac Newton) "was a zealot"[11] for the Cartesian position. Having gone up to Caius College, Cambridge in 1691, he took his first degree by public exercise in the schools upon a question taken from the Principia; his performance "surprized the whole audience, both for the accuracy of knowledge, and clearness of expression"[12] because few, even of the learned, were able to cope with the matter of the Principia. After his Degree he became a Fellow of Caius College and set about translating into 'pure Latin' the best expositor of Descartes, namely Rohault in his Traité de physique. Clarke not only translated Rohault but he filled it with such extensive Newtonian annotations that it effectively constituted the first Newtonian textbook.[13] It became the standard text used at Cambridge for more than thirty years, going to four editions and a translation into English.[14] Later Newton asked Clarke to translate his Optics

[11]Bishop Hoadly's 'Preface' in The Works of Samuel Clarke, D.D. Late Rector of St. James's Westminister. In Four Volumes (London: John and Paul Knapton) 1738, I:i. Hereafter cited as Works; spellings are usually modified, initial capital letters and most italics are reduced, except where indicated.

[12]Ibid.

[13]Jacobi Rohaulti Physica; latine vertit, recensuit et uberioribus iam Annotationibus, ex illustrissimi Isaaci Newtoni Philosophia maximam partem haustis, amplificavit et ornavit S. Clarke, S. T. P. 1697. Later editions were in 1702, 1710, and 1718. Each edition contains an increase of material incorporating Newton's viewpoint.

[14]Rohault's System of Natural Philosophy, Illustrated with Dr. Samuel Clarke's Notes taken mostly out of Sr. Isaac Newton's Philosophy. With Additions. Translated by John Clarke, D.D. Dean of Sarum. (London: James and John Knapton). Two Volumes. Second edition, 1729. John Clarke is Samuel's brother.

into Latin. It was published in 1706,[15] and he received £500 for his pains: £100 for each of his five children.[16] But Clarke is found to be Newton's theological spokesman most assertively in a correspondence occasioned by a famous challenge from Leibniz in a letter to Princess Caroline.

> Natural religion itself, seems to decay (in England) very much. Many will have human souls to be material: others make God himself a corporeal being . . . Sir Isaac Newton says, that space is an organ, which God makes use of to perceive things by . . . Sir Isaac Newton, and his followers, also have a very odd opinion concerning the work of God. According to their doctrine, God Almighty wants to wind up his watch from time to time: otherwise it would cease to move. He had not, it seems, sufficient foresight to make a perpetual motion.[17]

This would not mildly provoke Newton who, in a correspondence with young Richard Bentley, expressed something of the light in which he developed his philosophy.

> When I wrote my treatise about our System I had an eye upon such principles as might work with considering men for the belief of a Deity and nothing can rejoice me more then to find it useful for that purpose.[18]

Newton, careful 'politician' that he was, would not directly respond to Leibniz on theological matters and consequently Clarke became the adept

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[15]Optica, sive de Reflexionibus, Refractionibus, Inflexionibus, et Coloribus Lucis Libri III, Latine reddidit Samuel Clarke, A.M. Accedunt Tractatus II ejusdem Authoris de Speciebus et Magnitudine Figurarum Curvilinearum. 1706. Second edition in 1719 was without the mathematical treatises but the Queries are extended from 22 to 31.

[16]Whiston, Memoirs of Clarke, p. 13.

[17]The Leibniz-Clarke Correspondence, ed. H.G. Alexander (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1978), p. 11.

[18]Newton to Bentley, 10 Dec. 1692; The Correspondence of Isaac Newton, ed. H.W. Turnbull, J.F. Scott, A.R. Hall, and Laura Filling. Vol. 3 (Cambridge, 19), p. 233.

respondent to Leibniz's charges.[19] The exchange went to five letters each, finally terminated by Leibniz's death. Perhaps the most central issue is that of the divine governance of the universe. Leibniz could not ignore Query 28 of the Optics and the theological consequence Newton drew from his concept of infinite (absolute) space, namely that space is the sensorium of God. Contrary to Leibniz, Newton and similarly Clarke,

> saw this concept as the perfect antidote to atheism since it entailed the active participation of God in every phenomenon of nature . . .[20]

Thus Clarke, like other popularizers of Newtonian explanation,[21] drew

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[19]See Princess Caroline to Leibniz, 15 Nov. 1715 (Werke von Leibniz, ed. Klopp, 11:53) for the query about the theology of Clarke that provoked Leibniz's initial challenge. On the Leibniz-Clarke correspondence and the general issue of the philosophical differences between Newton and Leibniz, see Ernst Cassirer, "Newton and Leibniz," Philosophical Review, 52 (1943), 336-91; F.E.L. Priestley, "The Clarke-Leibniz Controversy," in Methodological Heritage, eds. Butts and Davis, pp. 34-56; Margula R. Perl, "Physics and Metaphysics in Newton, Leibniz, and Clarke," Journal of the History of Ideas, 30 (1969), 507-26; and I. Bernard Cohen, "Newton and Keplerian Inertia: An Echo of Newton's Controversy with Leibniz," Science, Medicine and Society in the Renaissance, ed. Allen Debus (New York, 1972) 2 vols., 2:199-211.

[20]Richard S. Westfall, Never at Rest: A Biography of Isaac Newton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), p. 653. This point is drawn out by Clarke in his discussion of miracles, wherein he states that there is no such thing as 'the course of Nature,' because it is God who directs inanimate matter, not chance.

[21]See G. Bowles, "The place of Newtonian explanation in popular thought, 1687-1727," D.Phil. Thesis, University of Oxford, 1977, p. 4. Bowles argues that it was not the practicing scientists who effectively popularized Newton's system, but that it was effected by Richard Bentley, Samuel Clarke, and William Whiston, whose interests were primarily theological and philosophical. Frank E. Manuel says, "Works by Craig, Whiston, George Cheyne, Derham, the lectures of Bentley and Clarke, advertised the superiority of Newton's system of the world as a religious apology above all other forms of gloria," in The Religion of Isaac Newton (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1974), p. 35.

out a proof of the existence of God from the fact of gravity.[22] Newtonian explanation also figured in Clarke's argument for the immortality and immateriality of the soul, and it may be the source of his unorthodox view that the immaterial soul has extension.[23] In short, this general overview shows, in effect, Clarke's acknowledged debt to the ideas of the new science.

Although Clarke's close relation to Newton and the influence on him of the latter's ideas are obvious from the above, this comes as a contrast with the so-called "historiographic orthodoxy."[24] That is to say, it contrasts with the view that British thought about the problem

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[22]A gravitational proof of the existence of God was especially popular among those who delivered Boyle's Lecture Sermon's (London, 1739). Bentley, who was among Clarke's circle of Cambridge friends, calls the power of gravitation "a new and invincible argument for the being of God; being a direct and positive proof, that an immaterial living mind doth inform and actuate the dead matter, and support the frame of the world" (Ibid., I:71). Brampton Gurdon moves from a gravitational proof to the moral world and analogously inquires about its Governour (Ibid., III:320, 349-56); Thomas Burnett makes the same analogy (Ibid., II:72-74). William Whiston also delivered a Boyle lecture (Ibid., II:259-348) but in his Astronomical Principles of Religion, Natural and Revealed (1717) he gives the most exhaustive treatment found on this topic. In Whiston's Sir Isaac Newton's Corollaries From His Philosophy and Chronology, In His Own Words (London, 1729), he cites the obvious prompting taken up by these popularizers of Newtonian physics (and later used by Hume for his antithetical result, see Mossner, The Life of David Hume, pp. 73-74), and (p.10) quotes Newton's Optics: "If natural philosophy in all its parts, by pursuing the method, shall at length be perfected, the bounds of moral philosophy will be also enlarged. For so far as we can know by natural philosophy what is the first cause, what power he has over us, and what benefits we receive from him, so far our duty towards him, as well as that towards one another, will appear to us by the light of nature." Such proliferation of Newtonian explanation in the Boyle lectures adds to the notion that Newton may have participated in the selection of those men who delivered the lectures. See also Margaret C. Jacob, "The Church, Newton, and the Founding of the Boyle Lectureship," in The Newtonians and the English Revolution 1689-1720 (Ithaca, N.Y., 1976), pp. 143-61. See Michael Macklem, The Anatomy of the World: Relations between Natural and Moral Law from Donne to Pope (Minneapolis, 1958), Appendix for numerous adherents of 'moral gravitation.'

[23]Works III:799. Cf. the Scholastic view that mind has place but does not occupy space.

[24]Harré, "Knowledge," p. 13.

of knowledge is properly taken to be a progressive refinement of the principle that 'nothing is in the mind which is not first in the senses,' motivated by a purely internal demand for progressive philosophical analysis. Clarke must be interpreted and understood in light of Newton (Descartes, and Leibniz), and not merely in reference to Locke's empiricism. In fact, material will be given that reveals Clarke to be in sharp contrast with Mr. Locke.

Indeed, even Locke himself rejected the philosophical rationalism of Descartes, while remaining a firm theological rationalist.[25] Clarke, on comparison, is a theological rationalist like Locke, but gives more place to 'abstract ideas,' innate dispositions, and has more in common with the philosophical rationalism of Descartes then he preferred to admit. He does not however follow Descartes' methodological doubt, but rather builds up from what is taken to be self-evident.

I.2.i The Major Works of Clarke

Clarke's Boyle lectures admirably aim at the ideal set by Robert Boyle, i.e. "to prove the truth of the Christian religion against notorious infidels."[26] His first course of eight lectures, delivered in St. Paul's Cathedral, present an argument to prove the existence of

[25]I.e. John Locke, An Essay Concerning Human Understanding, edited by P.H. Nidditch (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1975), 4.19.4: "Reason is natural revelation, whereby the eternal Father of light, and Fountain of all knowledge communicates to mankind that portion of truth which he has laid within the reach of their natural faculties. Revelation is natural reason enlarged by a new set of discoveries communicated by God immediately, which reason vouches the truth of by the testimony and proof it gives that they come from God. So that he that takes away reason to make way for revelation, puts out the light of both; and does much-what the same as if he would persuade a man to put out his eyes, the better to receive the remote light of an invisible star by a telescope."

[26]Quoted by Richard Bentley, A Defense of Natural and Revealed Religion: Being a Collection of the Sermons Preached at the Lectures founded by the Honorable Robert Boyle, Esq.; (From the Year 1691 to the Year 1732). In Three Volumes (London, 1739), I:Preface.

God: A Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God. More particularly in Answer to Mr. Hobbes, Spinoza and their Followers. Wherein the Notion of Liberty is stated, and the Possibility and Certainty of it proved, in Opposition to Necessity and Fate. Being the substance of eight Sermons, Preached in the Cathedral - Church of St. Paul, in the Year 1704, at the Lecture founded by the Honourable Robert Boyle, Esq., first published in 1704. The single method which continues throughout the entire work is "as near to mathematical, as the nature of such a discourse would allow,"[27] which entails starting with what is self-evident and drawing out further propositions with occasional additions from recent discoveries in natural philosophy. The argument is essentially an a priori cosmological argument, but the ontological and teleological arguments, and an argument from the nature of space and time, are also employed. Like almost all Clarke's writings, the Demonstration gave rise to a lively and extended controversy where sides were clearly drawn and strongly contested. Clarke was even chided by his good friend Whiston, who, like most theists of his day, preferred the teleological argument. Whiston recounts how he flatly confronted Clarke one day in the garden of St. Peter's in Cambridge, telling him that the most "contemptible weed in my garden contained better arguments for the being and attributes of God than all his metaphysics."[28] Clarke tactfully agreed, but alleged that since such philosophers as Hobbes and Spinoza had made use of such rational subtleties against religion, he thought it proper that the way of reasoning might be made

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[27]Works, II:517.

[28]Whiston, Memoirs of Clarke, p. 7.

better use of on the side of religion.[29]

I.2.ii The Argument of the Demonstration

The argument of the Demonstration includes the heart of Clarke's moral theory as he argues for the necessary moral perfection of God. It consists of twelve propositions with arguments in support of them, i.e. the 'mathematical method.' The first three propositions together and their arguments constitute the first part of his cosmological argument. They are designed to establish the existence of a necessary being. The concepts and theses essential to the reasoning in this part are developed in three steps. First, he endeavours to establish that there never was a time when nothing existed; the key issue involved in this is the principle of sufficient reason. Second, Clarke tries to establish that there exists an independent being, a being that has the reason for its existence within its own nature. And third, he argues that there is an independent, necessary being, meaning that there exists a logically necessary being, a being whose non-existence is logically impossible. He maintains that there must be a reason why a thing exists rather than not exist. If the reason why a thing exists does not lie in the causal efficacy of some other being, then the reason must lie within the thing itself. The clearest statement of

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[29]Likely the most clever contempt for Clarke's rationalism is by Timothy Constant who presented a rather lengthy 'argument,' using (supposedly) the same method as Clarke to prove that women have no souls, and "upon this account I call him [Clarke] the author of this ingenious and learned work." This was published as S. Clarke, "An Essay to Prove Women Have No Souls," Bodleian Library, G.P.839.5, no date. This pamphlet also reflects the popular interest that Clarke generated and also the assumed non-negotiable, that all persons have souls, intended in the Cartesian sense. James Downey, The Eighteenth Century Pulpit (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1969) writes that the century was "an age when the sermon trade was flourishing" (p. 58). Clarke's influence on the populace was further advanced by the place given his sermons in the study of divinity students: ". . . the sermons of Tillotson, Atterbury, Clarke and others were held up to students as the finest models of lucid reasoning and writing" (pp. 9-10).

this principle occurs in Clarke's reply to a critic.

> Of everything that is, there is a reason which now does, or once or always did, determine the existence rather than the non-existence of that thing. Of that which derives not its being from any other thing, this reason or ground of existence, (whether we can attain to any idea of it, or no) must lie in the thing itself.[30]

The second part of the Demonstration, namely, Propositions IV to XII and their arguments, are designed to establish that the 'necessarily-existent Being' is incomprehensible in its essence, employing the assumption of the substratum view of substance (Proposition IV). Yet this Being is such that some of its attributes can be demonstrated (V); is endowed with liberty and choice (IX); is omnipotent (X); and is infinitely good (XII). Thus the second part is designed to show that the necessary being has the properties of the God of traditional theism.

It is also relevant to add two secondary features found in the 'Introduction' to the Demonstration which balance (somewhat) Clarke's rational, mathematical argument with a more broad reflection that encompasses human existential concerns. First, the Demonstration is written to the 'speculative atheist,' and is not intended to be cogent for the two other types of atheists, i.e. the "extremely ignorant and stupid" who have not yet arrived at the use of the natural faculties, and those who through "habitual debauchery" mock and scoff at religion without good reason.[31] Those who have not developed their natural faculties, and those who renounce their use in dealing with the question of the existence of God are not the audience to whom the Discourse

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[30]Clarke, Demonstration, 9th ed. (London, 1738), p. 489. Cf. Works II:524, "Whatever exists, has a cause, a reason, a ground of its existence; (a foundation, on which its existence relies; a ground or reason why it doth exist, rather than not exist;) either in the necessity of its own nature, and then it must have been of itself eternal: or in the will of some other being . . ."

[31]Works II:521-522.

is written. The 'speculative atheist' is the person who believes that reason more favourably[32] tends to the disproof of the existence of God.

The second observation from the 'Introduction' that tempers any flat caricature of Clarke as an extreme rationalist, is that he actually begins arguing for the existence of God from consideration of human existential concerns. Human desires, wishes and hopes, even on the part of the atheist, point towards rather than away from the existence of God. The basic point is that even if God cannot be proven to exist, the speculative atheist still must concede that the existence of a benevolent God "'tis a thing very desirable, and which any wise man would wish to be true, for the great benefit and happiness of men."[33] A world with purpose, hope and liberty is existentially preferable to a world of fate, chance and determinism. Such a motive is deemed more than sufficient to warrant consideration of the formal argument that is then proposed.

It did not take long for the Demonstration to stir up controversy, finding a rather hostile reception in England but a glowing acceptance by certain Continental thinkers, especially in France. In a 1705 pamphlet, William Caroll took issue with Clarke on two counts. In his Remarks upon Mr. Clarke's Sermons, Preached at St. Paul's against

[32]Clarke is found to employ various 'probability' phrases in the Demonstration, i.e. Works II:521, on whether speculative reason is "more strong and conclusive" for or against the being and attributes of God. Thus pure mathematical proofs may be shown Q.E.D., but Clarke has a more modest appraisal of his own argument. He says that it sets out "to demonstrate the certainty and the being of God, and to deduce in order the necessary attributes of his nature, so far as by our finite reason we are enabled to discover and apprehend them" (Works II:524. Emphasis added). 'Finite reason' entails recognition of 'divine reason' for Clarke, and is discussed in Chapter IV of this work. Cf. Aquinas, Summa Theologica 1ae 2ae, 97.1 ad 1.

[33]Works II:522. His emphasis.

Hobbes, Spinoza and other Atheists,[34] Caroll argues that (1) as Clarke adopts the theory of substance as an unknown substratum, he is unable to show that matter is not the divine substance. Hence Clarke's argument must confirm rather than refute Spinoza's hypothesis.[35] Also, (2) Clarke's view of the metaphysics of absolute space and time as ideas of attributes which must necessarily inhere in a substance are said rather to establish Spinoza's position even further. Such a metaphysic that regards eternity and immensity as attributes of a necessary Being is using equivocal terms which a modern atheist can employ in his own sense. A final criticism[36] is (3) that if Caroll has understood Clarke correctly[37] on the relation of the goodness of God to moral fitnesses, then God is a necessary agent whose will is determined by something outside itself. On such a moral theory God is reduced to views that lead to atheism, by making God subject to "an uncontrollable necessity of fate."[38]

These three basic criticisms of the Demonstration are repeated by more formidable opponents. The criticism of the substratum theory is taken up in detail by Anthony Collins in his debate with Clarke over

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[34]For the longer title, see the bibliography. Cf. James P. Ferguson, The Philosophy of Dr. Samuel Clarke and Its Critics (New York: Vantage Press, 1974), pp. 29-31.

[35]Clarke replies to this charge in the Preface to the Discourse. This is discussed in Chapter IV.

[36]William Caroll, The Scepticism and Fundamental Errors established in Samuel Clarke's Sermons preached at St. Paul's, more fully discovered. (London, 1706).

[37]Cf. Chapter III which shows that Caroll has not correctly understood Clarke on the 'fitness of things'.

[38]Caroll, The Scepticism in Clarke's Sermons, p. 19. Taken from Ferguson, The Philosophy of Clarke, p. 30.

the substance of the soul.[39] The ideas of Collins, in turn, are famously developed by David Hume.[40] Joseph Butler doubted Clarke on the theological interpretation of absolute space and time,[41] as did Berkeley,[42] and Butler also questions Clarke on the topic of self-existence.[43] Numerous theologians and miscellaneous writers joined the fray on these controversial issues.[44]

On the Continent, the Demonstration was well received, sometimes

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[39]This is discussed in Chapter II.

[40]Cf. John P. Wright, The Sceptical Realism of David Hume (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1983), p. 185, note 59: "Hume's ideas bear a strong resemblance to those of Collins . . . Collins may also have influenced some other details in Hume's philosophy, e.g. his analysis of personal identity."

[41]Butler's letter is printed in Clarke's Works II:744, and replied to on the following page.

[42]Berkeley's dissent from Clarke on this point is inferential as he does not directly name Clarke. In his Principles he says, "It is certain that not a few divines, as well as philosophers of great note, have, from the difficulty they found in conceiving either limits or annihilation of space, concluded it must be divine" (The Works of George Berkeley, edited by A.A. Luce and T.E. Jessop (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd, 1949), II:94.). Although the rejection of such a doctrine likely has Clarke and Newton in mind (cf., Ferguson The Philosophy of Clarke, p. 31), another important passage in the Dialogues evinces a view that would be quite agreeable to Clarke, namely, where Philonous sums up his argument about sensible objects: "Whence I conclude, not that they have no real existence, but that seeing they depend not on my thought, and have an existence distinct from being perceived by me, there must be some other mind wherein they exist. As sure therefore as the sensible world really exists, so sure is there an infinite omnipresent spirit who contains and supports it" (Works of Berkeley II:212). Cf. Robert Oakes, "Does Traditional Theism Entail Pantheism?" American Philosophical Quarterly 20 (1983):105-112.

[43]Cf. Butler's letters and replies in Clarke's Works II:737-749.

[44]See the scholarly work by John W. Yolton, Thinking Matter: Materialism in Eighteenth-Century Britain (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983). Also see the more general survey in Ferguson, The Philosophy of Clarke, pp. 55-90.

with glowing adulation. Jean-Jacques Rousseau nearly idolized Clarke, proclaiming that after all the philosophers, ancient and modern,[45]

> . . . the illustrious Clarke illuminated the world, announcing at last the Being of beings and the dispenser of things:[+] with what universal admiration, with what unanimous applause was this new system not received,[4] so great, so comforting, so sublime, so suited to elevate the soul, to give a basis for virtue, and at the same time to striking, so luminous, so simple, and it seems to me, offering less things incomprehensible to the human mind than it finds absurd in any other system! . . . Must not this one alone, which explains everything, be preferred when it has no more difficulties than the others?[±]
>
> [+]the illustrious Clarke announcing first to the world the true theism or natural religion.
>
> [±]for last sentence: Only Clarke's system crushes all others; therefore it must be preferred by reason.
>
> [4]'He's right about Clarke's (sic) 1st volume; the second is ridiculous, as is the subject' (Voltaire, [Marginalia] p. 276).

Such admiration of Clarke by Rousseau was not to be overlooked by the latter's orthodox réfutateur, Sylvestre Bergier, who mocked: "So since not all peoples perceive natural revelation we had to wait, did we, 6,000 years for Clarke?"[46]

Voltaire also had rather grudging admiration for the English divine, commenting that Clarke "is so totally absorbed in problems and calculations that he is a mere reasoning machine . . ."[47] And in reference to Clarke's two Boyle lecture series he says,

> He wrote a book, which is very much esteemed and little understood, on the 'Existence of God'; and another, more intelligible, indeed, but pretty much condemned, on the 'Truth of the Christian Religion.'[48]

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[45]The following quotation is found in the Œuvres complètes de Jean-Jacques Rousseau, edited by Bernard Gagnebin and Marcel Raymond, vols. I-IV (Paris, 1959-70), IV:570.

[46]Sylvester Bergier, Le Déisme réfuté par lui-même, ou examen, en forme des lettres, des principes d'incrédulité repandus dans les divers ouvrages de J.-J. Rousseau, new edition (Besançon: Imprimerie de Outhenin-Chalandre Fils, 1842), p. 38.

[47]Voltaire, "Anti-Trinitarians," in his Works 39:220.

[48]Ibid. The condemnation that Voltaire has in mind here is the deist's reply to the theists on miracles and divine intervention.

It is evident that Voltaire thought extremely little of Clarke's arguments aimed at the deists (e.g. in the Discourse) where he sought to erect a structure of revealed religion atop the foundations of natural religion. On this point Rousseau agreed with Voltaire, but chose rather to pass over his hero's second volume in benign silence, while presenting his own case against revealed religion.[49]

The warm welcome of Clarke in France is further seen in Jean Le Clerc's[50] extensive abstract of Clarke's major works, which overflows with praise and exhorts that "we must translate"[51] these major works. Le Clerc writes, in particular reference to Clarke's controversy with Dodwell:

> . . . I entirely approve the Learned Dr. Clarke's Treatises and Reasonings against him [Dodwell], since this now can do no injury to his adversary. This excellent author, by a thorough Study of Mathematicks and sound Philosophy, being accustomed to think justly on every Subject, and to range his thoughts in a good Order and Method, has propos'd all he had to say on those important Heads, with Abundance of Clearness and Perspicuity, with an uncommon Force and Strength of Reasoning, and in such Order and Method, that every where carries its own Light and Conviction along with it; so that one may affirm it next to impossible, for any Person to read what he has wrote, of the Truth and necessity of Religion, whether Natural or Reveal'd, without being fully convinc'd thereof; provided he give the necessary attention the Importance of the Subject requires . . . [not] to be blinded by such Prejudices and passions as are contrary to right Reason. And we may see hereby and perceive, that true Philosophy is of great Use and Service to

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[49]Rousseau, "Profession de foi," p. 168: "The greatest ideas of deity come to us from reason alone. Look at the spectacle of nature, listen to the inner voice. Has not God said everything to our eyes, to our conscience, to our judgement? What more will men say to us? Their revelations only serve to degrade God . . ."

[50][Jean] Le Clerc, An Abstract and Judgement of Dr. Clarke's (Rector of St. James's) Polemical or Controversial Writings, Against I. The Atheists. II. The Deists. III. His Controversy with Mr. Dodwell and Mr. Collins, about the Spirituality and Natural Immortality of Humane Souls. Together with his several Answers, Defenses, and Replies to Mr. Collins. IV. And Lastly, His Opinion and Judgement of the Dr's last Famous Book, concerning the Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity. Translated from the French, of the 3d Article of 2d Part of the 26th tome of his Bibl. Choisie. Under Ten Heads, or Sections. (London, Printed for W. Taylor, 1713).

[51]Ibid., p. 6.

> Religion, in order to establish its Truth and Certainty, as a false one may be hurtful and prejudicial to it. 'Tis such sort of Books that do the chief Honour to the Dignity of humane Reason, and its great Author, and glorious Source and Fountain, by employing its Light in the Search and Discovery of the most momentous and important Truths, and such as both our Duty and our present and future Happiness are most nearly and deeply concern'd, and interested in.[52]

Le Clerc's comments, other than that quoted above, are rather sparse, but always positive with an occasional bit of constructive addition to Clarke's arguments. His abstract is detailed and clearly conveyed the views of Clarke to French readers.

Finally, concerning the Continental influence of Clarke, mention should be made of Diderot, a thinker who eventually abandoned his deism. In his "The Letter on the Blind for the Use of Those who See," the hero criticizes the teleological argument in Humean fashion and dies crying "O thou God of Clarke and Newton, have mercy on me!"[53] Thus, in Clarke's own times the Demonstration sparked off lively and extensive discussion among philosophers, theologians, and lay persons as well.[54] It was generally given rough treatment in England, but found generous acceptance in France.

Outside Clarke's generation, scholarship on his cosmological argument continues to receive both harsh criticism and glowing praise.

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[52]Ibid., pp. 4-5.

[53]Diderot, Early Philosophical Works, pp. 108-114.

[54]The wealth of secondary literature on Clarke in the early eighteenth century is clear evidence of this, which is in sharp contrast with, i.e. works on Hume in his own period. Cf. D.C. Yalden-Thomson, "Recent Work on Hume (A Survey of Hume literature 1969-1979)," American Philosophical Quarterly 20(1983):1-22. He points out that between 1869-79 there were only forty to fifty publications about Hume, from 1919-29 about the same number, and from 1969-79 there were over one thousand items, as well as the formation of a Hume Society, and a journal (Hume Studies). Whereas Hume may rightly be said to be 'at home' in this century, Clarke was certainly at home in the eighteenth century.

Leslie Stephen, in his English Thought in the Eighteenth Century, spells out one of his general impressions:

> The English mind, for some reason, is generally averse to the 'high a priori road,' and moves awkwardly and timorously when forced to take it.[55]

From this perspective he eventually offers his particular assessment.

> Samuel Clarke was a man of sufficient intellectual vigour to justify a very high reputation, and his faults were those which are less obvious to the eyes of contemporaries than of posterity . . . [which reduces] his name to a humble position in the list of eminent defenders of the faith.[56]

James P. Ferguson, having published the only extensive research on Clarke (to my knowledge) in the twentieth century[57] - the only works specifically concerned with Clarke apart from several dissertations[58] - is like-minded with Stephen. He is personally convinced that the dispute occasioned over Clarke's a priori argument,

> may be taken to end with the refutation of Clarke's arguments by David Hume, both in the Treatise and in the Dialogues concerning

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[55]Leslie Stephen, English Thought, I:32.

[56]Ibid., II:119.

[57]Ferguson, The Philosophy of Dr. Samuel Clarke; and An Eighteenth Century Heretic: Dr. Samuel Clarke (Kineton: The Roundwood Press 1976). There is however a German work by Theo. Kutze, Die Metaphysik des Samuel Clarke, 1929.

[58]Robert Zimmermann, Samuel Clarke's Leben un Lehre. Ein Beitrag Zur Geschichte des Rationalismus in England (Wien, 1870); James Edward LeRossignol, The Ethical Philosophy of Samuel Clarke, (Leipzig, 1892); and G.Y. von Leroy, Die philosophischen Probleme im Briefwechsel zwischen Leibniz und Clarke (Mainz, 1893). There are three Anglo-American dissertations: Martha B. Lucas, "Samuel Clarke and His Contemporaries," Ph.D. Thesis, University of London, 1940; William M. Longsworth, "Religious Beliefs and Moral Judgements: Some Patterns of Relations Derived from an Analysis of Samuel Clarke," Ph.D. Thesis, Yale University, 1977; and D.S. McGuffie, "The Concept of Reason in Taylor, Cudworth and Clarke," D.Phil. Thesis, University of Oxford, 1979.

> Natural Religion; but by the time the latter work was published, Clarke's theories had passed into history.[59]

Such stark assessments of Clarke's ideas may describe the nebulous 'major consensus' of subsequent (or more likely, twentieth century) philosophers, but they are overstatements.[60] Clarke's arguments still receive serious reflection and vigorous treatment by modern philosophers. For example, the contemporary philosopher William L. Rowe writes:

> My own belief is that the most sophisticated and fully developed form of the [cosmological] argument is the eighteenth-century version developed by Samuel Clarke in the first series of his Boyle lectures delivered in 1704. These lectures . . . constitute, I believe, the most complete, forceful, and cogent presentation of the Cosmological Argument we possess.[61]

Richard Swinburne pointedly comments that "In my view the two most persuasive and interesting versions of the cosmological argument are that given by Leibniz . . . and that given by his contemporary, Samuel

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[59]Ferguson, The Philosophy of Clarke, p. 27. J.L. Mackie draws the more reasonable 'historical line', not at Hume, but with Richard Price and Thomas Reid, in his Hume's Moral Theory (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1980), p. vii.

[60]Peter Gay in The Enlightenment, p. 550 assesses Stephen on this point; "The classic study of the English deists is Leslie Stephen's great English Thought in the Eighteenth Century. Stephen, however, underestimated both the deists' philosophical acumen and their influence; moreover, his distinction between critical and constructive deism, which has received almost universal acceptance, separates the very modes of thinking which, conjoined, gave the deists their strength." See also Roland N. Stromberg, Religious Liberalism in Eighteenth Century England (1954); Ernest C. Mossner, Bishop Butler and the Age of Reason: A Study in the History of Thought (New York: Macmillan, 1936); Arthur O. Lovejoy, "The Parallel of Deism and Classicism," Essays in the History of Ideas pp. 78-98, and Norman L. Torrey, Voltaire and the English Deists (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1930).

[61]William L. Rowe, The Cosmological Argument (London: Princeton University Press, 1975), p. 8. Rowe finds the logician George Boole, The Laws of Thought (1854), p. 187, to wholeheartedly agree that the arguments of the Demonstration "are almost always specimens of correct logic, and they exhibit a subtlety of apprehension and a force of reasoning which have seldom been equalled, never perhaps surpassed." This then is a 19th century example that shows Ferguson to be overstating the historical 'death of Clarke.'

Clarke . . . "[62]

After the controversial success of Clarke's Demonstration, being directed to atheists of a 'considering' nature, he was invited to offer a second series of lectures.[63] He continued his argument, directing A Discourse Concerning the Unchangeable Obligations of Natural Religion, and the Truth and Certainty of the Christian Revelation[64] to those deists[65] who would hold to their own principles and thereby be led to accept Christian revelation.

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[62]Richard Swinburne, The Existence of God, (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1979), p. 119. Cf. R. Luecke, "God and Contingency in the Philosophies of Locke, Clarke and Leibniz," Ph.D. Thesis, University of Chicago, 1955.

[63]The conditions of the Boyle Trust allowed a lecturer to be appointed for a period of up to three years. None were appointed for the full period, some were allotted two years, but the majority of the twenty-two lecturers confined their series to one year.

[64]The Discourse was delivered in 1705 and first published in London in 1706. The two courses of Boyle lectures were then published together as: A Discourse concerning the Being and Attributes of God, the Obligations of Natural Religion, and the Truth and Certainty of the Christian Revelation. In Answer to Mr. Hobbes, Spinoza, the Author of the Oracles of Reason, and other Deniers of Natural and Revealed Religion. Being sixteen Sermons, preached in the Cathedral-Church of St. Paul, in the Years 1704, and 1705, at the Lecture founded by the Honourable Robert Boyle, Esq. The work reached a wide public and by 1750 had gone to a tenth edition, in addition to which the separate edition of the compiled sermons preached at the Lecture were published in 1739. In the fourth edition (1716) the correspondence with Joseph Butler (his first appearance in print) was added to the Discourse as Several Letters to the Reverend Dr. Clarke, from a Gentleman in Gloucestershire, relating to the First Volume of the foregoing Sermons; with the Dr.'s answers thereunto. In the sixth edition (1725) there was also added A Discourse concerning the Connexion of the Prophecies in the Old Testament, and the Application of them to Christ, and The Answer to a seventh Letter, concerning the Argument a priori.

[65]Clarke, in Works II:600-608, is taken to offer the most definitive classification of the types of deism then present, as noted by E.C. Mossner, "Deism," The Encyclopedia of Philosophy, Vol. 1-2 (1967). Mossner says, "The following summary of the leading deists [in Britain] will testify to the general truth of Clarke's subtle distinctions . . ." (p. 327).

I.2.iii The Discourse and Deism

The Demonstration is important in understanding Clarke's moral theory, because the existence of a morally perfect Governor of the universe is the ultimate foundation of morality. The Discourse adds significantly not only to our understanding of Clarke's moral theory, but to our understanding of his moral theology. It must be noted that 'the unalterable obligations of natural religion' are topped by the obligation of obedience, imitation, and worship of God, and that the Discourse itself is not essentially a moral treatise, but an argument aimed at the 'true deist.' What is altogether overlooked in Clarkean scholarship is an interpretation of his moral theory which integrates what was harmonious in Clarke's mind, namely a philosophical refutation of Hobbes and Spinoza, by means of a theory that was not ammunition for the deists.

That Clarke puts forward such a theory is seen in the 'Introduction' of the Discourse[66] where he identifies four types of deists, all of which he argues against.[67] In this classic definition of various types of deists, the relation of morals and theology is crucial. The first type of deist affirms the existence of an eternal creator God, but one who is removed and unconcerned[68] about

[66]Works II:600-608.

[67]Thus it would seem unnecessary to state that Clarke was not a deist, but Leslie Stephen calls him such on the basis that a theist must hold to the mysteriousness of the faith, and others, e.g. Ronald Grimsley, speak of Rousseau's "great admiration for the English deist, Samuel Clarke" in The Philosophy of Rousseau (London: Oxford University Press, 1973), p. 14. That the eighteenth century French deists scowled at Clarke's Discourse, and that he argued for the orthodox position against the English deists of his day is sufficient evidence for calling Clarke a theist.

[68]Cf. Plato, Laws X, 885 b6, where Plato speaks of the three causes of impiety: (1) disbelief in the existence of gods; (2) belief that they exist but do not concern themselves with mankind; (3) belief that by entreaties and sacrifices the gods may be prevailed on to overlook crime.

the government and care of the world.[69] The second type believes in the providence of God, but only so far as to sustain "every natural thing that is done in the world."[70] They do not allow that God is morally concerned to expect obedience from his creatures. The third type acknowledges the moral role and concern of God towards men in the present life, but "having a prejudice against the notion of the immortality of human souls, they believe that men perish entirely at death" and hence there is no future "equity or proportion in the distributions of rewards and punishments . . ."[71] Clarke argues that these three types of deists all reduce to "absolute atheism" upon the consistent application of their own principles.[72] This leaves the fourth type of deist, the "true deists,"[73] e.g. "Socrates and Tully."[74] A true deist acknowledges a future life and the other doctrines of natural religion, but professes to believe only what is "discoverable by the Light of Nature alone; without believing any Divine Revelation."[75] The relation of reason and revelation, then, for Clarke, found in the Discourse, is simultaneously the relation of morals (both the epistemology and ontology of morals) and revelation. This topic is discussed in Chapter IV, as is the second aspect of Clarke's overall theory of morals.

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[69]Works II:600-601.

[70]Works II:602. His emphasis.

[71]Works II:604. His emphasis.

[72]Works II:600, 603, 604. This type of an argument may have prompted Joseph Butler's similar, expanded argument of The Analogy of Religion.

[73]Works II:605.

[74]Works II:606.

[75]Works II:605.

I.2.iv The Outline and Historical Place of the Discourse

As no apologetic goal was too lofty for Clarke, he assumes the truth of the Demonstration and erects a superstructure.

> Having in a former discourse [Boyle Lecutre, 1704] endeavoured to lay firmly the first foundations of religion, in the certainty of the existence and of the attributes of God . . . It remains now, in order to complete my design of proving and establishing the truth and excellency of the whole superstructure of our most holy religion . . . that I proceed at this time, by a continuation of the same method of arguing . . .[76]

The 'same method' is the geometrical method which comes in the form of fifteen propositions with their supporting argumentation. Clarke argues that every rational being has direct knowledge of moral obligation, arising from "the eternal and necessary differences of things"[77] which is antecedent, both logically and psychologically, to the express will and command of God (Proposition I and II), and antecedent to any reward or punishment (III). In that vice often flourishes in this present world, there is a future state of existence of the same persons wherein there is an exact distribution of rewards and punishments (IV). Although right reason can deduce the great moral obligations of natural religion, the present state of corruption in the world makes the greater part of mankind morally unable (averse) to discover these things 'clearly and plainly for themselves' (V). Hence there is a need for divine revelation (VI and VII), and only the Christian religion has all the marks and proofs of being divine revelation (VIII and IX).[78] Its

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[76]Works II:595-596.

[77]Works II:608.

[78]Cf. R.M. Burns, The Great Debate on Miracles: From Joseph Glanvill to David Hume (London: Associated University Presses, 1981). Burns casts Clarke as "The most influential example of extreme evidentialism" (p. 99), as one who believed that miracles are proof of the reality of revelation (p. 100), without any consideration of context (p. 102). But, it seems to me, when Clarke's sermon rhetoric is distinguished from his argument, and when the unity of the two Boyle lectures is understood, he does not so easily fit Burns' assessment.

practical duties, being most agreeable to our natural notions of God and the well-being of man, are 'a great evidence of a religion coming from God.' Its duties are also consonant with the dictates of reason, for revelation is coherent (XI, XII and XIII). These rational evidences are positively confirmed by fulfilled prophecy and miracles as found in the testimony of the apostles (XIV and XV).

The moral theory of Samuel Clarke is invariably described with reference to the post-Hutcheson question of 'What is his moral epistemology?'. The title normally given to the view of Clarke, derived from analysis of Propositions I-III of the Discourse, is some form of intuitionism.[79] This is the view that normal human beings have an immediate awareness of moral values, and the school in which Clarke is a member argues that it is a person's reason or understanding which forms moral judgements. Within the easily accessable nationalistic boundaries, the "classical exponents in British philosophy"[80] of rational intuitionism are Cudworth, Clarke, Wollaston, Balguy, and Price. Among these writers, Stephen points to Clarke as "the most conspicuous leader,"[81] and James Martineau remarks that "Price advances no positive doctrine and no body of argument which is not already found in

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[79]Various qualifying terms are used of Clarke's intuitionism, e.g. philosophical intuitionism, ethical intuitionism, second-order ethical intuitionism, rational intuitionism, or, simply, rationalism. This basic label of intuitionism will be adopted here for pragmatic purposes of reference, but it will be evaluated more fully in Chapter III. Thus far, however, I have distinguished Clarke's view per moral theology (rationalism) and here per epistemology (intuitionism).

[80]W.D. Hudson, Ethical Intuitionism (London: Macmillan, 1970), p. 1.

[81]Leslie Stephen, History of English Thought in the Eighteenth Century, 2 vols., 2nd. ed. (London: Smith, Elder, & Co., 1881), II:4.

Cudworth and Clarke."[82] What must be said in Price's favour, however, even if the views of Stephen and Martineau are valid, is that his work "is the fullest exposition of the theory which it advocates."[83]

This grouping of writers agree that reason or the understanding is the 'faculty' by which one knows moral obligation. They are readily distinguished therefore from the 'moral sense school' of intuitionism of Shaftesbury and Hutcheson who hold that awareness of morality can only be conceived satisfactorily on the analogy of sense-perception, closely akin to the awareness of pleasure and pain.[84] Henry Sidgwick, in his masterly work The Methods of Ethics, adds further clarification to Clarke's historical position and calls out three types of ethical intuitionism. Intuitionism, in the narrower sense of a method in which rightness of some kinds of action is held to be known without consideration of ulterior consequences and not to be confused with the wider

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[82]James Martineau, Types of Ethical Theory (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1901), p. 476. Price does claim, in his introduction to the Review, that he is going to treat many of the questions of morality and virtue "in a manner different from that in which they have been hitherto treated" (Review, p. 11). Raphael accepts this claim as justified, at least in regard to the objective content of the moral consciousness (Review, p. x). W.D. Hudson, Reason and Right (London: Macmillan, 1970), p. 84 also adopts Raphael's view.

[83]Stephen, English Thought, II:3. It should also be noted that Price himself expressed his indebtedness to Butler as well as Clarke. See Richard Price, Observations on the Importance of the American Revolution, and the Means of Making it a Benefit to the World (Dublin, 1785), pp. 61-62; also quoted in A.S. Cua, Reason and Virtue: A Study in the Ethics of Richard Price (New York: Ohio University Press, 1966), p. 5.

[84]The moral sense school argued from an analogy with sense-perception, and the rationalists argued from analogy with geometry or mathematics. I will suggest an alternative interpretation of Clarke (if not one that undercuts both views), one that argues from self-knowledge of personal identity. Immediate knowledge of one's perfect identity through time (i.e. 'I know that I am me') is subsequently taken to be the source of 'congruence' or '=' employed in the analogy with geometry, and alternatively in the all important concept of 'fitness' and 'moral fitness'.

'first impression' sense of intuition, may be (1) perceptional, (2) dogmatic, or (3) philosophical. The perceptional type holds that it is always the rightness of some particular action that is held to be immediately known. The dogmatic version is that the general rules of common sense are accepted as axiomatic. The philosophical view attempts to find a deeper explanation for the current rules. Sidgwick finds Clarke to be more philosophical than the later common sense school of Thomas Reid, and before Clarke, those moralists like Cudworth,

> contented themselves with simply reaffirming the absoluteness of morality, [but] the more thoughtful felt ... they must penetrate beyond the dogmas of common sense to some more irrefragable certainty. And so, while Cumberland found this deeper basis in the notion of 'the common good of all rationals' as an ultimate end, Clarke sought to exhibit the more fundamental of the received rules as axioms of perfect self-evidence, necessarily forced upon the mind in contemplating human beings and their relations. Clarke's results, however, were not found satisfactory: and by degrees the attempt to exhibit morality as a body of scientific truth fell into discredit, and the disposition to dwell on the emotional side of the moral consciousness became prevalent.[85]

Sidgwick himself was not unaffected by Clarke, "who shows more earnestness in the effort to penetrate to the really self-evident principles"[86] than any other. In a brief history of the development of his own thought, Sidgwick recounts how

> in spite of my early aversion to Intuitional Ethics, derived from the study of Whewell, and in spite of my attitude of discipleship to Mill, I was forced to recognize the need of a fundamental ethical intuition.[87]

And after coming under the influence of Butler who was vehement in condemnation of pure utilitarianism,

> I had myself become, as I had to admit to myself, an Intuitionist to a certain extent. For the supreme rule of aiming at the general happiness, as I had come to see, must rest on a fundamental

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[85]Henry Sidgwick, The Methods of Ethics (London: Macmillan) reprint of seventh edition 1922, pp. 103-104.

[86]Ibid., p. 384.

[87]Ibid., p. xvi.

> moral intuition, if I was to recognize it as binding at all. And in reading the writings of the earlier English Intuitionists, More and Clarke, I found the axiom I required for my Utilitarianism [that a rational agent is bound to aim at universal happiness], in one form or another, holding a prominent place.[88]

In spite of the immediate intellectual flurry occasioned by the rationalism of Clarke[89] (and the work of the Cambridge Platonists), among intellectuals as well as the British public at large, full-length treatment of Clarke's thought is nearly non-existent. There are several excellent works on Richard Price, a disciple and developer of Clarke's theory, and on the other side of the fence, work on Hume has become prolific. Thus, those influenced both positively and negatively by Clarke are given careful study today, but it is work largely dissected from one of its motivating forces. The scholarly appraisal of W.D. Ross is still true, namely that Clarke is not a "sufficiently regarded"[90] moral philosopher. A brief sketch of contemporary research on Clarke bears this out.

I.2.v State of Scholarship on the Discourse (Proposition I and II)

Outside the eighteenth century, Clarke's works are in virtual hibernation until late in the following century. It has already been noted that Sidgwick's Methods of Ethics (1874) is indebted in degree to Clarke, but even there less than a handful of (five) pages are devoted

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[88]Ibid., p. xix. Cf. Hastings Rashdall, The Theory of Good and Evil, Vol. I-II, (London: Oxford University Press, 1924). Rashdall offers six objections to philosophical intuitionism, yet is "driven to accept . . . in the last resort" an appeal to the intuition or judgement of value of universal well-being, only it is related to ends and not to acts (pp. 91-96).

[89]Cf. D.D Raphael, The Moral Sense, and Ferguson, The Philosophy of Clarke, pp. 166-242.

[90]W.D. Ross, Foundations of Ethics (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1963), p. 52.

to analysis of Clarke. Stephen's English Thought in the Eighteenth Century (1876) does devote significant place to Clarke and his influence within the century. He calls him "a vigorous gladiator . . . enjoying the reputation of a great master of philosophic thought,"[91] and finds Clarke's system of ethics the most intellectually rigorous of his times. In comparison with Butler and Reid, Clarke is distinguished in finding the ontological ground of moral axioms via intuitions of pure reason; Butler is expressive of morality discovered by divining the purposes of the Creator; and Reid merely consults common sense and conscience.[92]

Besides Sidgwick and Stephen, there is a work in 1892 devoted specifically to the moral theory of Clarke. James E. LeRossignol, in his inauguration dissertation at the University of Leipzig, summarized the state of Clarkean scholarship at that time.

> To say that Clarke has been in general misunderstood by writers on ethical subjects, would be to assert too much; but it is not too much to say that a complete account of his ethical system is not to be found in any History of Ethics; nor do I know that a monograph of the subject has yet appeared.[93]

In this ninety-seven page work, LeRossignol begins to identify and analyze Clarke's involved theory, but he fails to consider Clarke's philosophy of mind, which is the foundation of his metaphysics of morals.

There are four later works which are devoted in part to an analy-

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[91]Stephen, English Thought I:86. Particular analysis of Clarke is found in I:119-34; II:2-4, 5-12, 338-40, 351. There are other numerous references to Clarke within the debates of the century; I:86, 110, 135, 137, 204, 217, 280-86, 313-14, 317, 384, 405, 409, 420 and II:15, 45, 47, 62, 87, 89-90, 107, 152, 191, 280, 330, 335, 341, 344, 348, 353, 384, 424, 429. These page numbers are given for sake of easier reference than the section divisions given in Stephen's index.

[92]Ibid., I:87.

[93]LeRossignol, The Ethical Philosophy of Samuel Clarke, Preface.

sis of Clarke's moral theory. The most important work has already been mentioned, namely, the unpublished section of Raphael's 1940 Oxford dissertation. Further interaction with this is left for appropriate places in Chapter III. A second work is by Arthur N. Prior, in Logic and the Basis of Ethics (1949). He assesses Clarke's moral axioms in terms of the 'Naturalistic Fallacy'; being a case of "the tendency to fall into fallacious modes of reasoning."[94] Thus,

> Ethical rationalism - the belief that the mind may perceive real and distinctive ethical qualities in actions (Cudworth), or real and distinctive ethical relations between acts and situations (Clarke), or between elements in our personality (Butler) - fell into considerable disrepute in the middle of the eighteenth century, precisely through its entanglement with this new form of the illusion that ethical conclusions may be drawn from 'natural' premisses. Its weakness here was most clearly exposed . . . by the new 'sentimental' school in which the leading figures were Hutcheson and Hume. The arguments of these men were directed against Clarke more than anyone else.[95]

Thirdly, W.D. Hudson's carefully worked Ethical Intuitionism approaches Clarke, Shaftesbury, Hutcheson, Cudworth, Balguy, Price, and Butler as the "classical exponents in British philosophy"[96] of ethical intuitionism. His purpose, however, is not to attempt "an exhaustive exposition of the moral philosophy of the writers named, but simply a general critical introduction to eighteenth-century ethical intuitionism," a topic "not of merely antiquarian philosophical interest" but rather one which finds "scholarly champions in our own day."[97]

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[94]Arthur N. Prior, Logic and the Basis of Ethics (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, Reprinted 1975), p. 26.

[95]Ibid. p. 30. Prior does not argue for his unsympathetic interpretation of Clarke, which amounts to little more than two sentences (pp. 28-29) in the chapter "The Autonomy of Ethics: (2) Clarke to Reid."

[96]W.D. Hudson, Ethical Intuitionism, p. 1.

[97]Ibid., p. 3. Cf. Hudson, A Century of Moral Philosophy, where he assesses intuitionism and utilitarianism to be the two principal options in moral philosophy at the beginning and now at the end of the century (pp. 1, 170).

A fourth work which gives place to serious consideration of Clarke is J.L. Mackie's, Hume's Moral Theory. Mackie, in strong sympathy with the Hobbes-Hume tradition, finds the moral philosophy of Clarke to be "as complete and uncompromising a statement of moral objectivism as one could possibly desire."[98] Not surprisingly then, upon analysis he concludes that "Clarke's arguments are disappointing,"[99] and fervently adds,

> Clarke and writers like him - and they are still to be found today - will get away with their unsubstantiated rhetoric unless they are challenged, and challenged repeatedly.[100]

Mackie formulates particular criticisms of Clarke's rational intuitionism which will afford significant material for subsequent consideration of Clarke's proposals.

The only books devoted in full to a treatment of Clarke are the two historical works by Ferguson, already mentioned. They provide a wealth of information about Clarke and his critics. Ferguson is concerned to show the historical flow of ideas wherein "every position that Clarke had advocated was considered, discussed and controverted."[101] He is certainly correct to say that essential notions of Clarke's philosophy were disputed and denied, but to say that 'every position' of Clarke was refuted is an overstatement. If Clarke were only understood as an apologist for essential doctrines of traditional Christian theism and natural theology, then peculiar items of his philosophy may be outdated (i.e. his gravitational proof of God) but

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[98]Mackie, Hume's Moral Theory, p. 16.

[99]Ibid., p. 17. Mackie's arguments via Hume and against Clarke will be incorporated in Chapter II and III.

[100]Ibid., p. 18.

[101]Ferguson, Philosophy of Clarke, p. 9.

certainly not 'every position' he held (i.e. the immateriality and immortality of the soul, moral knowledge, knowledge of God from his effects, defence of miracles and divine revelation). It would be more accurate to describe the viewpoint for which Clarke was arguing as having been swallowed up in the rise of modern secularism. Some modern theologians may cry with Nietzsche that 'God is dead and we have killed him,' but there is certainly a significant foothold still maintained which seeks to defend the same essentials as Clarke, even by similar argumentation.[102] Thus, in contrast with what Ferguson holds about him, Clarke is found to be an apologist for the faith as well as a moral thinker, who certainly is "almost entirely neglected."[103]

I.2.vi Letter to Dodwell and its Defenses

Henry Dodwell[104] (1641-1711) was a scholar and theologian who was appointed, "without any solicitation on his part, Camden professor or praelector of history at Oxford"[105] in 1688. He did have some very unusual ideas[106] and published a work in 1706 that was important if

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[102]I.e., Richard Swinburne would defend dualism, consider himself a foundationalist, and offers a cosmological argument for God. H.D. Lewis has written some of the most uncompromising arguments for the elusive self, and is also an ethical intuitionist. To say that every position advocated by Clarke was 'controverted' would entail that Christian theism is demonstrably false, which is rather presumptuous.

[103]Ferguson, Philosophy of Clarke, p. 10.

[104]This is Henry Dodwell, the elder; not to be confused with his fourth son, Henry Dodwell, the younger (d. 1784). The son was a deist and wrote the important pamphlet, Christianity not founded on Argument (1742).

[105]Dictionary of National Biography, edited by Leslie Stephen (London: Smith, Elder, & Co, 1888) Vol. XV:179. He was a non-juror (until the last years of his life) which deprived him of his professorship in 1691 when he refused to take the oath of allegiance to William and Mary.

[106]Hoadly puts the point gently in referring to Dodwell's "usual perplexity of learning." Works I:v.

only because of his high reputation. Its title summarizes his argument: An Epistolary Discourse proving from the Scriptures and the First Fathers, that the soul is a principle naturally mortal, but immortalized actually by the pleasure of God, to punishment or reward, by its union with the divine baptismal Spirit: Wherein is proved, that none have the power of giving this divine immortalizing Spirit, since the Apostles, but only the Bishops.

Clarke replies to Dodwell in A Letter to Mr. Dodwell; wherein all the Arguments in his Epistolary Discourse against the Immortality of the Soul are particularly answered, and the Judgement of the Fathers concerning that Matter truly represented (1706). There are two parts to Clarke's argument, one philosophical and the other from the tradition of the early church Fathers. The philosophical arguments are aimed to prove the natural immortality and immateriality of the soul, a view that clearly distinguishes Clarke from Locke[107] and is linked with ideas of geometry and mathematics:

> We have the Ideas of a Square, a Circle, and Equality; and yet, perhaps, shall never be able to find a Circle equal to a Square, and certainly know that it is so. We have the Ideas of Matter and Thinking, but possibly shall never be able to know, whether any more material Being thinks, or no; it being impossible for us, by the contemplation of our own Ideas, without revelation, to discover, whether Omnipotency has not given to some Systems of Matter fitly disposed, a power to perceive and think, or else joined and fixed to Matter so disposed, a thinking immaterial Substance: It being, in respect of our Notions, not much more remote from our Comprehension to conceive, that GOD can, if he pleases, superadd to Matter a Faculty of Thinking, than that he should superadd to it another Substance, with a Faculty of Thinking;[108]

A notable deist friend of Locke, Anthony Collins, came into the contro-

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[107]Clarke is agreed with The Bishop of Worcester (Edward Stillingfleet) who debated Locke at length (the three publications amounted to about two-thirds of that of the Essay) on the issue of whetheher matter could possibly have the faculty of thinking. Locke's rejoinders were published in 1697-9 under the titles A Letter to the Right Rev. Edward Ld. Bishop of Worcester . . . ; Mr. Locke's Reply . . .

[108]See Locke, Essay 4.3.6.

versy and took much further the philosophical dispute as to what could plausibly be said about the immateriality of the soul, as well as the liberty of human actions. Collins made three Replies and Clarke published four Defenses which were published separately (two Defenses were published in 1707 and two more in 1708), and then together with a few additions.[109] The complete debate by correspondence went to a sixth edition which appeared in 1731.

John W. Yolton notes the historical importance of the Clarke-Collins correspondence, saying that "Locke's brief pronouncement" (about the possible relation of immateriality and immortality),

> was magnified and carried forward in the debates of the first half of the eighteenth century. Samuel Clarke and Anthony Collins, the friend and follower of Locke, carried on the most extended exchange of tracts on this subject: Clarke maintained against Dodwell that matter is utterly incapable of thought, while Collins sought to show that it was possible for matter to think, and that the immortality of the soul did not depend upon its immateriality.[110]

Although this work by Clarke is nearly unknown today,[111] it is the most refined defence of his view of substance and it puts forward his most basic, foundational epistemological concepts. Hence to overlook this correspondence is rather like overlooking Locke's Essay and attempting to interpret him from other works. In terms of the workings of Clarke's own mind, Bishop Hoadly writes that these topics were ones

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[109]The addition by Clarke is Some Reflections on that part of a Book called Amyntor, or the Defense of Milton's Life, which relates to the Writings of the Primitive Fathers and the Canon of the New Testament (which was a reply to John Toland's Amyntor: Or, a Defense of Milton's Life, (1699)), and the addition of Collins' A Letter to the Learned Mr. Henry Dodwell.

[110]John W. Yolton, John Locke and the Way of Ideas (London: Oxford University Press, 1956), p. 164. This point is now developed in Yolton's Thinking Matter.

[111]A notable exception is Robin Attfield in his God and the Secular and The Ethics of Environmental Concern (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1983).

"on which he spent so many of his thoughts, as upon one of his favorite-points."[112] Two similarly overlooked, but less prominent works, add to the content of the Clarke-Collins correspondence; Letters to Dr. Clarke concerning Liberty and Necessity; from a Gentleman of the University of Cambridge [R. Bulkeley]; with the Doctor's Answers to them (1717),[113] and Remarks upon a Book, entitled, A Philosophical Enquiry concerning Human Liberty (1717), a book written by Anthony Collins.

Finally, of importance to Clarke's moral theory, is his most well-known work, The Leibniz-Clarke Correspondence.[114] This "most frequently cited of all eighteenth-century philosophical controversies"[115] is the classic discussion of absolute versus relative space and time. But for Clarke and Leibniz it is 'natural religion' which is at stake. The welding of science, metaphysics and theology is inextricable, and if only as an example of how Clarke thinks, it would show that Clarke's moral theory is not likely to be separated from his theology. In point of fact, however, numerous issues of direct bearing on his epistemology, moral theory, and natural theology are debated, i.e. the 'sensorium of God,' the principle of sufficient reason, the principle of the identity of indiscernibles, space and time as real or as 'ideal things,' the providence of God, divine intervention, and the concepts of motives, human actions, liberty, and moral necessity. The

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[112] Works I:v.

[113] This was translated into French by J. Bulkeley in 1720.

[114] This is the title it is now published under, edited by H.G. Alexander (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1978). It was originally published as, A Collection of Papers Which passed between the late Learned Mr. Leibnitz, and Dr. Clarke, In the Years 1715 and 1716. Relating to the Principles of Natural Philosophy and Religion. With an Appendix (London, 1717).

[115] Alexander, The Leibniz-Clarke Correspondence, p. vii.

correspondence itself was prompted by Leibniz's warning in a letter to Caroline, Princess of Wales that "natural religion itself, seems to decay [in England] very much,"[116] because of the philosophical and theological implications of Newton's work. Hence in this work studied most by philosophers of science, is found

> the finishing stroke to a subject, which must ever be the foundation of morality in man; and is the sole ground of the accountableness of intelligent creatures for all their actions.[117]

I.3 Some Influences upon Clarke's Thought

Whiston recalls an early conversation with Clarke where Clarke told him the only recorded incident of his childhood.

> It was this: one of his parents asked him when he was very young, whether God could do everything? He answered, Yes. He was asked again, whether God could do one particular thing, could [He] tell a lie? He answered, No. And he understood the question to suppose that this was the only thing that God could not do: nor durst he say, so young was he then, he thought there was any thing else which God could not do: while yet he well remembered, he had even then a clear conviction in his own mind, that there was one other thing which God could not do, viz. that he could not annihilate that space which was in the room wherein they were. Which impossibility now appears even in Sir Isaac Newton's own philosophy.[118]

This incident is illuminating as evidence of that pre-occupation with God and space which are characteristic of Clarke's writings.

Clarke went up to Cambridge in 1690 and was admitted in Gonville

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[116] Works IV:587.

[117] Works I:ix. The English critics of Clarke on the subject of space have already been mentioned; against Clarke were Joseph Clarke, Isaac Watts and Edmund Law; in his defence were John Clarke and John Jackson, Voltaire's exposition Eléments de la Philosophie de Newton (1741) "contributed very considerably to the spread of Newtonian doctrines on the Continent," in which "He frequently cites the correspondence and, in each case, sides with Clarke against Leibniz" (From Alexander, The Leibniz-Clarke Correspondence, p. xlii).

[118] Whiston, Memoirs of Clarke, pp. 15-16.

and Caius College, being allotted to Mr. Ellis as his student.[119] Clarke was, like the majority of undergraduates of that time, intending to be ordained. There are only two documents[120] which give any details of the course of study which such an undergraduate would have followed. The course of studies, according to Newton's memorandum, comes under three disciplines: classics, philosophy, and mathematics. Classics includes Latin and Greek; philosophy includes logic, ethics, geography, chronology, physics, the elements, minerals, vegetables and animals, as well as anatomy. Mathematics is taken to include Euclid, spherics, the projections of the sphere, the construction of maps, trigonometry, astronomy, optics, music, and algebra.[121] Daniel Waterland's Advice divides studies into the three classses of philosophy, classics and divinity. There is an addition made to Newton's list, namely that theology includes the study of sermons, amongst which those of Archbishop Tillotson occupy a prominent place, to which Clarke's own Boyle lectures of 1704 and 1705 were eventually to be added. We may assume then that Clarke's studies as an undergraduate would be in the three fields of classics, philosophy and theology. This is confirmed in the statement by Sykes in his Eulogium, that after going to College "Dr. Clarke excelled in natural philosophy, in mathematics, in divinity, in critique [Greek and Latin], as if he had made but one of them

[119]We have already noted that the highly esteemed Mr. Ellis was a friend of Newton, but also that he was fervently in favour of Cartesian mechanical theory.

[120]One of these is a memorandum prepared by Sir Isaac Newton probably written about the end of the seventeenth century on the studies, teaching and discipline of undergraduates. The other is by Daniel Waterland, Advice to a Young Student. With a Method of Study for the First Four Years (probably done between the period 1704 to 1713), which can be found in his Works, ed. Van Mildert, Second edition (Oxford, 1843) Vol. IV.

[121]This listing is taken from Ferguson, Heretic, p. 4.

his sole study."[122]

The method of examination at Caius offered itself as early training which would later show itself in the tone of the Boyle lectures. Examination was "an extension of the practice of disputations; the candidates in Caius sat in the chapel for three days, being examined by scholars on the first day and by the Dean and fellows on the second and third."[123] Clarke took the B.A. degree in 1695 being placed twelfth Wrangler, and was appointed a Junior Fellow of his College in 1696 which he held until 1700.

I.3.i Newton

Clarke and Whiston were both avowedly disciples of Newton, but Clarke had favoured status and, evidently, access to Newton. Whiston fell into a grave situation when two friends of his were planning to propose Whiston, "an heretick,"[124] for membership in the Royal Society. Newton found out about these plans and "closeted some of the members, in order to get clear of me; and told them, that if I was chosen a member, he would not be President."[125] Whiston, not daring to cross purposes with Newton - "the most fearful, cautious, and suspicious temper, that I ever knew"[126] - and evidently not bold enough to speak to Newton himself, writes:

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[122]Whiston, Memoirs of Clarke; Appendix: I. Dr. Sykes's Elogium of Dr. Clarke, p. 1.

[123]John Venn, Caius College [London, 1901], p. 201. The quotation is taken from Westfall, Never at Rest, p. 101, n. 95.

[124]Whiston, Memoirs of Whiston, p. 293.

[125]Ibid.

[126]Ibid., p. 294.

> I told his bosom friend, Dr. Clarke, that had I known his mind, I would have done nothing that might bring that great man's grey hairs with sorrow to the grave . . . "[127]

Just when Clarke came into such favoured status with Newton is conjectural, but it likely began while Clarke was a student at Caius. Although Clarke was tutored by Mr. Ellis of Caius, he studied Newtonian physics in such detail that during his examination for the B.A. degree he adeptly defended Newtonian rather than Cartesian physics. He may have simply studied the Principia on his own, but it seems likely that he would have dared a conversation with Newton at nearby Trinity College. Mr. Ellis did send other students to Mr. Newton.[128] It would seem even more certain that Newton would have worked with Clarke in some degree while Clarke added his footnotes to the translation of Rohault. The editions having additional footnotes may reflect further discussion with Newton on the faults of Cartesian mechanics. Also, the almost immediate reception of Clarke's translation of Rohault by the University would not be trivial 'politics' for Newton to tamper with. The first bit of (less nebulous, inferential) data is that Newton, obviously pleased with Clarke's treatment of Rohault and having threatened that no one ought to attempt a Latin translation of the Optics, asked Clarke to translate the Optics, which he did in 1706. There can be little doubt that the cautious Newton would keep a close eye on this translation long before it went to any printer.

The extent of Newtonian influence upon Clarke's philosophical and theological concerns is obvious in places, but Clarke was not merely a Newtonian mouthpiece. In subsequent chapters the independence of

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[127]Ibid., p. 293.

[128]Westfall, Never at Rest, p. 210, n. 94. Henry Wharton, admitted to Caius in 1680 and pupil of John Ellis, recounts that he gained considerable skill in mathematics "amongst a select Company in his [Newton's] own private Chamber."

Clarke from Newton will be clarified, but here, more needs to be said of Newtonian influences.

Clarke's close friend Whiston, perhaps jealous of the 'bosom' relation that he did not have with Newton, overstates the case that Clarke's philosophy "was generally no other than Sir Isaac Newton's philosophy."[129] Bishop Hoadly, in a letter to Lady Sundon, writes of Clarke's antagonism to Berkeley's philosophy, evincing that Clarke considered himself to be contributing, and not Newton's puppet, in the concerted enterprise. Hoadly states that it was from books of the character that Berkeley wrote

> that Dr. Clarke used to dread and foretell the total subversion of all knowledge as well as of all religion; of all that Sir Isaac Newton, Mr. Locke, he himself, and many others, had been endeavouring to bring into some reputation.[130]

The interplay of physics and theology in the Newton-Clarke philosophy is involved. Their theory of perception is a prime example. Newton and Clarke adopted the theory of perception that was current in scientific circles; the division of qualities into primary and secondary, the view that what we directly perceive are images conveyed to the soul through the organs of sense,[131] and not the actual material substances themselves.[132] In Query 28 of the Optics Newton exposes his famous position where the theological implication of this is addressed.

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[129]Whiston, Memoirs of Clarke, p. 122.

[130]Works of Benjamin Hoadly, (London, 1773) Vol. I, p. li. Clarke's 'dread' may be seen as a prophecy fulfilled in the works of Hume.

[131]I.e. see Works, II:544-45; Leibniz-Clarke Correspondence, I.3; III.11; IV.29,30; V.83-88, 89-91. Notably, Clarke does not adopt the empiricist's analogy available to him, between 'color' and goodness.

[132]Berkeley was the exception to the generally received view of the scientists and most of the philosophers of the time.

> Whence is it that nature does nothing in vain; and whence arises all that order and beauty which we see in the world? . . . does it not appear from the phenomena that there is a Being incorporeal, living, intelligent, omnipresent, who in infinite space, as it were in his sensory [tanquam sensorio suo],[133] sees the things themselves intimately, and thoroughly perceives them, and comprehends them wholly by their immediate presence to himself: of which things the images only carried through the organs of sense into our little sensoriums, are there seen and beheld by that which in us perceives and thinks.[134]

This is the 'corrected' version of Query 28 that the cautious Newton rephrased from what he initially sent to the printer. A copy of the uncorrected version, however, evidently found its way into Leibniz's hand. It reads:

> Is not space the sensorium of a Being [Annon Spatium Universum, Sensorium est Entis] incorporeal, living, and intelligent, who sees the things themselves intimately . . .[135]

An extensive discussion of this new Query between David Gregory and Newton on 21 December 1705 further clarifies the theological conception of space held by Newton. Gregory recorded the interpretation of this passage in a memorandum.

> His doubt was whether he should put the last Quaere thus. What the space that is empty of body is filled with. The plain truth is, that he believes God to be omnipresent in the literal sense; and that as we are sensible of objects when their images are brought home within the brain, so God must be sensible of every thing, being intimately present with every thing: for he supposes that as God is present in space where there is no body, he is present in space where a body is also present. But if this way of proposing this his notion be too bold, he thinks of doing it thus. What cause did the ancients assign of gravity. He believes that they reckoned God the cause of it, nothing els [sic] that is no body being the cause; since every body is heavy.[136]

Newton obviously saw this concept of the sensorium as the perfect

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[133]See Alexander Koyre and I. Bernard Cohen, "The Case of the Missing Tanquam," Isis, 52(1961), pp. 555-66.

[134]Newton's Optics, Query 28, quoted from extract in Leibniz-Clarke Correspondence, pp. 173-74.

[135]See Koyre Isis 52(1961) and Westfall, Never at Rest, p. 647 for discussion of this point.

[136]Westfall, Never at Rest, p. 647.

antidote to atheism as it entailed the active participation of God in every phenomenon of nature. Likewise Clarke uses this concept in his argument for miracles, arguing that there is no such thing as 'the course of Nature' which directs things, but God who so directs inanimate matter.[137]

The relation of Newton and Clarke is not limited only to physics but also to more purely theological issues. The theological conclusion drawn from the nature of absolute space, i.e. the sensorium of God, has already been mentioned.[138] Clarke's other original argument for the existence of God, that from antecedent necessity, appears to have gained the approval of Newton although it is not possible to say whether Newton had any part in its origination. Dr. John Edwards remarked that it was thought that Sir Isaac Newton and Dr. Clarke had conferred together in the composition of Newton's General Scholium. To this Dr. Edwards adds, "it seems it was agreed upon, that Sir Isaac should appear in favour of those notions which Dr. Clarke had published."[139] There is sufficient similarity to be between the General Scholium and the Demonstration to substantiate this report. Ferguson believes the similarities are sufficient to render Edwards' statement "extremely plausible."[140] A specific example is found in the General Scholium (1713).

> It is allowed by all that the Supreme God exists necessarily; and by the same necessity he exists always and everywhere . . . We have ideas of his attributes, but what the real substance of any-

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[137]Works, II:697-98.

[138]Above, p. 7.

[139]Dr. John Edwards, Some brief Critical Remarks, Postscript (1714), p. 36. The quotation is taken from Ferguson, Philosophy of Clarke, p. 251.

[140]Ferguson, Philosophy of Clarke, p. 251.

> thing is we know not . . . Blind metaphysical necessity, which is certainly the same always and everywhere, could produce no variety of things. All that diversity of natural things which we find suited to different times and places could arise from nothing but the ideas and will of a Being necessarily existing.[141]

This very sympathetically compares with passages from Clarke's Demonstration (1704).

> Now this necessity being absolute itself, and not depending on any outward cause; 'tis evident it must be every where, as well as always, unalterably the same . . . Whatever therefore exists by an absolute necessity in its own nature, must needs be infinite as well as eternal.[142]

Also in the Demonstration[143] Clarke states that we have no idea of the substance of the necessarily existing Being, but nevertheless many of the attributes of his nature are strictly demonstrable. Clarke argues that the necessity that is absolute in itself is said to be single and uniform without any possible difference or variety. Ferguson nicely pieces this together:

> It is because there can be no diversity in absolute necessity that it can be the ground of the existence only of one infinite self-existent Being, but this very uniformity makes us seek to prove the intelligence, wisdom and goodness of the self-existent Being, by a posteriori methods. Hence we have to show that the original cause is known to be an intelligent Being from the "wonderful contrivance, and fitness of all things in the world, to their proper and respective ends," or as Newton puts it, "We know him only by his most wise and excellent contrivances of things, and final causes."[144]

There are also resemblances between Clarke and Newton's Arian views, which Dr. Edwards is keen to suggest. Newton writes of God who

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[141]Newton, General Scholium; reprinted 'Extracts from Newton's Principia,' in Leibniz-Clarke Correspondence, pp. 168-69.

[142]Works, II:540.

[143]Works, II:537-40.

[144]Ferguson, Philosophy of Clarke. pp. 251-52. The two quotations in this passage are from Works II:546 and Newton's General Scholium, respectively.

is Universal Ruler, which is also a favourite expression of Clarke who repeatedly speaks of God as Ruler over the natural as well as the moral world. Newton and Clarke use the same terminology, appeal to the same Scripture texts, and insist that the doctrine of the Trinity is unintelligible, contradictory and not what the earliest Fathers believed.[145] This shared Arianism of the bosom friend of Newton was clearly recognized by a famous visitor to England, Voltaire,[146] who writes,

> Newton, being entirely averse to all controversy, and a very great economist of his time, permitted Dr. Clarke, his disciple in philosophy, and at least his equal in metaphysics to enter the lists for him.[147]

Thus Clarke seems to be dominated by Newton in many and varied ways where there was an overlap of interest. Clarke is never found in disagreement with Newton, and Voltaire recalled of Clarke that

> this philosopher always pronounced the name of God with an air of contemplation and extreme respect. I acknowledged the impression this made on me; he told me that he had insensibly acquired this habit from Newton.[148]

I.3.ii Descartes

Clarke never cites Descartes approvingly. In Proposition VIII of the Demonstration, Descartes' mechanical theory of motion is rebuked :

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[145]Newton had become an Arian "well before 1675" (Westfall, Never at Rest, p. 315), and summarized his Arian christology in twelve points which appear to date from the period 1672-5 (Westfall lists them on pp. 315-16, which are found in Newton's Yahuda MS Var.1, 14, f. 25 in the Jewish National and University Library, Jerusalem). Clarke's work on the Trinity has yet to be compared with Newton's Yahuda MS. Ferguson, in Heretic makes no reference to this work of Newton.

[146]Voltaire was in England in 1726, a year before Newton's death and had several conversations with Clarke.

[147]Voltaire, Elements of Newton's Philosophy, Part I, Chapter 1. In Works, translated. (Dublin, 1772) XVI:77.

[148]Voltaire, Eléments de la philosophie de Newton, in Oeuvres XXII, p. 403. See Gay, The Enlightenment, pp. 316-17.

> that, whereas Descartes and others have endeavoured to give a possible account, (possible, did I say? Nay, indeed, a most impossible and ridiculous account,) how the world might be formed by the necessary laws of motion alone . . .[149]

And "that beasts are mere machines" cannot be the case because even those who so assert it "have yet never presumed to conjecture that men are so too."[150] In the Preface of the Discourse Clarke asserts that

> the Cartesian hypothesis . . . the best mathematicians in the world have demonstrated to be false . . . absolutely false.[151]

Clarke effectively summarizes his contentions with Descartes in answer to a letter from Joseph Butler (who expresses reservations about absolute space and time and its theological consequences) in April of 1713. Attempting to answer Butler's question as to why Clarke's proof of God from the nature of space and time has not been universally recognized, if it is as evident as Clarke claims, Clarke writes:

> . . . the true cause of why it has been seldom urged, is, I think, this; that the universal prevalency of Cartes's absurd notions (teaching that matter is necessarily infinite and necessarily eternal, and ascribing all things to mere mechanic laws of motion, exclusive of final causes, and of all will and intelligence and divine Providence from the government of the world) hath incredibly blinded the eyes of common reason, and prevented men from discerning him in whom they live, and move, and have their being . . . Something of the like kind has happened in the matter of transubstantiation, and, I think, in the scholastic notion of the Trinity, &c.[152]

Although Clarke openly repudiates the doctrines of Descartes, these

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[149]Works, II:546.

[150]Works, II:544.

[151]Works, II:581-82. Newton is footnoted as the particular one in mind.

[152]Joseph Butler The Works of Joseph Butler, In two Volumes (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1874), II:374-75.

criticisms are those of his physics and directly related issues.[153] As Leslie Stephen says, the spirit of Cartesianism "expresses itself in particular in the theology of the rationalizing school."[154] To this school of thought Clarke unmistakably belongs. By contrast with a partial Cartesian like Pascal, who could not accept the double-truth theory - "La nature confound les pyrrhoniens, et la raison confound les dogmatistes,"[155] Clarke, being much more Cartesian, held that "No article of the Christian faith is disagreeable to right reason."[156] Thus like Locke he proceeds to show the Reasonableness of Christianity (1695), and, being much in the same tempo as that of Toland when he wrote Christianity not Mysterious (1696), Clarke is sometimes labeled a deist. Stephen, for example, considers Clarke a deist because he seeks to remove all mystery from the faith.[157]

But Clarke is not only Cartesian in terms of a general rationalizing spirit. Some of his most basic notions are distinctively Cartesian as well as some of his arguments. For Clarke, like Descartes, there are three substances: God, minds, and matter. Not only is there agreement on this definitive viewpoint, but the view that one has immediate knowledge of one's self as a thinking being is also held in common. In Clarke's translation of Rohault, where critical footnotes can sometimes go to double columns with only one or two lines of

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[153]Clarke also wishes to reject Descartes' ontological argument also but develops one of his own. See Ferguson pp. 95-7, 115-19, 263-64.

[154]Stephen, English Thought, I:33.

[155]Blaise Pascal, Pensees, Second edition, Partie Art. I.

[156]Works, I:vi.

[157]Stephen, English Thought I:129, 172-173.

text,[158] no objection is found in Chapter II, "An Examination of the Notions that precede the Study of Natural Philosophy" where Rohault says,

> And because that which thinks, which is in us, which we know before all other things, which we imagine not to be extended, is what we call our soul or spirit, and that which we conceive to be extended in length, breadth, and height, and to which we imagine thought does not belong, is what we call our body; it is evident, that our soul or spirit is known to us sooner than our body.[159]

In Clarke's later work he does come somewhat to dissent on the exact nature of the immaterial soul, holding it to be immaterially extended,[160] but from his conviction about immediate knowledge of the unchanging, simple substance which is one's self, he never waivers.[161] Richard A. Watson asks the interesting question, where did Descartes get such an idea?

> The common sense source of Cartesian Dualism, is familiar to everyone. Each of us thinks of and experiences himself and others as a combination of a mind that thinks, understands, and wills, and has conceptual ideas, sensations, and passions, and of an extended body of a certain size and shape that moves about.[162]

But Watson adds, what might further be said of Clarke's 'Cartesianism,': "Descartes was concerned first of all to uphold Christian dogma

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[158] Rohault's System, translated by John Clarke, Second edition (London, 1729), e.g. I:85,88.

[159] Ibid., I:3. The last phase of this quotation is a point affirmed and developed by Clarke. See Chapter II.

[160] I.e., Works, III:794. This may be the 'little sensorium' of the person which corresponds to space as the sensorium (i.e. attribute) of God.

[161] Clarke obviously held this view when translating Rohault (1697), he argues strongly for it in the Letter to Dodwell and Defenses (1708), and also in Remarks upon Human Liberty (1717).

[162] Richard A. Watson, "What Moves the Mind: An Excursion in Cartesian Dualism," American Philosophical Quarterly 19(January, 1982):73.

. . . his ontology derives from dogmatic theology."[163] In line with Clarke's theological commitments on this issue he is ready to speak of the "errors"[164] of Mr. Locke, where Locke leaves open the possibility of matter thinking, a lead that the materialists and deists were quick to accept. Clarke is swift to spot this 'error,' one which Thomas Reid in latter Humean days, eventually came to identify as well.[165]

Clarke's conception of matter and mind as distinct, essentially different, substances is the same as Descartes's.[166] Whereas Descartes is most clearly an interactionist, both LeRossignol and Ferguson read Clarke to be an occasionalist. LeRossignol supports his view of Clarke as follows.

> Matter and mind are distinct from one another in all their properties. Therefore there can be no point of contact between them. How then does the body act upon the soul? Clarke gives the answer of the "Occasionalists." He says, - "the power by which matter acts upon the soul is not a real quality inhering in matter, as motion inheres in it, and as thinking inheres in the thinking substance; but 'tis only a power or occasion of exciting certain

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[163]Ibid., p. 86. Richard Rorty also agrees as to these two sources of dualism; see his Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1980), p. 44, n.13.

[164]Leibniz-Clarke Correspondence, p. 12.

[165]Reid was a committed Lockean (as to the substratum view of substance) but the application of the new science to the study of man brought out this biographical comment:

> . . . I never thought of calling in question the principles commonly received with regard to the human understanding, until the Treatise of human nature was published, in the year 1739. The ingenious author of that treatise, upon the principles of Locke, who was no sceptic, hath built a system of scepticism, which leaves no ground to believe any one thing rather than its contrary. His reasoning appeared to me to be just: there was therefore a necessity to call in question the principles upon which it was founded, or to admit the conclusion. Reid, Works I:95.

[166]Cf. Works, II:582. It is also the same view as Newton's (Optics, Queries 28, 31). "Newton was an atomist, and an admirer of the ancient atomists, but not with respect to the mind-body problem: here he followed Descartes, and the Platonic and Aristotelian immaterialist traditions." From Karl R. Popper and John C. Eccles, The Self and Its Brain (London: Springer International, 1977), p. 190.

> modes or sensations in another substance" (Letter to Dodwell, p. 219).[167]

To this quotation of Clarke LeRossignol adds that he finds it to be the

> explanation Clarke also applies to the Freedom of the Will. The mind acts from motives, but motives are not the causes of the action. A motive, or a judgement is a passive state of the soul; action is an active state. "Nothing that is passive can ever be the cause of anything that is active. An occasion, indeed, it may be, and action may be consequent upon perception or judgement, and yet there be no manner of physical or necessary connection between them" (Remarks on a Book, p. 10.)[168]

Ferguson says that Clarke's occasionalism is confined to the cause of secondary qualities.[169] He draws from Proposition VIII of the Demonstration where Clarke says that colours and sounds are not qualities of material bodies. "They are mental phenomena and as such cannot be caused by what is not mental, i.e. by unintelligent bodies, although they may be occasioned by them."[170] One might argue that Clarke has placed himself in a position which is open to Berkeley's critique - if secondary qualities are purely mental, then the same applies to primary qualities - but he also claims to be an interactionist in the Letter to Dodwell and its Defenses,[171] takes extension to be a property common to matter and mind, and argues straightforwardly that motives do not cause action, but rather 'I act.' These points will be taken up in detail in Part II, and I will only note here that Clarke is not an occasionalist in the same sense as Malebranche. Rather, he is an interactionist by admission, but made out to be an occasionalist by Ferguson and LeRossignol by infer_ence. Clarke is an occasionalist

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[167]LeRossignol, Samuel Clarke, p. 29.

[168]Ibid., pp. 29-30.

[169]Ferguson, The Philosophy of Clarke, pp. 244-45.

[170]Ibid., p. 245.

[171]I.e., Works, III:843, 850.

as far as matter physically 'acting' upon mind is concerned but he is an interactionist as far as mind, an active power, acting on matter is concerned. Speaking on what our reason is able to apprehend with clarity and certainty he says,

> This is plainly the case of the infinite divisibility of quantity, of infinity and eternity in general, of the actions of immaterial substance upon matter, and of many other things.[172]

I.3.iii Locke

Clarke's epistemology is also significantly indebted to the work of John Locke, an indebtedness which Clarke is not eager to acknowledge. Early in the Leibniz-Clarke dispute, Princess Caroline reveals as much in a letter to Leibniz:

> Neither Dr. Clarke nor Mr. Newton wishes to be thought a follower of Mr. Locke, but I cannot and would not wish to be one of theirs.[173]

One reason for Clarke's reluctance to acknowledge any affinity with Locke's ideas would likely be that the radical non-conformist religious sects, the deists and materialists, were aligning themselves more and more with Locke. Clarke remarks in the Demonstration that he has not quoted any passage from "the learned Mr. Locke," nor borrowed any argument from him.[174] Strictly speaking this may be true,[175] but William

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[172]Works III:850. Also, Works II:369.

[173]Leibniz-Clarke Correspondence, p. 190. She does appear to have changed her mind and sided with Newton and Clarke by the end of the exchanges.

[174]Works II:582. When Clarke comes to respond to Anthony Collins in the Defenses (1707-08) of the Letter to Dodwell, though, Locke is very frequently referred to and appealed to as an authority by both Clarke and Collins.

[175]William Caroll, in Remarks upon Mr. Clarke's Sermons (London, 1705), p. 20, accuses Clarke of following Locke (Essay, IV.10) by borrowing Locke's words in rejecting the ontological proof, and claims that he reproduces the form and terminology of Locke's own argument for the existence of God. It is the case though that unlike Locke in this chapter, Clarke puts forward an a priori argument of his own. Also, what Caroll pairs up with Locke may as easily be paired up with Cicero, one of Clarke's favourite authors.

Caroll's vehement attack on Clarke was aimed at his acceptance of Locke's doctrine of substance. Clarke accepts the view that from the

> known properties of matter, we have as unanswerable reasons to convince and satisfy us that their essences are entirely different; though we know not distinctly what those essences are; as our faculties can afford us, in judging of any of the certainest things whatsoever.[176]

This is the item Caroll calls attention to, being an acceptance of the Lockean doctrine.

> Tho' this sceptical hypothesis is absolutely false, and borrow'd from Mr. L. as other things in these Sermons are; yet it shews [sic] us, that as Mr. C. neither has nor can have, any idea of the substance of God, so likewise, he neither has, nor can have, any idea of the substance of matter.[177]

In a series of tracts Caroll went further in his criticisms of this Lockean doctrine and strove to show that such a view was an expansion of Spinoza's pantheism, namely that there is only one substance in the world and that it is material. Although Clarke expressly aims to refute the materialism of Hobbes and Spinoza, Caroll argues that to do so Clarke must show that the substance of God is not the substance of matter. With the essence of substance unknowable, neither Clarke nor Locke can meet this charge. John W. Yolton, in John Locke and the Way of Ideas, has very clearly identified the nature and scope of the reaction to the Essay, and finds Clarke to be one (along with William Sherlock and John Witty) who sought to bring the substratum doctrine into consistency with the doctrine of the immateriality of the soul.[178]

There is one final matter which may be noted about Clarke in

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[176]Works, II:582.

[177]William Caroll, Remarks upon Mr. Clarke's Sermons (London, 1705), p. 5.

[178]Cf. John W. Yolton, John Locke and the Way of Ideas, pp.160-66.

relation to Locke, although not an item uniquely related to Locke, namely the high place given to mathematics in the method of ethics. Mathematics was considered the most exact of all the sciences, and as such exerted its influence upon Clarke and Locke, as well as upon Cudworth, More, and Cumberland. Mathematical certainty was what they desired to attain. Locke believed in the possibility of an exact science of ethics, but left the work to someone else. Clarke believed in it, and straightaway undertook to demonstrate with mathematical exactitude the existence of God and the obligations of natural religion.

I.3.iv The Platonic Inheritance of Clarke

David Hume attributes the origin of the "abstract theory of morals which was afterwards adopted by Cudworth, Clarke and others" to "Malebranche."[179] J.H. Muirhead goes back further and finds the ideas to have been "planted in England by John Scotus Erigena," ones which come into their own in the Cambridge Neo-Platonists, on the heels of the Platonic revival that had taken place in Italy.[180] In the more broad characterization of the tradition in which Clarke is located, it is clearly the Platonic tradition with which he is best associated.[181] This will be identified throughout this work, but it must not be taken to imply that Clarke is an 'other-wordly idealist.' He is significant-

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[179]David Hume, Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding and Concerning the Principles of Morals, 3rd. ed., edited by P.H. Nidditch (Oxford: The Clarendon Press), 3.2 (p. 197). On Hume as understood against the background of Malebranche and others, see John P. Wright, The Sceptical Realism of David Hume (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1983), esp. pp. 141-145.

[180]J.H. Muirhead, The Platonic Tradition in Anglo-Saxon Philosophy (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1931), p. 13.

[181]Muirhead, in The Platonic Tradition, does not count Clarke as among this tradition, or at least not among its best representatives. He analyzes the idealistic movement in English philosophy to begin with the Cambridge Platonists and Cudworth; its aftermath being found in John Norris, and absent until "the pale form" of it found in Berkeley (p. 13).

ly indebted to Newton and Locke, as well as to the Platonic-Christian scheme ofthought, and given due consideration to these factors he may be called a realist, or a critical realist, by comparison with Thomas Reid's common-sense realism. The Neo-Platonic tradition in which he does fit is adopted from Muirhead. There are three common features of the school which themselves focus best in terms of a "philosophy of religion" rather than in "a theory of knowledge and of nature."[182] The first is that quintessential interpretation and place given to what one finds within, that which rises up "from the centre of a man's own soul in the real and internal impressions of a godlike nature upon his own spirit."[183] Clarke's views on the nature and knowledge of the soul are the subject of Chapter II.[184] It is seen that Clarke gives 'quintessential' place (logically prior) but not exclusive place to self-knowledge (hence his realism which gives place to knowledge of the essence of things internal and external). The second feature of the Cambridge Platonists accepted but modified by Clarke is that "The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord." Clarke accepts that the world within teaches us much about God, but he stops short of the exclusivity of the inner way to God given by Henry More. The third common feature is the view of the relation between reason and faith, between reason and Eternal Reason, namely that the object of faith may

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[182]Muirhead, Platonic tradition, p. 28.

[183]John Smith, The Excellency and Mobleness of True Religion, c. vii, quoted by Muirhead, Ibid., p. 29.

[184]Muirhead puts Norris but not Clarke in The Platonic Tradition, but in terms of the nature of the soul Norris appeals to Aquinas (and therefore Aristotle) in his best work on the subject, i.e. A Philosophical Discourse Concerning The Natural Immortality of the Soul . . . Occasion'd By Mr. Dodwell's late Epistolary Discourse. (London, 1708), fourth edition, 1722, pp. 7-8, 24. Clarke argues for his own view with frequent reference to the works of Plato.

not be contrary to reason.[185] The corollary of the freedom of the will is also found in Clarke. Thus my point here is that Clarke is within the Platonic tradition, yet his concept of reason is distinguishable from Cudworth's pre-Lockean, pre-Newtonian view.[186] He is Platonic in the above sense of offering a developed 'philosophy of religion.'[187]

I.4 Summary

In this chapter the largely neglected work and influence of Samuel Clarke, both within Britain and on the Continent, have been introduced. As Clarke is relatively unknown today, by comparison with the work of David Hume, he may be termed 'Hume's Heretic'. Not only does this seek to capture a bit of the polarity between the views of Clarke and Hume, it also reflects one of the predominant concerns of eighteenth century writing, namely the bearing of claims about knowledge of the world (including the 'world of morals') and knowledge of God. In Part II, Clarke's treatise on the nature of 'individual personality' will be discussed. These are lost works in contemporary scholarship, but supply, from Clarke's pen, an epistemological foundation for his ethical rationalism. The bulk of this work by Clarke comes as a debate (by published correspondence) with the deist Anthony Collins. As there are ideas that Hume picked up from Collins on the concept of personal identity, there is reason to believe, it seems to me, that Books I and

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[185]See Muirhead, The Platonic Tradition, pp. 30-31.

[186]See D.S. McGuffie, "The Concept of Reason in Taylor, Cudworth and Clarke," D.Phil. Thesis.

[187]Ralph Cudworth is normally credited with the first use of this phrase. See Muirhead, The Platonic Tradition, pp. 28, 33-34.

II of the Treatise had at least one eye on the Clarkean position which would be coherent with rational theism. I will then go on in Part III to discuss further aspects of Clarke's moral theory, but there again 'Hume's Heretic' will be spotted as the chief violator of 'Hume's Law'. Thus Clarke offers fruitful study for the moral sceptic or subjectivist (the Humean tradition) as well as for the ethical rationalist. He is not an historical figure that should have passed into antiquity.

PART II

PHILOSOPHICAL ANALYSIS OF THE MORAL SELF

II.1 The Question Stated

Samuel Clarke's moral theory, examined within its historical context, is an attack on the basic principles of Thomas Hobbes. Employing the same geometrical method, Clarke went much further than merely to argue against Hobbes's conclusions about the status of moral principles. Hobbes saw morals and politics as reducible to the desires of 'human nature;' and 'human nature' as reducible to the metaphysics of matter in motion.[1] Given this materialism, he finds the concept of "an incorporeal substance" to be a "contradictory and inconsistent"

[1]Thomas Hobbes, Leviathan, Everyman's Library (London: J.M. Dent & Sons, Ltd, 1940), Ch. 1. Elsewhere, in his work Human Nature, Ch. XI, Hobbes adds: "Concerning other things, which some men call spirits incorporeal, and some corporeal, it is not possible by natural means only, to come to knowledge of so much, as that there are such things. We that are Christians acknowledge that there be angels . . . and that the soul of a man is a spirit . . . but, to know it, that is to say, to have natural evidence of the same, it is impossible: for all evidence is conception . . . and proceedeth from sense." From The English Works of Thomas Hobbes of Malmesbury, 11 vols., edited by Sir William Molesworth, Bart. (London: John Bohn, 1839), IV:61. 'Spirit' in Scripture is taken to imply locality and dimension, and therefore body. There is no knowledge of spirits only belief in them (Ibid., pp. 62-63).

signification of names.[2] There is simply no knowledge of such a thing as a human soul; the 'I' of common speech is non-referential, as is the term 'infinite' when used of God:

> It is also evident, that there can be no Image of a thing Infinite: for all the Images, and Phantasms that are made by the Impression of things visible, are figured: but Figure is a quantity every way determined; nor of the Soule of Man; nor of Spirits; but onely of Bodies Visible, that is, Bodies that have light in themselves, or are by such enlightened.[3]

Clarke's reply (indirectly) to the metaphysical basis of Hobbes's moral theory comes in his Letter to Dodwell and Defenses where he argues for the natural immortality and immateriality of the soul, or an immaterial substance view of persons. The nature of a person does not substantively consist of causally determined matter in motion, but rather of the essential powers ('faculties') of reason and moral agency. In a sermon written soon after the Discourse Clarke gives the following definition of 'man':

(2.1) This is the proper and peculiar nature of human actions; the distinguishing character by which man, as a rational and moral agent, is distinguished from the inferior creation. He not only has in himself a power of acting, which is in common to him with the irrational creatures; but he has moreover a still higher principle or power of directing his actions, with some determinate views, and to some certain and constant end. He has a power of judging beforehand, concerning the consequences of his actions, concerning the reasonableness or unreasonableness of the end he aims at; he has a power of recollecting, after the action done, whether he acted with a good or an evil view. He can either follow the irregular motions of all his appetites and passions, as do the beasts that perish; or he can restrain and over-rule their solicitations by attending to the guidance of a superior light of reason and religion.[4]

My aim in this chapter is expository and critical. As there is no standard reference, nor general working knowledge of Clarke's works

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[2]Ibid., p. 17.

[3]Ibid., p. 355. Cf. Ibid., pp. 369-372. See also the quotations at (2.3) and (2.4).

[4]Works I:244. His emphasis.

considered here (say, by comparison with Hume or Kant), numerous quotations will be given. I will indicate their relevance in contemporary debates, of which the eighteenth century moralists are never too far out of sight. Thus, as Clarke attacks Hobbes, J.L. Mackie finds Clarke to be one of his most uncompromising opponents.[5] The basic arguments Clarke is found to offer in reply to Hobbes, are not wholly inapplicable to Mackie's own theory of 'inventing right and wrong.' These however will not be drawn out until Chapter III.

II.2 'Fitness' Entails Individuation

The 'fitness of things' is the basic concept of Clarke's moral theory.[6] But the moral fitness of things is a relation; a relation of a person in certain circumstances wherein differences of things are individuated. The relevant portion of the chief passage on fitness begins:

> (2.2) That there are differences of things; and different relations, respects or proportions, of some things towards others; is as evident and undeniable, as that one magnitude or number, is greater, equal to, or smaller than another.[7]

The claims in (2.2) are that (i) there are 'things' which are known to obtain, inclusive of external objects, abstract concepts and mathematical concepts. (ii) There are differences of things, meaning differences in kind or natural types of things, i.e. matter, animals, persons. (iii) There are, subsequent upon (ii), different relations, respects or proportions which obtain, presumably taken to mean that

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[5]Mackie, Hume's Moral Theory, p. 16. In summary of Hobbes, Mackie says: "There is no room for objective moral qualities or relations in this strictly materialist universe" (p. 7). And of his own view about Hobbes writes: ". . . the main outlines of his theory still stand. He was right in denying objective moral qualities and relations" (p. 150).

[6]See Chapter III for the full discussion of this concept.

[7]Works II:608. His emphasis.

such relations that obtain can obtain for any rational being in a certain situation. (iv) The discernment, or individuation, of the differences of things and relations is 'evident and undeniable' to any and every rational being. And (v) the individuation of differences of things and their relations are analogous to the mathematical concepts of comparison, i.e. greater, equal, or smaller. Clarke, like the eighteenth century mathematicians, does not distinguish mathematics from Euclidean geometry. Thus mathematics is a term which covers both disciplines for Clarke.

Now in order for the 'evident and undeniable' claims of (2.2) to be more than merely 'true by definition,' Clarke must offer a theory of individuation that comprises at least three things.[8] First, in order to individuate the differences of things and their relations, (ii) and (iii) above, there must be "an elucidation of the primitive concept of identity or sameness."[9] Second, there must be an account of what it is for something to endure through time, or to persist through change. And third, there must be, "however schematic," a treatment of "what it is for a thinker at one time and then another to single out the same substance as the same substance."[10]

These three criteria must be satisfied by Clarke if fitness as a relation is to be a viable concept on which to develop a moral superstructure. These criteria are in fact satisfied and are found to coalesce in his concepts of the immaterial self, direct acquaintance,

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[8]The following three criteria are adopted from David Wiggins, Sameness and Substance (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1980), p. 1. In adapting these to Clarke it is understood that for him the meaning of a word is its reference, and not understood as "a function of its use" (Ibid.).

[9]Ibid.

[10]Ibid.

and the perfect endurance of a substance over time. Claim (i) above is not taken to be in any doubt. It is assumed that there are 'things.' But Clarke does not always distinguish claims (ii) and (iii), i.e. the logical relation of personal identity through time from the mathematical notion of '='. In assuming the truth of Euclidean geometry he sometimes speaks as if the Euclidean concept of congruence or the mathematical concept of '=' substantiates the truth of personal identity and the fitness or unfitness of things. Sometimes he reverses this sense of the logical dependence and speaks of the ultimate primitiveness of self-knowledge.

II.3 The Soul as Substance

The nature of the soul, the strict concept of personal identity, the theory of substance, and the associated religious doctrines of the immaterial nature of God, who is morally perfect, are all threads of the same fabric for Clarke. The close relation of these ideas is a principal characteristic of the eighteenth century. In his classic tome, Body and Mind, William McDougall says that in the religious-minded eighteenth century "the notion of the soul was closely bound up with that of substance."[11] Clarke exemplifies this point, holding that the nature of the soul is one of "the most important and fundamental doctrines of all religion."[12] Indeed, the theological importance of a concept of personal identity has been recognized from patristic times, and Clarke's correspondence on it sprang from his criticism of

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[11]William McDougall, Body and Mind (London: Methuen, 1911), p. 61. For particular disputants in the century see Yolton, John Locke and the Way of Ideas, pp. 151-166.

[12]Works III:740.

Henry Dodwell's odd interpretation of the early Church Fathers.[13]

Although much research remains to be done in charting the development of this idea in the intellectual, spiritual, and literary culture of the century, a working background of Clarke's position can be sketched by reference to Hobbes and Locke.[14] Very briefly, Hobbes's reductionist theory of matter in motion needs to be rescued from a prima facie contradiction. In De Corpore he writes,

> (2.3) It is one thing to ask, concerning Socrates, whether he be the same man and another to ask whether he be the same body; for his body, when he is old, cannot be the same as it was when he was an infant, by reason of the difference of magnitude; yet nevertheless he may be the same man.[15]

Hobbes, rejecting any theory that Socrates is an immaterial substance, pieces together his materialism and (2.3) with a "unity of form theory"[16] as a principle of individuation. He draws on an illustration from Plutarch, about the repair of the ship of Theseus. (Clarke replies to this particular illustration from his own theory of individuation.[17]) On Hobbes's view,

> (2.4) two bodies existing both at once would be one and the same numerical body. For if, for example, that ship of Theseus, concerning the difference whereof made by continued repara-

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[13]See Russell Coleburt, "Principle of Identity: Philosophical Problem and Theological Mystery," Downside Review 96 (April, 1978) : 132-148. Dodwell's view (see the title of this work) was very unorthodox, but clever as he may have been, he likely developed his form of annihilationism of the unbaptized (Dodwell), wicked souls from John Locke in The Reasonableness of Christianity, according to G.C. Joyce, "Annihilation," Encycolopaedia of Religion and Ethics (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1908), I:548.

[14]However see Yolton, Thinking Matter, and R.C. Tennant, "The Anglican Response to Locke's Theory of Personal Identity," Journal of the History of Ideas 43 (January - March, 1982): 73-90. Tennant's article is concerned with Anglicans that are post-Clarke, chiefly in the 1730s and 1740s.

[15]Hobbes, De Corpore, Ch. 11, §7.

[16]Wiggins, Sameness and Substance, p. 92.

[17]Works III:844. This is discussed on p. 79.

> tion in taking out the old planks and putting in new, the sophisters of Athens were wont to dispute, were, after all the planks were changed, the same numerical ship it was at the beginning; and if some man had kept the old planks as they were taken out, and by putting them afterwards together in the same order, had again made a ship of them, this, without doubt, had also been the same numerical ship with that which was at the beginning; and so there would have been two ships numerically the same, which is absurd.[18]

Thus Hobbes's unity of form theory is the cornerstone of his theory of individuation and will be replied to by Clarke.

By constrast with the metaphysics of Hobbes, which Clarke sought to refute, a by and large sympathetic interpretation of Locke is found in Clarke. An example of this is the quotation from Locke's Essay that is included on the title page of A Third Defense of an Argument Made use of in a Letter to Mr. Dodwell, To prove the Immateriality and Natural Immortality of the Soul. The quotation which is intended as authoritative support for Clarke against the view of Collins is:

(2.5) We have as much Reason to be satisfied with our Notion of Immaterial Spirit, as with our Notion of Body; and the Existence of the One, as well as the Other. For it being no more a Contradiction that Thinking should exist separate and independent from Solidity, than it is a Contradiction that Solidity should exist separate and independent from Thinking; they being Both but Simple Ideas, independent one from another: And having as clear and distinct Ideas in us, of Thinking, as of Solidity; I know not why we may not as well allow a Thinking Thing without Solidity, that is, Immaterial, to exist; as a Solid Thing without thinking, that is, Matter, to exist. Mr. Locke's Essay, Book II. Ch. 23. Sect. 32.[19]

The passage of Locke in (2.5) is, by itself, not difficult for Clarke to use in support of his substance dualism of mind and body, but he goes even further in attempting to number Locke on his, rather than

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[18]Hobbes, De Corpore II, 11 (Molesworth, p. 136). Cf. Plato, Phaedo 58[A], Xenophon, Memorabilia 4.8.2, and a contemporary employment of it in Wiggins, Sameness and Substance, p. 92, and Brian Smart's "How to Reidentify the Ship of Theseus," Analysis 32 (April, 1972): 145-148, and also his "The Ship of Theseus, the Parthenon, and Disembodied Objects," Analysis 34 (October, 1973):24-27.

[19]Works III:822. Also on the title page Clarke quotes from Mr. Hobbes, albeit a bit of advice he believes Hobbes himself needed to apply: "Arguments seldom work on Men of Wit and Learning, when they have once engaged themselves in a contrary Opinion."

Collins's, side of the fence. Later in the Third Defense, in reply to Collins's defence of Locke's famous passsage about the possibility of matter thinking,[20] Clarke argues that such a "possibility" was acknowledged by Locke himself to be "very absurd".

> (2.6) Local Motion can have no other Effect upon any System of Matter, than only producing in it a different juxta-position of Parts. To which to ascribe Thinking, Mr. Lock himself, who had no Prejudice against the Possibility of Matter's Thinking, acknowledges it is very absurd. To suppose, saith he, the eternal thinking Being [or any finite thinking Being] to be nothing else but a Composition of Particles of Matter, each whereof is incogitative; is to ascribe all the Wisdom and Knowledge of that eternal Being [or the Wisdom and Knowledge, and all the Powers of the finite thinking Being] only to the juxta-position of Parts. Than which nothing can be more absurd. For unthinking Particles of Matter, however put together, can have nothing thereby added to them, but a new Relation of Position, which it is impossible should give Thought and Knowledge to them.[21]

II.4 The Nature of Consciousness

The central item of contention between Collins and Clarke is summed up by the former, saying that "the whole dispute turns upon the present distinction of the significations of the word consciousness."[22] That the word signifies and refers to something is not an issue. To what it refers is the content of the debate. Clarke seeks to defend the following, broadly descriptive, definition of consciousness.

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[20]Locke, Essay 4.3.6. See Yolton, John Locke and the Way of Ideas, pp. 148-151. Yolton argues that this digression of Locke was meant to show that we need not be "overzealous", as some are, to demonstrate the immateriality of the soul. Clarke would thus be one of the "overzealous," and overstating Locke for his own end.

[21]Works III:837. The brackets are added by Clarke and the quotation is from Locke's Essay 4.10.16. Hobbes is later quoted on the same principle, namely, that what the parts do not have, the whole cannot possess: "Motus nihil generat praeter Motum. Lev. c. 1." See Works III:839.

[22]Works III:842.

(2.7) By consciousness in the following propositions, the reader may understand indifferently either the reflex act, by which a man knows his thoughts to be his own thoughts; (which is the strict and properest sense of the word;) or the direct act of thinking; or the power or capacity of thinking; or (which is of the same import,) simple sensation; or the power of self-motion, or of beginning motion by the will: the argument holding equally in all or any of these senses;[23]

This passage is bursting with metaphysical notions that warrant critical assessment, but in reference to Clarke's theory of individuation, the relevance and bedrock primitiveness of the first-person perspective begins to surface. He holds that 'the strict and properest sense' of consciousness is that 'a man knows his thoughts to be his own thoughts' (2.7). That is, consciousness necessarily entails personal identity. It is held to be an indubitable awareness that is forced upon one, that in thinking, one directly knows themself. Or, in other words,

(2.8) I do individuate certain things.

The 'I' that is known in a strict sense, is one thing that is held to be individuated per se. And if Clarke is to be given the label of an 'intuitionist' it is properly given to him in reference to the concept of self-knowledge. Direct knowledge of oneself is the epistemological foundation upon which his moral theory is dependent. Clarke is an 'intuitionist' because there is no positive argument from more evident concepts that he gives, nor that can be given in support of his claim. His appeal is to every man's experience and common-sense. Such is deemed sufficient to make this an axiomatic truth. The best statement Clarke gives of this point includes the refinement of (2.7).

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[23] Works III:795.

Consciousness is essentially 'an individual power.'[24]

(2.9) It is true, my affirming consciousness to be an individual power, is not giving an account of what consciousness is; neither was it intended to be so. Every man feels and knows by experience what consciousness is, better than any man can explain it: which is the case of all simple ideas: and it is not at all necessary to define more particularly what it is; but abundantly sufficient that we know and agree what it is not, viz. that it is not a multitude of distinct and separate consciousnesses;in order to prove that it does not and cannot inhere in a being, that consists of a multitude of separate and distinct parts.[25]

Clarke knows directly that he is an individual power, or individual consciousness. He is a perfect unity and not a self composed of parts, either material or psychological. The epistemological importance of this is that he would therein have strong reason to claim that Hobbes's empiricism (or Hume's later 'bundle theory' of the self) is logically undercut by (2.7)-(2.9). Given the truth of direct self-knowledge, appealing "to the common sense of all mankind"[26] and "to the idea which every man has in his own mind,"[27] Clarke's point is to show what is a priori necessary for individuation of perceptions, and therefore pre-

[24]Although Clarke does not acknowledge his indebtedness for the concept of 'individual power,' using it as an 'individual essence' or property of the soul, it was 'in the air' and fully developed by Leibniz and Arnauld. They both took 'individual concept' in a strict and narrow sense to mean the same as 'individual essence' or 'haeceity.' See their correspondence in G.W. Leibniz, Discourse on Metaphysics: Correspondence with Arnauld and Monadology, (La Salle, Ill.: The Open Court Publishing Co., 1937), pp. 93-99, 126-127. This is not the only concept which Clarke gleaned (directly or indirectly) from Leibniz. In another letter (1715) Leibniz himself asks Louis Bourguet to tell him "where Mr. Clarke, Mr. Ditton, and others make use of the principle which I have put forward - that God has chosen the best possible plan" in Gottfried Leibniz, Philosophical Papers and Letters, Leroy E. Roemaker, ed., (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1956), II:1079.

[25]Works III:790. Cf. Works III:837.

[26]Works III:839.

[27]Works III:840.

supposed in any materialist's metaphysic or empiricist's epistemology; namely, an enduring 'I' who individuates things x, y, and z.[28]

II.5 Personal Identity

In this section, my aim is to show that Clarke argues that the self or a person is a perfect identity, i.e. that 'I am me,' and that this is the nature of my direct experience of myself. Eventually he will be found to fill out the nature of the self in terms of 'a rational and moral agent.' But before jumping to that topic, it will be argued that given his theory of direct self-knowledge, he could extend his argument in favour of relating fitness with mathematics. A close analogy is generally assumed today, with the demise of Euclidean geometry, not to stand. Consequently, to refute the rationalist's 'logic of ethics' is fatally to cripple Clarke's theory of morals.[29]

The nature of personal identity is expressed in the positive term, to be an 'individual power'; or, one knows directly that one 'is not a multitude of distinct and separate consciousnesses,' and not 'a multitude of separate and distinct parts' (2.9). The nature of an 'individual power' is not unlike that of a Leibnizean monad. It is an 'individual power' in a 'proper and strict' sense of the term.

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[28]I will simply take leave of this particular topic of individuation here, in order to sketch out more broad strokes of Clarke's epistemology. The critical discussion at this point would move to discussion of the merits of such a theory of individuation. Roderick Chisholm identifies the three logical possibilities in respect to individuation of thing x. (1) We individuate in a circle, (2) we individuate by having individuated an infinite number of things, or (3) we individuate some things without relating them uniquely to still other things and therefore individuate them per se. Chisholm argues for (3), the position Clarke would be committed to, in Person and Object (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd, 1976), pp. 32-35.

[29]E.g. W.D. Hudson, Reason and Right, pp. 41-43. Hudson is dealing with Price and the nature and relevance of Euclidean geometry, but the criticism he makes is equally applicable to Clarke. See Part III.4.

(2.10) An individual power, properly and strictly speaking, such as consciousness or thinking must needs be acknowledged to be, can only proceed from, or reside in, an individual being.[30]

In this passage (2.10) Clarke has the substratum theory of substance in mind when he speaks of an individual power that 'can only proceed from, or reside in, an individual being.' The substratum theory, understood as the theory that there is an unknown something that is distinct from the known essential powers which are said to inhere in it, has come by numerous and strong criticisms.[31] But, even if the substratum theory is unacceptable, there still remain the self-evident datum that one knows one to be oneself. I suggest in Chapter IV that Clarke would have better defined substance as the conjunction of its known essential powers. And there is also another alternative theory that could possibly be read into Clarke. That is the interpretation M.R. Ayers gives of Locke.[32] He argues that "Locke did not distinguish ontologically between real essence and substratum substance, that the latter is not supposed to be 'an entity distinct from all its properties' . . ."[33] Rather than digress into an assessment of the substratum theory here, my point is that Clarke's (and possibly Locke's) epistemology does not necessarily fail, even if the traditional notion of substratum fails. Clarke still has the known, self-evident experience of himself as a perfect identity with which to work.

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[30]Works III:760. Emphasis added.

[31]E.g. D.J. O'Connor, John Locke (Pelican), p. 79. I have made my assessment of it in Chapter IV.

[32]M.R. Ayers, "The Ideas of Power and Substance in Locke's Philosophy," in I.C. Tipton, ed., Locke on Human Understanding, Selected Essays, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), pp. 77-104.

[33]Ibid., p. 11.

The sense of perfect identity that Clarke claims for 'an individual power' or 'an individual being' (2.10), is a 'proper and strict' sense. He adds that it is the logical sense of identity that he intends to be understood.

> (2.11) By an individual power I mean (in the sense that logicians commonly use the word individual when they oppose it to specific,) such a power as is really and truly in the nature of the thing itself one power, in opposition to its being such merely in our abstract complex notion.[34]

An individual power then is a logically proper name for an individual person (granted a revision of the substratum theory), that entails uninterrupted continuance over time.

> (2.12) Consciousness, in the most strict and exact sense of the word, signifies neither a capacity of thinking, nor yet actual thinking, but the reflex act by which I know that I think, and that my thoughts and actions are my own and not another's.[35]

The logically perfect (identical) individual that one is, is known from the first-person perspective.[36] Combining (2.11) and (2.12),

> (2.13) I know I am me.

It follows from the discussion in this section that Clarke could consistently assert that the self-knowledge of one's perfect identity over time (2.13), is the source of the concept of '=', as employed in mathematics and applied in 'congruence' as used in geometry.[37]

In knowing that I am self-identical, I know by direct acquaintance a necessarily undivided and indivisible power. Again, speaking appro-

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[34]Works III:784.

[35]Works III:784.

[36]Such a position cannot be obtained from a strict empiricist's analysis of personal identity, for such would be conducted in terms of the third-person observable connections between experiences. Clarke does however account for the identity of physical objects through time from the third-person perspective.

[37]This suggestion will be developed in Part III.4

priately in the first person, Clarke offers what he knows of himself, and implies that every person likewise knows the same to be true about himself:

> (2.14) For instance: when I speak of my own consciousness, and call it an individual power; I mean thereby to express that it is really and truly one undivided consciousness, and not a multitude of distinct consciousnesses added together.[38]

Whereas in (2.11) the nature of the self is said to be a logical oneness, the self to which this term refers is far from a 'bare ego.' The self of which Clarke speaks is known by its essential powers, as stated above, 'by acquaintance' in contrast with knowing 'by description.'[39] One has knowledge by acquaintance if what is referred to is something "of which we are directly aware, without the intermediary of any process of inference or any knowledge of truths."[40] This is clearly what Clarke claims in (2.12) and (2.14); a direct acquaintance with an individual power (in its logical sense), or rather simply, with himself. It will be seen that a basic 'moral acquaintance'[41] is also understood to be an essential power of the self. But as the 'moral acquaintance' is the culminating feature of Clarke's epistemology, there are other important distinctions that must first be identified.

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[38]Works III:784.

[39]These two alternatives with regard to the knowledge of the self are proposed by Russell (at one point) and later by McTaggart. More recently they are invoked by Madell. See, respectively, Bertrand Russell, The Problems of Philosophy (London: Oxford University Press, 1959), pp. 46-59; J.M.E. McTaggart, The Nature of Existence (Cambridge University Press, 1927), Vol. 2, Ch. 36; and Geoffrey Madell, The Identity of the Self (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1981), pp. 23-26.

[40]Russell, Problems of Philosophy, p. 46.

[41]This is my term, not Clarke's.

II.5.i 'The Strict and Exact Sense' and the 'Abstract Complex Notion'

'The strict and exact sense' of identity (2.12) is in contrast with a unity expressed when one speaks about an army or a city as being one.

(2.15) By an individual power I mean (in the sense that logicians commonly use the word individual when they oppose it to specific,) such a power as is really and truly in the nature of the thing itself one power, in opposition to its being such merely in our abstract complex notion.[42]

Examples of the 'abstract complex idea' of 'individual' are implied or understood,

(2.16) when I speak of the blueness, (suppose) or redness, or sweetness of a body, as of a single power belonging to that body; it is evident I can mean only, that it is such merely in the abstract complex notion or idea I frame in my mind; that is, in the same sense as we say an army or a city is one; but that really and indeed is a vast multitude. . .[43]

The strict and abstract senses of oneness might have been similarly distinguished by Leibniz in his correspondence with Arnauld. The soul, or self, is an indivisible and naturally indestructible entity, but "a people, army, society or college" are entities "dependent upon the fabrications of our minds."[44] Clarke, however, as in (2.15) pairs up the contrasting senses of the term and has referents for both. Thus, the referent to which the strict sense of oneness applies is

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[42]Works III:784. This is (2.11) but it is rewritten here in order to note a different concept.

[43]Works III:784. Conversely, Derek Parfit (in the contra-Clarke tradition) uses nearly the same example, "the unity of a nation" to be an apt way to think of oneself, in his important article, "Personal Identity," Philosophical Review 80 (1971):27, note 35.

[44]The Leibniz - Arnauld Correspondence, trans. H.T. Mason (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1967), p. 94. Cf. Locke, Essay 2.23. Clarke would be in agreement with Locke that it is by the same consciousness that one knows his personal identity, but he disagrees that personal identity could "be continued in a succession of several substances."

persons.[45]

The fact that Clarke drew these helpful (and necessary, for his own view) distinctions seems to be a lost datum in the history of philosophy. In the history of ideas and the modern discussion in philosophy of mind, the important distinction brought out between the 'strict philosophical' and the 'loose figurative' sense of identity, is mistakenly credited to Joseph Butler.

Butler certainly held the importance of this dualist's distinction, speaking of the contrast between 'a loose and popular sense' of the persistence of things, and 'the strict and philosophical sense' in which we may speak of the persistence of persons.[46] But Butler was not the father of this criticism of Locke, which is crucial for any dualist to maintain.[47] He not only published his remarks (in 1736) on personal identity later than Clarke (1706-08), he had read Clarke's work on the issue, and even footnotes the correspondence itself in his "Dissertation I. of Personal Identity."[48] It is the only reference cited, apart from footnotes to Locke, in the essay and (knowing of Butler's careful reading of Clarke's Demonstration) we can see that he did not overlook important details in the Letter to Dodwell and Defenses. But whereas Clarke was required reading in his time, his Works are now difficult to find in all but better equipped libraries.

[45]Clarke applies his 'intuitive' concept of person, to the concept of God, the Person. The result is seen in his anti-trinitarian view of the Godhead. Cf. Wiggins, Sameness and Substance, pp. 29-30. Wiggins cites the doctrine of the three Persons of one substance to be "the most difficult case" (p. 30) of 'sameness'. Clarke has an adequate reply (Works IV:1-222), albeit unorthodox.

[46]Joseph Butler, Works I:321.

[47]Locke believed that the identity conditions for a man are like those which apply in the case of a tree, Essay pp. 331-32.

[48]Butler, Works I:323.

The resurrection of this Clarkean distinction in contemporary philosophy of mind is largely due to the careful work of Roderick Chisholm.[49] Unfortunately, he credits this notion to Butler's account,[50] and notable others, like Sidney Shoemaker,[51] make no corrrection on this point. Acknowledgement of Clarke is long overdue on the point, but it will be shown that this is not his only forgotten contribution to the philosophy of mind.

In moving from the self-concept of person, to a consideration of the Supreme Being as a Person, Clarke writes:

> (2.17) There is <u>one</u> Supreme Cause and Original of Things; <u>one</u> simple, uncompounded, undivided, <u>intelligent Agent</u>, or** <u>person</u>; who is the Alone Author of all Being, and the Fountain of all Power.
>
> **For, <u>Intelligent Agent</u>, is the proper and adequate definition of the word, <u>person</u>; nor can it otherwise be understood with any distinct sense or meaning at all.[52]

There is an extensive amount of material from Clarke's work on the nature of the Trinity that could be added to the discussion of the concept of person, intelligent agent, and substance. Here I will simply note it as a wealth of untapped support for the above interpretation of

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[49]Roderick Chisholm, "The Loose and Popular and the Strict and Philosophical Senses of Identity," in <u>Perception and Personal Identity</u>, eds. Norman S. Care and Robert H. Grimm (Cleveland: The Press of Case Western Reserve University, 1969), pp. 82-106; and his <u>Person and Object</u>, pp. 89-113. Also see Geoffrey Madell, <u>The Identity of the Self</u>, p. 5.

[50]Chisholm, <u>Person and Object</u>, p. 92. He notes that Locke was aware of the notion (Locke's third letter to the Bishop of Worcester) but did not adhere to it as did Butler.

[51]Sidney Shoemaker, "Comments on Chisholm's 'The Loose and Popular and the Strict and Philosophical Senses of Identity,'" in <u>Perception and Personal Identity</u>, eds. Care and Grimm, pp. 107-127.

[52]<u>Works</u> IV:122.

Clarke.[53]

The strict sense of personal identity, then, is crucial for Clarke. The numerous moral and theological consequences (or common sense support) of this concept are given below.[54] But it is also crucial because (or for the sake) of his theological position. He believes God to be the supreme, personal, intelligent agent; the source of all power. For Clarke, belief in God as the same Person today, yesterday, and tomorrow, adds further substantial reason to adhere to the strict concept of personal identity.[55]

II.6 Personal Identity and Memory

The next distinction to note about the nature of the self and the concept of personal identity, concerns the place of memory. (This will prove to be important in a later development of the status of the moral concepts of 'knowing the difference between right and wrong' and that of whether or not there is a possibility of 'forgetting the difference between right and wrong.')

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[53]I have said above that Clarke's concept of one's personal identity is not that of a bare ego, but one characterized by its essential (including moral) powers. The same is true of his concept of God. Hampered by the substratum theory, Clarke nonetheless argues that "personal characters, offices, powers, and attributes" (Works IV:122) are the concepts that attribute a fully personal nature to God. Clarke moves from the concept of soul or self, to his concept of God, being added to by revelation and the historical doctrines.

[54]See pp. 91-93.

[55]Actually, three senses of the meaning of identity are distinguished by Clarke, stimulated by a wary illustration given by Collins: "Extraordinary reasoning indeed! Because in a figurative sense a man, when he is mad, is said not to be himself; and in a forensic sense, is looked upon as not answerable for his own actions; therefore in the natural and philosophical sense also, his actions are not his own actions, but another person's; and the same man is really two distinct persons!" (Works III:902). Hence the three senses: (1) the natural, philosophical, or strict and exact sense, (2) the figurative or abstract complex notion, and (3) the forensic sense. Locke notes the "forensic term" in Essay 2.27.26.

II.6.i The Ship of Theseus and Reidentification

Clarke realizes that the role of memory cannot be the ultimate court of appeal in the reidentification of persons, because memory claims require checks and may be either true or false. However, the necessary role memory plays in reidentification, its defects of "oblivion and slowness,"[56] and Hobbes's Ship of Theseus thought experiment are acknowledged and accounted for in the polar arguments of Clarke and Collins. Clarke's point is that memory does not in itself constitute one's personal identity. (In the next section are put forward his arguments for the view that memory entails or presupposes an enduring subject who remembers or forgets.)

The replies of Clarke on the philosophical problems of persistence of a perfect identity over time are straightforward and do not require much clarification. His response to the scepticism of Collins refers to the ancient puzzle of the Ship of Theseus. Clarke's realism is not incidental to his position.

> (2.18) Then, I saw, you make individual personality to be a mere external imaginary denomination, and nothing at all in reality: just as a ship is called the same ship, after the whole substance is changed by frequent repairs; or a river is called the same river, though the water of it be every day new. The name of the ship, is the same; but the ship itself, is not at all the same: and the continued name of the river signifies water running in the same channel, but not at all the same water. So if a man at forty years of age, has nothing of the same substance in him, neither material nor immaterial, that he had at twenty; he may be called the same person, by a mere external imaginary denomination in such a sense as a statue may be called the same statue, after its whole substance has been changed by piecemeal: but he cannot be really and truly

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[56] Locke, Essay 2.10.8.

> the same person, unless the same individual numerical consciousness can be transferred from one subject to another.[57]

In this passage Clarke confronts Collins with an all-or-nothing choice between realism and illusionism. Either the self is the perfectly enduring entity that self-reflexive thought testifies that it is, or it is not a unitary thing. There is no middle position between being perfectly one and being fragmented. The naturalness of accepting the testimony of self-reflection is either proper and correct, or it is

(2.19) nothing but a deception and delusion, under the form of memory; a making the man to seem to himself to be conscious of having done that, which really was not done by him, but by another.[58]

Clarke is a realist and is not only willing to swallow the consequence of it, namely, the existence of immaterial substances, he is uncompromisingly defending the dualist account of the human person. This places him unabashedly and squarely within a long tradition among philosophers and theologians,[59] one that holds that by self-reflection we can discover at least some basic truths about reality. It is a

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[57]Works III:844. Clarke is referring to the dictum of Heraclitus: "You could not step twice in the same river; for other and yet other waters are ever flowing on," as translated by Milton C. Nahm, Selections from Early Greek Philosophy (New York: F.S. Crofts, 1934), p. 91. Leibniz speaks of the Ship of Theseus in the New Essays 2.27.4. Although the New Essays were not published until 1765, they were likely completed by 1704. Clarke's work is exceptionally similar to Leibniz on this point except that the latter speaks of a monad as the soul, "which makes the I in substances which think" (Ibid.).

[58]Works III:844.

[59]This tradition was dominant during Clarke's period; Hume's work by contrast is much more at home in the twentieth century then it was in the eighteenth. See Arthur O. Lovejoy who authoritatively develops the thesis that the 'moment' of history comprising the last half-century will be known as "the Age of the Great Revolt against Dualism," in The Revolt Against Dualism (La Salle, Ill.: The Open Court Publishing Company, 1960), p. 1.

tradition that is frequently said to have common-sense[60] on its side (conceded even by most contemporary materialists[61]), and it is the position of traditional Christian theism.[62] Clarke argues that it is a basic, intuitive understanding which every person has immediately of himself. With all this in its favour, it is accepted as a basic proposition about the self that we have a right to believe, as epistemically innocent, a basic truth that seems impregnable in the sense of not being capable of being overturned by anything more reliable or more basic.

Anthony Collins believes that he can find several mental states which must favour the alternative interpretation, that the substratum of consciousness is the brain, a substance in constant flux. He writes:

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[60]Hobbes grants the weight of common-sense to the dualist camp himself: "It is true, that the heathens, and all nations of the world, have acknowledged that there be spirits, which for the most part they hold to be incorporeal" ("Human Nature", Ch. XI, in English Works of Hobbes IV:62). Rather than attribute this view to natural reason, he accounts for it from the ignorant belief in ghosts and phantasms.

[61]I.e., Daniel Dennett, Content and Consciousness (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1969), pp. 3-5; David Lewis, "An Argument for the Identity Theory," Journal of Philosophy 63(1966):25; Thomas Nagel, "Physicalism," Philosophical Review 74(1965):340; Brian O'Shaughnessy, The Will, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), I:29; Richard Rorty, Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1980), p. 17; and J.J.C. Smart, "Materialism," Journal of Philosophy 60(1963):661.

[62]Clarke argues for this from Justin Martyr, Tatian, St. Irenaeus, Athenagoras, Theophilus Antiochenus, Tertullian, St. Cyprian, Lactantius, and St. Athanasius. Others not employed are, i.e., Aquinas, Summa Theologiae, Ia. 90, 4; Augustine, Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers V:332--335; Luther, Luther's Works, pp. 51, 234; Calvin, Institutes of the Christian Religion, I:184-189. H.A. Wolfson defends it as the traditional view (in opposition to Oscar Cullmann's hasty contrast) in "Immortality and Resurrection in the Philosophy of the Church Fathers," Harvard Divinity School Bulletin 22(1956-57):7-40. Gundry argues for it from the biblical data in Sôma in Biblical Theology, in opposition to the 'standard' opinion among contemporary theologians. From a more philosophical view see Paul Badham, Christian Beliefs About Life After Death (London: SPCK, 1978), who argues for the immortality of the soul with no ressurection of the body.

(2.20) But if the soul or principle of thinking be undivided, how can it think successively, divide, abstract, combine or ampliate, retain or revive impressions in the memory? And how can it be capable, partly or wholly, to forget anything? All which phenomena are naturally conceived, and may be commodiously explained . . . by the vigor, perfection, disorder or decay of a bodily organ, but not by any thing indivisible.[63]

Clarke eventually gives what seems to be his definitive answer. Such phenomena, he argues, are only possible "because the whole soul thinks successively, divides . . . " whereas "none of these phenomena can be explained by the various acts of the various parts of a bodily organ alone."[64] Consciousness is a unity, an indivisible power. To think successively or to retain a memory impression can only presuppose an enduring substance that can remember a and so know that a was followed by b. Similarly, that I retain a memory impression (or forget it) entails the fact that I remember or I forget. An indivisible subject that endures over time is therefore assumed in Collins's supposed objections. If thinking were merely separate impressions somehow arranged in a line or sequence, as Collins suggests, it would not be thinking, but merely bits of data individually separate. In post-Kantian terms, this amounts to a transcendental argument for the nature of the self and will be discussed later in more detail.

Although Clarke does not find the above objections of Collins challenging, he goes on to formulate one that is much more substantial. It rests on the logical possibility (assuming the substratum view of substance) that the experience of consciousness may be self-identical for each self, yet be only a quality that is transferred from one system of brain cells to another.

(2.21) If therefore you will answer, (which is the only possible seeming evasion in this case) that that which we call consci-

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[63] *Works* III:807.

[64] *Works* III:843. His emphasis.

> ousness, is not a fixed individual numerical quality, like the numerical figure or motion of a solid body; but a fleeting transferable mode or power, like the roundness or the mode of motion of circles upon the face of a running stream: and that the person may still be the same, by a continual superaddition of the like consciousness; notwithstanding the whole substance be changed: Then I say . . .[65]

This objection became famous in the hands of Kant,[66] who posed it in the more memorable terms of a set of elastic balls. But Clarke's answer is ready at hand in either case. He admits it is logically possible that instead of there being just one person who makes up my biography there could be a series of different persons, all but the first of them being deluded with respect to its past. Elsewhere he admits it is logically possible that an evil demon is continually deceiving us. But the logical possibilities of these things are not anywhere near adequate reason for Clarke to deny the most certain awareness he has, that he who did ϕ at time t_1 is the same person at t_2 who still remembers having doneϕ. The logical possibility is no reason for thinking that what patently contradicts my basic awareness is actually the case. What is logically "possible" is "nothing at all in reality."[67] Strictly speaking, I do not merely claim to remember having done ϕ; I claim to know that I did ϕ. We return to the either/or juncture of whether basic self-awareness is true or a delusion.

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[65]Works III:844.

[66]Immanuel Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, translated by Norman Kemp Smith (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1965) A364 (p. 342): "An elastic ball which impinges on another similar ball in a straight line communicates to the latter its whole motion, and therefore its whole state . . . If, then, in analogy with such bodies, we postulate substances such that the one communicates to the other representations together with the consciousness of them, we can conceive a whole series of substances of which the first transmits its state together with its consciousness to the second, the second its own state with that of the preceeding substance to the third, . . . the last substance would then be conscious of all the states of the previously changed substances, as being its own states, because they would have been transferred to it together with the consciousness of them. And yet it would not have been one and the same person in all these states."

[67]Works III:844.

II.6.ii The Self Who Remembers

The role of memory is crucial but it is not the criterion of individual substances enduring over time. Clarke's repeated clarification about the relation of memory and consciousness is of special interest because it shows him to be father of another distinction which is repeatedly attributed to Joseph Butler. The distinction is that memory does not constitute consciousness of identity, rather it recognizes and entails it. It is found in several passages which will be quoted at length.

(2.22) . . . consciousness, by which I not only remember that certain things were done many years since, but also am conscious that they were done by me, by the very same individual conscious being who now remembers them;[68]

(2.23) XII. The spirits and particles of the brain, being loose and in perpetual flux, cannot therefore be the seat of that consciousness, by which a man not only remembers things done many years since; but also is conscious that he himself, the same individual conscious being, was the doer of them.[69]

(2.24) For to affirm that new matter perpetually added to a fleeting system, may by repeated impressions add recollection of ideas, participate and have communicated to it a memory of what was formerly done by the whole system; is not explaining or proving, but begging the question, by assuming an impossible hypothesis. But supposing it were possible, that the memory in general of such or such an action's having been done, might be preserved in the manner you suppose; yet it is a manifest contradiction, that the consciousness of its being done by me, by my own individual self in particular, should continue in me after my whole substance is changed; unless consciousness could be transferred from one subject to another, in the absurdest sense of those words. For to suppose that one substance should be conscious of an action's having been done by itself, which really was not done by it, but by another substance; is as plainly supposing an individual quality to be transferred from one subject to another in the most absurd sense; as it is plain that consciousness is a real individual quality, and different from bare general memory.[70]

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[68] Works III:787.

[69] Works III:798.

[70] Works III:844.

(2.25) . . . the memory may be preserved in a fleeting substance . . . (is) an impossible hypothesis . . . till you can find out some new hypothesis, by which to make it intelligible, how it is possible that new ideas printed upon new particles, should be a memory of old ideas printed upon old particles . . . the question being . . . whether the consciousness of its being done by me, by my own individual self in particular, could in this manner be continued.[71]

(2.26) A man, you say, who during a short frenzy, kills another, and then returns to himself, without the least consciousness of what he has done; cannot attribute that action to himself; and therefore the mad man and the sober man are really two as distinct persons as any two other men in the world, and will be so considered in a court of judicature. Extraordinary reasoning indeed! Because in a figurative sense a man, when he is mad, is said not to be himself; and in a forensic sense, is looked upon as not answerable for his own actions; therefore in the natural and philosophical sense also, his actions are not his own actions, but another person's; and the same man is really two distinct persons![72]

(2.27) Whereas the individual numerical consciousness, which identifies the person, is that perception by which the person is sensible, that his past acts of thinking were his own thoughts and not another's; which perception, in the same continued being, is a true memory, and can be true in that one numerical being only; but in your fleeting being, it would be a false memory, a mere delusion, and might be impressed on any number of beings at one and the same time: all which, distinct, intelligent, rational beings, because they happened to be in the same dream, you would affirm to be one and the same individual person; and, for the same reason, if twenty pieces of money happened to be stamped with so like an impression, that they could not be distinguished one from another; you must affirm them all to be one and the same individual shilling, notwithstanding their being different pieces of silver.[73]

These quotations sufficiently show that Clarke doggedly emphasized the fact that the memory of having done something in the past must unavoidably entail the immediate experience that a person is an enduring identity. But Clarke's 'correction' of one one of the "errors"[74] of Mr.

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[71] Works III:902.

[72] Works III:902.

[73] Works III:903. Although Clarke does make extensive use of the concept of 'personal identity,' his preferred term is 'individual personality' as in (2.27).

[74] Works IV:588.

Locke's is a lost fact in the history of ideas. It is now widely attributed to Joseph Butler,[75] and has made him "famous"[76] among philosophers of mind. Butler wrote, in 1736.

> (2.28) And one should really think it self-evident, that consciousness of personal identity presuposes, and therefore cannot constitute, personal identity; anymore than knowledge, in any other case, can constitute truth, which it presupposes.[77]

Butler has certainly packaged the relation of memory and personal identity in a much more quotable form than does Clarke. But the historical credit on this is best returned to Dr. Clarke. Butler himself acknowledges that in reading the Clarke-Collins correspondence he clearly saw the "strange length"[78] to which Locke's suppositions go, and thereby sought to defend dualism along the same lines as Clarke.

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[75]I.e., Antony Flew in "Locke and the Problem of Personal Identity," Philosophy 26(1951):53-68, says, "War on Locke's thesis can be made on two fronts. The traditional front was opened by Bishop Butler in his dissertation Of Personal Identity" (p. 55). Sidney Shoemaker in Self-Knowledge and Self-Identity (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press), 1964, finds that that tradition which holds the concept of identity to be indefinable to be "most notably Reid and Butler" (p. 36). This is a thorough analysis of the distinction but Shoemaker neglectfully attributes it to Reid and Butler, who both acknowledge indebtedness to Samuel Clarke. Derek Parfit in "Personal Identity," Philosophical Review 80(1971):3-27, similarly says that "from Butler onward" (p. 14, note 20) there are philosophers who believe that the description of memory must refer to identity. Terence Penelhum in "Personal Identity," in The Encyclopedia of Philosophy 6:97, cites Joseph Butler as the one who spotted "the problem of identity as memory," which Penelhum himself argues against in Survival and Disembodied Existence, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1970), pp. 9, 10, 70. A.B. Palma, in "Memory and Personal Identity," The Australasian Journal of Philosophy 42(1964), argues against "Butler's celebrated criticism of Locke's theory of personal identity" (p. 53). B.A.O. Williams, in "Personal Identity and Individuation," Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society LVII(1956-57) implies that "Butler's famous objection, so far from constituting personal identity, presupposed it," (p. 233) is valid. Geoffrey Madell in The Identity of the Self, argues for "the vindication of the Reid/Butler view of identity" (pp. 122-134).

[76]I.e., David Wiggins, "Locke, Butler and the Stream of Consciousness:and Men as a Natural Kind," Philosophy 51(1976):131-158, esp. p. 133.

[77]Butler, Analogy, Dissertation I, in Works of Butler I:320.

[78]Works of Butler I:323.

II.7 Arguments in the Clarke-Collins Correspondence

The above discussion needs to be placed in its context within the Clarke-Collins debate itself. Thus far I have been pointing out the logically irreducible starting-point in Clarke's foundationalism. In terms of the skeleton of the overall correspondence, it is built into an extensive, rationalistic argument about the nature of matter and motion. Collins and Clarke had some basic agreements as to the nature of matter, and consequently Clarke fashions an extensive argument, defending fifteen propositions, starting with a notion of matter mutually acceptable to both parties. The result is an argument concerning substance, simple and compound properties or powers ("qualities"), matter and consciousness. What I have identified as Clarke's most basic starting-point comes in at Proposition VIII, and Propositions XI-XIV are those chiefly concerned with the 'strict and proper' sense of identity discussed above. The overarching argument actually employed by Clarke to refute Collins may be summarized as follows.[79]

I. Every system of matter consists of a multitude of distinct parts.

II. Every real quality inheres in some subject.

III. No individual or single quality of one particle of matter, can be the individual or simple quality of another particle.

IV. Every real simple quality, that resides in any whole material system, resides in all the parts of that system.

V. Every real compound quality, that resides in any whole material system, is a number of simple qualities residing in all the parts of that system; some in one part, some in another.

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[79] Works III:795-799. If more space were devoted to a discussion of the context of these fifteen propositions, the extensive influence of Newton would be unmistakable. Cf. Ernan McMullin, Newton on Matter and Activity (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1978).

VI. Every real quality, simple or compound, that results from any whole material system but does not reside in it . . . is the mode or quality of some other substance, and not of that (i.e. colour, smell, taste).

VII. Every power, simple or compound, that results from any whole material system, but does not reside in it . . . nor yet reside in any other substance, as its subject; is no real quality at all; but must either be itself a real substance, (which seems unintelligible;) or else it is nothing but merely an abstract name or notion, as all universals are.

VIII. Consciousness is neither a mere abstract name . . . nor a power of exciting or occasioning different modes in a foreign substance . . . but a real quality, truly and properly inherent in the subject itself, the thinking substance.

IX. No real quality can result from the composition of different qualities, so as to be a new quality in the same subject, of a different kind or species from all and every one of the component qualities.

X. Consciousness therefore being a real quality, and a kind specifically different from all other qualities, whether known or unknown, which are themselves acknowledged to be void of consciousness; can never possibly result from any composition of such qualities.

XI. No individual quality can be tranferred from one subject to another.

XII. The spirits and particles of the brain, being loose and in perpetual flux, cannot therefore be the seat of that consciousness, by which a man not only remembers things done many years since; but also is conscious that he himself, the same individual conscious being, was the doer of them.

XIII. The consnciousness that a man has at one and the same time, is one consciousness; and not a multitude of consciousnesses; as the solidity, motion, or colour of any piece of matter is a multitude of distinct solidities, motions, or colours.

XIV. Consciousness therefore cannot at all reside in the substance of the brain, or spirits, or in any other material system as its subject; but must be a quality of some immaterial substance.

XV. Difficulties that arise afterwards, concerning other qualities of that immaterial substance, as whether it be extended or unextended; do not at all affect the present argument.

Collins concedes that Clarke's argument is demonstrative in part, but maintains that it does not affect his point that consciousness is a real quality "inhering in the subject itself, the brain."[80] This is a logically possible position because both debaters unquestioningly accept the notion of substance as unknown substratum. Clarke's manner of argumentation then becomes one of arguing for the actual impossibility of a substratum which could sustain both the essential properties of indivisibility (consciousness) and divisibility (a property of matter, i.e. magnitude). Hence the unknown substratum, by inference, must be of like kind with the essence of consciousness, i.e. immaterial and individual. Clarke does remark, eventually, that his formulation of dualism may have some "difficult consequences that cannot be perfectly cleared," but that the materialist's notion of a fleeting personal identity much the worse reduces to "absurdities, contradictions, and disagreements of ideas."[81]

In the course of filling in the content and arguing for the

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[80] Works III:818.

[81] Works III:849.

fifteen propositions laid out in the third Defense, several arguments are quite readily identifiable. Reductio type arguments are the most common. For example, if thinking is essentially brain activity as Collins suggests, then it must be that all motion would be some degree or kind of thinking. There would be circular motion, rectilinear motion, elliptical motion and thinking motion. From this Clarke intends to illustrate that thinking is different in kind from the motion attributable to matter, and a 'system of matter' with the "beating of one particle of matter against another"[82] can only alter the degree or quantity of force. It cannot produce a new kind of activity like thought. A square is not a circle, a colour is not a taste, a thought is not a motion.

There is one final type of argument found in Clarke which has already been mentioned, a transcendental type of argument. This is employed to show the a priori necessity of the existence of an enduring entity for the exercise of thinking itself, but it is not extensively employed by Clarke. Responding to Collins's perceptive objection - that as Clarke (per Newton) believes there are "original and perfect solid particles of matter,"[83] they too must have the power of thinking because they are indivisible - Clarke replies:

> (2.29) For though divisibility or discerpibility in any subject, is a sufficient proof that that subject is not capable of such an individual power of thinking; yet it does not from thence presently follow on the contrary, that whatever is indiscerpible, is therefore capable of thinking. Though the present argument proves indeed only, that whatever is discerpible, cannot think; that is, that individuality is a sine qua non, or a necessary qualification without which no subject can be capable of thinking;[84]

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[82] Works III:838.

[83] Works III:762.

[84] Works III:761. Clarke adds that whereas atoms may at least in theory be divisible by the power of God and yet remain matter, an immaterial being "whose whole essence may be necessarily one," if divided is annihilated (III:763).

The transcendental point is again found a bit later:

> (2.30) the only properties we certainly and indisputably know of them [immaterial substrates], namely consciousness and its modes, do prove (as has been before shown) that they must necessarily be such indiscerpible beings.[85]

A final example that consciousness and the power of thinking necessitate a perfectly enduring entity is found in an ad hominem rebuke of Collins in his continuing debate over these issues. If the substance of thinking is as Collins suggests, a power of matter which is continually in flux, then Collins must be in continual flux:

> (2.31) If so; it can be to no great purpose for us to dispute about anything: for, before you receive my reply, you may happen possibly to be entirely changed into another substance; and, the next time you write, may deny that you have any consciousness at all, that you continue the same individual being who wrote this remarkable sentence [denying that we have a consciousness that we continue the same individual being at different times].[86]

In other words, if Collins himself does not endure through time, remaining the same individual being, then he would not even be able to conduct the sustained argument he has been engaged in with Clarke over some two years. In the Fourth Defense Clarke repeats this point again and claims that each and every "distinct thinking being . . . must indeed unavoidably think" himself to be "the same person that did the action."[87] The options are either/or: either we unavoidably know we

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[85]Works III:763. His emphasis. Such comments by Clarke imply that the substrate hypothesis is a cluttering, unnecessary dogma held for purposes which are not rationally supported. But compare Works III:827.

[86]Works III:845.Cf. C.A. Campbell, On Selfhood and Godhood (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1957), pp. 76-77. Campbell's contemporary statement of this same point is that in order to apprehend the second stroke of Big Ben striking, as sequent upon the first stroke, requires that "I am not merely the same subject, but also conscious of my self-sameness, in the two experiences."

[87]Works III:904.

are the same person or,

(2.32) we are all unavoidably we know not who, and do but fancy and dream ourselves to be the persons we think we are, and write and read about we know not whom nor what.[88]

Clarke maintains his unrepentant ways throughout the entire correspondence on this crucial aspect. There are only two options possible on the nature of the enduring self:

(2.33) Either consciousness proves a man to be the same individual being at different times; or, else it is a mere deceit and delusion.[89]

In summary then, the types of arguments Clarke employs in support of his theory of mind are: self-evidence, common sense, an argument from the nature of matter and motion, reductio, and transcendental arguments. In addition to these philosophical reasons Clarke also argues against Dodwell that dualism of soul and body is the traditional position of Christianity and supplements this point by pointing out to Collins several of the moral and theological consequences of his position.

II.8 Implications of the Dispute: Practical and Religious

The philosophical dispute of the Clarke-Collins correspondence is not empty rhetoric. Clarke is keen to identify several consequences of Collins's position, which if true would prove disastrous for theism. Firstly, if consciousness is the motion of a system of matter then

(2.34) there could be no such thing in us, as liberty, or a power of self-determination. Now what ends and purposes of religion mere clocks and watches are capable of serving, needs no long and nice consideration.[90]

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[88] Works III:904.

[89] Works III:845.

[90] Works III:851.

Secondly, if a person is substantivally a material entity with minor refinements, then

> (2.35) it will be but too natural a consequence, to conceive that it may be only the same thing in all other rational beings likewise; and even in God himself. And what a notion of God this would give us, is not difficult to imagine.[91]

Finally, if thinking is nothing but a quality of matter, and "my present consciousness, be nothing but a mode of motion in the fleeting particles of my brain or spirits,"[92] then the doctrine of the resurrection of the body will be inconceivable and incredible, and the justice of future rewards and punishments will be impossible because both depend upon "the notion of personal identity"[93] which, on such a view as Collins's, strictly does not obtain. The "justice of all reward or punishment is entirely grounded"[94] upon a principle of personal individuality. In both the 'here' and the 'here-after' justice requires that the person who did right or wrong be the person who is rewarded or punished, not some other person. But if there is no such substance as an enduring self, then person p who did the morally wrong act a_p at t_1, is not the same person who comes to judgement at t_2. Thus the entity q at time t_2 which has, say, a causal history which includes p, is nonetheless not p. If q is sentenced for a crime committed by p, the law must surely be unjust. But q being punished for what was done by p is the nature of 'justice' required by the materialism of Collins. In like manner the doctrine of the resurrection itself as traditionally understood becomes impossible. If there are no enduring selves but

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[91] Works III:851.

[92] Works III:851.

[93] Works III:852.

[94] Works III:851. Also, Works III:903.

only 'entities in flux', which 'entity in flux' will be resurrected? Will it be the one I today call 'me', or that one in ten years called 'me', or that one at death which is called 'me'? The problem is even more difficult though because, when a fleeting system of matter dies, any subsequent resurrection, being the restoring of the power of thinking to the 'same' body,

> (2.36) will not be a raising again of the same individual person; but it will be as truly a creation of a new person, as the addition of the like power of thinking to a new body now, would be the creation of a new man. For, as God's superadding now to a new parcel of matter, the like consciousness with what I at this time find in myself, would not make that new parcel of matter to be the same individual person with me, but only another person like me; so his superadding that consciousness at the resurrection, to the same particles of dust, of which my body was formerly composed; will not be a restoration of the same person, but a creation of a new one like me.[95]

If one believes that it is the same dust particles which constitute the 'same' person, the further question arises as to who will get the particles that have a shared history? When a cannibal[96] has dinner, the body he consumes becomes the substance of the cannibal. Who will get the shared material in the resurrection? These consequences are powerful reasons for Clarke,[97] and strong secondary support of what he takes to be an undeniable, intuitive certainty.

II.9 Personal Agent as Cause

If Clarke's Letter to Dodwell and Defenses are nearly lost material in Clarkean scholarshsip, his Remarks upon a Book, Entitled, a Philosophical Enquiry concerning Human Liberty are lost and buried. Even in the collected Works of Clarke no reference is given in the

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[95]Works III:851.

[96]Works II:690.

[97]Cf. H.D. Lewis, The Elusive Mind (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1969), pp. 320-328.

table of contents to this critical review which Clarke wrote of a book by Anthony Collins. It is simply tacked on to the end of the Leibniz-Clarke correspondence.[98] This may supply the excuse for another common historical blunder, that of attributing the modern formulation of agent-causation to Thomas Reid.[99] Hence the short discussion of Clarke's arguments in this section are worthy of much fuller treatment and comparison with the views of, e.g. Reid, Chisholm, and Taylor.

In the Letter to Dodwell and Defenses are found Clarke's arguments for his epistemological foundationalism which reduces to considerations

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[98]The Remark's upon Human Liberty, found in Works IV:721-735, were originally published with the collection of papers that passed between Clarke and Leibniz which accounts for the quiet place they take in the Works.

[99]Reid himself gives full credit to Clarke and cites both the Demonstration and Remarks on Human Liberty. See Thomas Reid, Essays on the Active Powers of the Human Mind, edited by Baruch A. Brody (London: The M.I.T. Press, 1969), p. 325: "That the first motion, or the first effect, whatever it be, cannot be produced necessarily, and consequently, that the first cause must be a free agent, has been demonstrated so clearly and unanswerably by Dr. Clarke, both in his Demonstration of the being and attributes of God, and in the end of his remarks on Collin's Philosophical Inquiry concerning Human Liberty, that I can add nothing to what he has said; nor have I found any objection made to his reasoning, by any of the defenders of necessity."

There are numerous recent works that employ 'Reid's theory of agency' in the formulation of views on freedom and responsibility. I.e., T. Duggan, ed. An Inquiry into the Human Mind, on the Principles of Common Sense (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970); K. Lehrer and R.E. Beanblossom, eds. Thomas Reid's Inquiry and Essays (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1975); B. Brody, ed. Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man (Cambridge: M.I.T. Press, 1969); B. Brody, ed. Essays on the Active Powers of the Human Mind (Cambridge: M.I.T. Press, 1969); S.F. Barker and T.L. Beauchamp, eds. Thomas Reid: Critical Interpretations (Philadelphia: Philosophical Monographs, 1976); E.H. Madden, "Asa Mahan and the Oberlin Philosophy," in History, Religion, and Spiritual Democracy, Essays in Honor of Joseph L. Blau (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980); Francis Wayland's Elements of Moral Science, ed. J.L. Blau (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963); E. Flower and M. Murphy, A History of Philosophy in America (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1977), vol. I, chapters 4-6; Richard Taylor, Action and Purpose (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1966); Roderick Chisholm, "Freedom and Action" in Freedom and Determinism, ed. K. Lehrer (New York: Random House, 1966); and Edward H. Madden, "Commonsense and Agency Theory," Review of Metaphysics 36 (December 1982):319-341, esp. note 1.

of the self as an intuitively known substance. In the Remarks upon Human Liberty is found his answer to what, in the pen of Hume, may have become the most substantial foil to his moral theory; namely, the point, contending that even if reason is said to discern the moral difference of things, it is inert to move one to action. Above all else, morality is practical, in that it either produces or prevents actions. As reason is inert, morality cannot be derived from reason alone.[100] Clarke's answer is clearly spelled out in this later work. His position is one that again has the aim of undercutting Hobbes's (or Hume's) theory of motives or sentiments. He agrees that reason is inert to move one to act, but so also are motives. Clarke's position is that reason does not have the power to act, nor do motives. Persons, however, are 'active substances'; it is persons who 'act', in the strict sense of the term.

II.9.i Determinism or Human Agency

Collins is a determinist and speaks of man as a "necessary agent". Clarke begins by giving a fair summary of the question Collins undertakes to answer, and his basic argument.

> (2.37) The question he undertakes to determine, is thus stated by him; whether man be a free or necessary agent. And he is confident, that men are necessary agents; that all allow mad men, and children, and beasts, to be necessary agents; that some actions, are plainly actions that are necessary; that there can be no dispute, but perception is a necessary action of man; and that causes act on necessary agents, to whom they are necessary causes of action.[101]

As Collins and Clarke agree that the meaning of terms has to do with their referents, Clarke finds 'necessary agent' to be a contradiction in terms. He asks, "Now here I desire to know, what idea the word

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[100]Hume, Treatise 2.3.3, and 3.1.1. It is most likely that Hume had Clarke (and possibly Wollaston) specifically in mind in his rejection of a morality that is based on reason (Treatise 3.1.1).

[101]Works IV:721.

agent or action carries along with it when joined with necessary."[102] Upon analysis of the term Clarke argues that proper distinctions have not been employed.

First, when doing philosophy, one must be careful not to confuse a loose and figurative sense of words with their strict and philosophical meaning.

> (2.38) Vulgarly indeed, in loose, figurative, and improper speech, we call clocks and watches, necessary agents. But in truth and strictness of speaking, (which ought always to be carefully preserved in philosophical debated,) a necessary agent or necessary action is a contradiction in terms.[103]

It is strictly a contradiction in terms because of the obvious distinction between being an agent and a patient. A patient is that which "does not move, but is moved only," which is equivalent with saying that subject p "acts necessarily."[104] The proper term to express the idea Collins has in mind is "motion" and not "action."[105]

Second, a 'necessary agent' is self-contradictory because we do have a clear idea of what it means to be an agent. Indeed, Clarke's a priori method comes out again, as he argues that all persons have the idea of power or agency from self-knowledge. At this point he states the basic data in the form of an axiom.

> (2.39) To be an agent, signifies, to have a power of beginning motion . . . All power of acting, essentially implies at the same time a power of not acting: otherwise it is not acting, but barely a being acted upon by that power (whatever it be) which causes the action.[106]

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[102] Works IV:721.

[103] Works IV:721-722.

[104] Works IV:722.

[105] Works IV:722.

[106] Works IV:722.

Third, if Collins is properly clarified by understanding motion (whether an absolute, physical, or mechanical motion) for 'necessary action,' he backs himself into a corner with the reductio ad absurdum consequences of his position. Namely, Collins assumes (i) that he (everyone) individuates motion ('necessary action'). (ii) He also accepts the law of physical nature that every physical event that obtains is preceded by a cause of its occurring. The consequence of this is that with the individuation of event (or motion)x, one assumes that it was caused by 'event x-1', which must itself have a cause, 'event x-2', and so on ad infinitum or until one opts to jump to a 'Free Agent.' Motion cannot be accounted for as merely beginning with motion.

> (2.40) And motion cannot begin necessarily; because necessity of motion, supposes an efficiency superior to, and irresistible by, the thing moved; and consequently the beginning of the motion cannot be in that which is moved necessarily, but in the superior cause, or in the efficiency of some other cause still superior to that, till at length we arrive at some Free Agent.[107]

Fourth, in (2.37) Collins does not distinguish perception from action. To confound these is to call what is passive active, and by action to mean that which is passive. Thus by the word "will" he

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[107]Works IV:722. See Works IV:724 and 730, where Clarke speaks of "an infinite and eternal chain of effects without any cause at all; which is an express contradiction, except . . ." (p. 724). Cf. Richard Taylor, Metaphysics, Third Edition, (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1983), pp. 42-43. Taylor applies the same argument in his refutation of determinism. He refers to the infinite regress of inner states; Clarke applies (2.40) to both inner states or outer conditions. The replies of Clarke to the objection from the infinite regress of acts of willing are directed to Collins, but the objection is initially advanced by Hobbes, English Works I:412, IV:246, V:105. Hence Clarke, and not Thomas Reid, is the proper source of the reply from agent-causation. Cf. Reid, Essays on the Active Powers of the Human Mind, Essay IV, (p. 263).

sometimes means "the last perception of the understanding" which is passive, and sometimes "the first exertion of the self-moving faculty."[108] The interchange of terms is thoroughly suspect, but so is Collins's logic. In effect, Collins tries to restrict the question of human liberty to 'Is the man free to do what it is that he wills to do?' He answers the question affirmatively, holding that it is always necessary that a person "must necessarily do . . . what his understanding approves."[109] But there is no logically necessary connection between understanding, judgement, assent, approbation or liking and the efficient cause of action.

> (2.41) An occasion indeed, it may be; and action may be consequent (though without any physical connexion,) upon perception or judgement; nay, it may easily (if you please) be supposed to be always consequent upon it, and yet that at the same time there be no manner of physical or necessary connexion between them.[110]

Clarke gives an example in support of (2.41):

> (2.42) For instance: God's performing his promise, is always consequent upon his making it: yet there is no connection between them, as between cause and effect: for, not the promise of God, but his active power, is the alone physical or efficient cause of the performance.[111]

Fifth, an important reply which carries over to Hume's later criticism of (a misinterpreted?) Clarke, does not deny the passivity of reasons and arguments. It entails the intuitive knowledge of the truth of (2.39). He is replying to the claim that pleasure and pain are the causes that determine men's wills.

> (2.43) For, what idea can any man frame, how pleasure or pain, which are mere passive perceptions; or how reasons, motives and

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[108] *Works* IV:722.

[109] *Works* IV:723.

[110] *Works* IV:723.

[111] *Works* IV:723.

> arguments, which are mere abstract notions, can be the physical, necessary, and efficient cause of action? May not an abstract notion as well strike a ball, as be the efficient cause of motion in a man's body? Occasions indeed they may be, and are, upon which that substance in man, wherein the self-moving principle resides, freely exerts its active power. But it is the self-moving principle and not at all the reason or motive, which is the physical or efficient cause of action.[112]

Sixth, Clarke distinguishes between 'indifferency as to power' and 'indifferency as to inclination.'[113] Collins confounds the two in line with his determinism. But this distinction must go hand-in-hand with the fifth, and without it Clarke would be left with a version of the indetermist's theory of action.[114] It has already been shown in the first part of this chapter that one is directly acquainted with oneself as a conscious, thinking, rational being. This is a direct, metaphysical intuition that answers the question 'Why be rational?' with the critical intuitionists' knowledge claim, 'I ought to be rational because I am essentially (per essential powers) a rational being.'[115] Here Clarke begins to spell out a further essential power of persons, namely, what may be called the '<u>moral inclination</u>.' The chief passage where this active moral power of mind is found is quoted

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[112]<u>Works</u> IV:723.

[113]<u>Works</u> IV:724.

[114]Taylor, <u>Metaphysics</u>, pp. 44-5, contrasts the "puppet" model of determinism, with the "jerking phantom" model of simple indeterminism. Collins would be an example of an adherent of the 'puppet model', but without the innate moral inclination that Clarke distinguishes here, he himself would exemplify the 'jerking phantom' model, i.e. action "without any rhyme or reason at all."

[115]Possibly this is better stated, to explain Clarke, if an identification is made between the directly known rational inclination of the soul, and the fact that 'I know I am not indifferent in affirming that which I understand to be true rather than that which is false.' I am not indifferent, Clarke would say, because I have a 'rational inclination.'

at (2.47) in length. Clarke distinguishes two senses of willing, (2.45) and (2.46); one pairs up with innate 'inclinations' and the other with the 'self-moving power.' The first does not causally override the second, but the 'inclination' - to be rational and moral ('perfect') - is inescapably known to every person. A person is at liberty to do what is right or wrong (because a person is a 'free agent'), but a person is not at liberty to prefer wrong and evil, rather than the right and the good. 'Moral liberty' (2.47) is joined with the understanding which judges the difference of things. In judging one course of action to be right and an alternative to be wrong, one is not left in a practical vacuum. 'Moral liberty' is 'that inclination' which 'every rational being does so much the more constantly and regularly follow, as the being is more rational and perfect' (2.47). This concept is further developed in the following chapter.[116] The 'fact' of the moral inclination is the bedrock moral datum that is unavoidably known, in being a person, by direct acquaintance. It is the 'moral fact' around which Clarke's 'world of morals' turns. It is the point of conjunction between the person as a self-identical substance and the person as the cause of action. A person is an active substance, who is not indifferent, yet not compelled, inclined but not ('physically' or causally) necessitated, to do what is rational and right.

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[116]Chapter III, pp. 143-8. Cf. Works IV:730 where Clarke speaks of 'our assent to truth' which is simply the way the understanding is inclined; but this does not necessarily 'cause' a man to act. The same 'active principle' is essential in God himself (Works IV:731). In God, but not in men, 'doing right is always concomitant with, or consequent upon, judging right' (Works IV:732). Cf. Kant, who says that it is doubtless man has 'a primitive natural capacity for moral discernment,' but it is a capacity which only becomes evident when men are forced into society with one another (Kant's Werke XI:38; and comment on this in Howard Williams, Kant's Political Philosophy (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1983), p.9).

II.9.ii The Moral Inclination and Moral Necessity

The source of the concept of liberty is the direct acquaintance a person has with his 'power of acting.' Collins (like Locke?) "makes the difference between a man and a clock to consist only in sensation and intelligence, not in any power of acting."[117]

(2.44) Whereas indeed the whole essence of liberty, consists in the power of acting. Action and liberty are identical ideas: and the true definition of a free-being, is, one that is indued with a power of acting as well as of being acted upon.[118]

The power of acting is not indifferent. Clarke's notion of what is 'natural' for a person to do is embedded in the passage quoted at length below; it is natural for a person to act according to what is 'rational and perfect.' The perception of ideas and the judging of propositions are passive faculties of the understanding. The 'doing as we will' can have either a passive or an active sense. The passive sense of the word 'willing' is understood in (2.45):

(2.45) Willing or preferring, is the same with respect to good and evil, that judging is with respect to truth or falsehood: it is judging that one thing is upon the whole better than another, or not so bad as another.[119]

'Willing' in the active sense is understood in (2.46):

(2.46) This power of the man thus to order the beginning or forbearance, the continuance or ending of any action is called the will; and the actual exercise thereof, willing.[120]

The sense in (2.45) is 'entirely passive' and that in (2.46) is 'truly active.' Thus the question 'whether we are at liberty to will, or not to will' has two answers. If (2.45) is the sense intended, we are not at liberty. If (2.46) is understood as implied, then we are. To the

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[117] Works IV:725.

[118] Works IV:725. Emphasis added.

[119] Works IV:727. This is a quotation from Collins that Clarke interprets in terms of its passive and active senses.

[120] Works IV:727.

question '"whether we can suspend willing, or no;" (in which, the learned and judicious Mr. Locke was indeed much perplexed:)',[121] in the sense of (2.45) we cannot suspend willing; in the sense of (2.46), we can.

The above two senses of 'willing' are similarly called upon in reply to the question, 'whether we are a liberty to will or choose one or the other of two or more objects.' The concepts of inclination and moral necessity are employed, which is of particular interest.

(2.47) The answer is still the same; in the former [2.45] sense of the word, we are not at liberty; in the latter [2.46], we are. Nor does it make any alteration in this case, whether the objects proposed be perfectly alike and indifferent, or whether they be unlike and different. For if the understanding judges them to be indifferent, it cannot help judging them to be indifferent; and if it judges them to be different, it cannot help judging them to be different: and yet in either case, the self-moving faculty retains fully a physical power, or liberty, of actually exerting itself towards either of the indifferent, or either of the different objects. Which liberty of acting, with regard to the indifferent objects, is a moral as well as a physical liberty: but with regard to the different objects, 'tis joined with that inclination, which (by an usual figure of speech) is styled moral necessity; which every rational being does so much the more constantly and regularly follow, as the being is more rational and perfect; but which nevertheless is as far from entrenching the least degree upon literal and physical liberty, as even a perfect indifferency itself.[122]

This passage goes a long way in aiding our understanding of Clarke's nebulous 'fitness of things;' the heart of his moral theory as found in the Demonstration and Discourse. It is relevant here to note a few distinctions in (2.47).[123] The understanding judges not only (a) between indifferent or different objects, corresponding to the 'fitness of things;' it also judges (b) between morally indifferent or

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[121] Works IV:727.

[122] Works IV:727-728. Emphasis added.

[123] See Chapter III for the fuller development of these distinctions.

different objects of choice, corresponding to the moral fitness of things. The difference between (a) and (b) is that (b) is 'joined with that inclination' which is called a 'moral necessity'. It is a 'necessity' in the sense of (2.45), i.e. I am not at liberty to prefer that which is evil or wrong to that which is good or right. I know I prefer good to evil. It is an active power or moral inclination that I simply find to be essential in me being myself; an essential power that distinguishes a person from a machine and a beast.[124] This moral necessity, furthermore, is not a physical necessity. It is a moral necessity in that it only inclines but does not physically necessitate a corresponding action. In knowing myself, I know that it is moral to do what is good and right, and that I ought to do what is good and right, i.e. what is consistent with my nature as a moral being. I can however, because I have contra-causal power, choose to do otherwise. It is an intuitively known moral fact that 'I know I ought to prefer good to evil.' Thus 'I cannot forget the difference between right and wrong' because it is stamped upon my nature. But I can choose to act contrary to what I understand to be the good and the right because, as a person, I have the power of acting (2.44) either in accordance with or contrary to my moral 'inclination' (2.47). To act with respect <u>for</u> my moral inclination to the good and the right, is to

(2.48) grow continually in degree [not in kind], not more free, but more [a] moral agent.[125]

The notion of self-control and moral improvement are seen to be firmly protected by the concept of 'moral necessity.'

The theological implications of the concept are by now quite evident. (1) There are two types of free moral agents, man and God.

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[124]See <u>Works</u> IV:729.

[125]<u>Works</u> IV:722.

Man, as a "free agent" has

(2.49) received the power of beginning motion, from the will of a superior free agent:[126]

God himself is the Free Agent who is

(2.50) necessarily existent, necessarily all-knowing, necessarily all-powerful; [which is not a contradiction in terms] because existence, knowledge, power, and the like, are not actions;[127]

Finally, the bedrock of Clarke's moral theory is what is a priori necessary for his moral theology. He concludes his criticisms of Collins, writing:

(2.51) Religion there can be none, without a moral difference of things: a moral difference of things there cannot be, where there is no place for action: and action there can be none, without liberty.[128]

II.10 Summary

It is generally assumed that, 'of epistemology proper there is little or nothing in Clarke' (D.D. Raphael). This has been shown to be a mistaken view; in fact Clarke's work on the nature of mind is the most extensive of any immediately post-Lockean British writers.

In this chapter, three important concepts in the history of philosophy of mind have been found to be generated from Clarke's work on the nature of 'individual personality'. There are two concepts that are wrongly attributed to proceed initially from Butler: (1) the distinction between the strict and the complex (or loose) notion of identity, and (2) the argument that memory does not constitute personal identity, rather it necessarily entails and presupposes identity. Also, (3) the

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[126] *Works* IV:722.

[127] *Works* IV:722.

[128] *Works* IV:735.

concept of agent-causation, normally believed to have been fathered by Thomas Reid, is clearly developed and adopted by Clarke.

The importance of this chapter as regards Clarke's moral theory is that his arguments about knowing oneself directly (by 'acquaintance'), as a 'rational and moral agent', is the epistemological ground of his 'intuitional' foundationalism. He does not believe that reason moves one to action, but that having a reason can be a motive for an agent to act upon. But the person as agent is not completely indifferent in matters of choice; two senses of will are distinguished, (2.45) and (2.46). The determined sense (2.45) is that the will is inclined, but does not necessitate an agent, to choose the rational (more reasonable, or true) alternative, and the moral (the right and the morally good). The determined will (2.45) constitutes an active power. It is the directly known, essential powers that constitute a person as a 'rational and moral agent'.

Clarke then is devoted to a refutation of materialism in its two most influential seventeenth century forms. Clarke attacks the radical Hobbesian claim that 'immaterial substance' is meaningless, a view likewise characteristic of Hume in Treatise (pp. 240, 250). But as Clarke argues against Collins, he is attacking the less radical Lockean view that God might superadd the faculty of thinking to a system of matter. Thus Clarke does not fit the neat historical view that British philosophy is basically refinements on the ideas of Locke. Clarke's position was the dominant view of his time, e.g. Hume Treatise (p. 241).

PART III

THEORY OF MORAL KNOWLEDGE

III.1 Introduction

It will now be assumed, from Chapter II, that Clarke gave due consideration to the nature of mind, and that his theory of the mind's self-reflexive power constitutes the foundation of his essentialist epistemology. This is determinative if we hope to gain a clear understanding of his broader moral theory. Clarke is usually read as simply assuming or defining his moral theory of the fitness of things, and giving no supportive base for it in terms of its dependence on the nature of the human mind.

In particular, the faculties or powers of the soul or mind are innate. The two essential 'natural' tendencies or inclinations of mind are the rational and moral inclinations. These have both a passive sense (2.45) and an active sense (2.46). In the passive sense, one simply discovers oneself to have an unalterable tendency to prefer truth to falsehood, and to prefer right to wrong. The rational and moral inclinations of mind are directly ('necessarily') known, and are not acquired by experience. They are simply 'in the nature of things', the nature that the Creator has seen fit to make in his own image. Although Clarke labels this the 'passive' sense, it is passive only in

the sense that it is unchangeable. It is however a 'power', i.e. an active moral inclination, and by it one knows that the right and the good ought to be willed.

In the active sense of (2.46), because of the innate tendencies of mind, a person can develop his reasoning capacity and knowledge of truth. Likewise, because a person is not amoral but moral by (2.45), he can become more virtuous or more vile. A person is by definition a 'rational and moral agent'.

In this chapter I will fill out the moral theory of Clarke from the rather barren moral ego of Chapter II. To do this the slippery whale, 'the fitness of things', will need to be tackled. The account of the nature and knowledge of the moral self will (1) have significant explanatory power in understanding Clarke's meaning of 'the fitness of things' and consequently in weighing the criticisms of Hutcheson and Hume. It will also (2) be the ground of Clarke's argument against Hobbes who suggests that one ought to keep compacts. Clarke's reply is that if this is a duty, then it is a duty 'antecedent' to the signing or the agreement of any compact. If it is an antecedent duty, then moral duties are not arbitrary, nor created by compacts. And (3) the moral self of Chapter II will consistently fit in with the three branches of practical duties, namely the three relations in which every person exists, first of which is the duty of piety to God. The unique characteristic of Clarke's Natural Law Theory is the account of an innate, 'moral inclination'(2.47) which frees it from being characterized as suggesting that universal (innate) moral ideas, rules, laws, duties or propositions pop into all rational minds and are the ground of moral knowledge. Such an innatist doctrine is "a naive form of innatism to which no one subscribes."[1]

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[1]John Colman, John Locke's Moral Philosophy (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1983), p. 51. Locke rejects naive innatism and would reject Clarke's 'moral tendency' form as well.

III.2 'Fitness' as 'Rightness' and 'Obligation'

Although Clarke is not entirely consistent, his concept of the moral fitness of things is chiefly understood as linked with moral 'suitability', right action, moral obligation, or duty. This distinguishes it from direct association with goodness, a moral quality that varies in degrees. (Clarke does devote considerable space to the concept of moral goodness, especially in his sermons.) In this regard Clarke regards the moral life as, first of all, obedience to the duty of doing the right action, and the objective of Proposition I of the Discourse is to argue for the objective status of moral truth. At the end of this first section he writes,

> (3.1) Thus have I endeavoured to deduce the original obligations of morality, from the necessary and eternal reason and proportion of things.[2]

The nature of obligation and rightness is basic, specific, and unanalysable in any more simple moral terms, and it cannot be explained away (i.e. as Hobbes would have it in his original state of nature). Two attempts at defining obligation are explicitly rejected by Clarke, namely, Divine Command Theories[3] and theories of public utility.

> (3.2) Some have chosen to found all difference of good and evil, in the mere positive will and power of God: but the absurdity of this, I have shown elsewhere. Others have contended, that all difference of good and evil, and all obligations of morality, ought to be founded originally upon considerations of public utility.... but truth and right (whether public or private) founded in the eternal and necessary reason of things, is what every man can judge of, when laid before him. 'Tis necessarily one and the same, to every man's understanding...[4]

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[2]Works II:630. His emphasis.

[3]Clarke footnotes Descartes as a Divine Command Theorist, "Cùm omnis ratio veri & boni ab ejus omnipotentiâ dependeat. Cartes. Epist. 6, partis secundae" (Works II:630, note a). He could also have identified Locke as a voluntarist, whose account of the moral 'ought' is thoroughly legalist. (Essay 1.3.5).

[4]Works II:630.

Clarke does accept the Aristotelian[5] and Thomist[6] conception of good as that which things aim at, or desire, but unshakeably asserts that there is a species of good that is intrinsically related to morality. Locke, of course, defines "good and evil" as "nothing but pleasure or pain, or that which occasions, or procures pleasure or pain to us. Morally good and evil then, is only the conformity or disagreement of our voluntary actions to some law,"[7] which attends our observance because of ensuing reward or punishment.

One of Clarke's clearest statements that right[8] is a sui generis concept is found in a sermon, 'Of the Omnipotence of God.'[9] In one of his frequent rebuttals of the view that right means what the power and will of God [or a Leviathan] declares to be right, he adds:

> (3.3) For, not power or will, but the reason of things only, is the foundation of right: and tho' 'tis indeed certainly true, that whatever God does, we are sure 'tis right, because he does it; yet the meaning of this, is not, that God's doing or willing a thing, makes it to be right; but that his wisdom and goodness is such, that we may depend upon it, even without understanding it, that whatever he wills, was in itself right, antecedent to his willing it; and that he therefore willed it, because it was right.[10]

In the same sermon is found the explanation of how it is that persons

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[5]Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics, I, 1094a3.

[6]Aquinas, Summa Theologiae, Ia.Q5, Art. I.

[7]Locke, Essay, 2.28.5.

[8]Moral rightness is understood whenever 'right' is used in this chapter. Uses of 'right' in cases like 'the right book' or 'the right key' are not moral uses of right.

[9]Works I:53-59.

[10]Works I:55. Emphasis added.

are necessarily acquainted with moral rightness: it is by means of "the image of the divine nature" which is "implanted in men",[11] uniquely.

III.3 'Fitness' in the Discourse

In the chief passage of the Discourse where 'fitness' is presented it is problematic (at least at an initial reading) to sort out Clarke's account of his method of doing metaethics, from his account of the meaning of fitness. When these are not adequately distinguished, or when they are understood as coincident, Clarke is viewed as a "definist".[12] A definist theory is "that Ought can be defined in terms of Is, and Value in terms of Fact".[13] Accordingly, "basic ethical terms, such as 'right' and 'good' can be defined by assertions of fact of some kind -- empirical, metaphysical or theological."[14] Such an interpretation of Clarke, I believe, might be tenable if right is said to be defined by recourse to a 'metaphysical fact". But the relevant metaphysical fact, given the material discussed in Chapter II, is the directly known 'moral inclination' of mind. But then this undermines the claim that Clarke is a definist because ethical terms are not defined or translated into non-ethical ones, ethical sentences are not translated into non-ethical ones of a factual kind. For Clarke, there is a non-reductive world of morals with which every 'rational and moral agent' has direct acquaintance. Thus it is incorrect to interpret Clarke as a definist.

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[11] Works I:55.

[12] E.g. William M. Longsworth, Ph.D. Thesis, p. 9

[13] William K. Frankena, Ethics, 2nd. ed. (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1973), p. 80.

[14] Longsworth, Ph.D. Thesis, p. 9.

By contrast, if Clarke's method is understood to be phenomenological in nature[15] in (3.4.1) to (3.4.5), then his meaning of fitness as a relation of a person (moral agent) to an action or situation (3.4.3) is clearly discernible, and coherent with his theory of 'moral inclination'. In virtue of the moral property of mind, obligation arises or 'flows from the essences' of persons in relations (3.4.5). The chief passage follows.[16]

(3.4.1) That there are differences of things; and different relations, respects or proportions, of some things towards others; is as evident and undeniable, as that one magnitude or number, is greater, equal to, or smaller than another.

(3.4.2) That from these different relations of different things, there necessarily arises an agreement or disagreement of some things with others, or a fitness or unfitness of the application of different things or different relations one to another; is likewise as plain, as that there is any such thing as proportion or disproportion in geometry and arithmetic, or uniformity or disformity in comparing together the respective figures of bodies.

(3.4.3) Further, that there is a fitness or suitableness of certain circumstances to certain persons, and an unsuitableness of others; founded in the nature of things and the qualifications of persons, antecedent to all positive appointment whatsoever;

(3.4.4) Also that from the different relations of different persons one to another, there necessarily arises a fitness or unfitness of certain manners of behaviour of some persons towards others:

(3.4.5) Is as manifest, as that the properties which flow from the essences of different mathematical figures, have different congruities or incongruities between themselves; or that, in mechanics, certain weights or powers have very different forces, and different effects one upon another, according to their different distances, of different positions and situations in respect of each other.

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[15]'phenomenological' in the sense that (3.4.1) is an explanation of the way the understanding directly 'sees' or knows equals are equals. Two geometric figures are not defined as equal in (3.4.1); rather, the point is that the understanding can compare different figures, and simply perceives the nature of the relation of their size or shape to each other.

[16]Works II:608. His emphasis.

The meaning of 'rightness' is described in (3.4.3) in terms of 'fitness or suitableness'. But 'fitness' is not a non-moral term that defines 'rightness.' Throughout Clarke's writings 'rightness,' 'moral obligation,' and 'fitness' are interchangeable if not "coincident and identical".[17] Fitness is as much a moral concept as rightness or moral goodness. In the context of the relation of reward and punishment to obligation, Clarke is seen interchanging these moral concepts.

(3.5) This also is very evident: because, if good and evil, right and wrong, fitness and unfitness of being practised, be (as has been shown) originally, eternally, and necessarily, in the nature of the things themselves; 'tis plain that the view of particular rewards or punishments...cannot be the original cause of the obligation of the Law...[18]

Why did Clarke use the word fitness if he meant rightness? It is not a word that has "the authority of common use".[19] Today it raises ideas of physical fitness and health studios, if not of a key fitting the lock. What positive service can be gained by the use of this term? I think if Clarke were to reply, he would have several reasons in favour of its use.

First, when we say that something is fitting, the notion entails a consideration of a relation (3.4.1) that arises between two or more items. The word rightness or obligation does not as easily convey this important feature of the nature of moral obligation.

Second, if fitness as a relational concept does describe some important feature of moral obligation, then it will be evident that it is

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[17]This phrase is from Richard Price who I take to interpret Clarke in the same manner that I am suggesting. See Richard Price, A Review of the Principal Questions in Morals, edited by D. Daiches Raphael (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1948), Chapter 6.

[18]Works II:627-628.

[19]Reid, Essays on the Active Powers of the Human Mind, p. 472.

reason or the understanding that discerns it. Moral obligation will more easily be distanced from 'feelings of duty' or 'sentiments of revulsion'. Thus it will direct us more clearly to the necessary role of objective reason, rather than subjective appetites and passions, as the actual nature of rightness.

Third, fitness or suitableness is a concept that has uses in contexts which are non-moral, and can thus aid our understanding of what is involved in the specifically moral concept of rightness. The overlapping notion is that the phenomena of two different things either fitting together or not, is something that is directly understood. For example, 3+2 will undeniably (3.4.1) be 'suitable' with 5 (given the elementary understanding of 3, +, 2, =, and 5). Or, in the relation of two triangles that measure the same base and height, a necessary suitableness or congruence will arise (3.4.2). One triangle alone is not congruent. The comparison with rightness is that a person, devoid of all relations (which is not possible on Clarke's account), is not under any obligation. Rightness obtains when a person comes into certain relations.

Fourth, the concept of fitness normally implies not only a relation that obtains, but an evaluation of the nature of the relation. Fitness is intelligibly described as the relation of two things to some standard.[20] In applied geometry, two triangles are congruent by reference to Euclidean axioms (the standard). In moral situations, an action is right for a person in situation x, but the action may not be 'absolutely right' ('absolutely fit') in <u>every</u> situation. Or conversely, one may say that God (alone) does what is 'absolutely fit' because he is morally perfect.[21] The concepts of relation <u>and</u> standard are

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[20]L.A. Selby-Bigge, <u>British Moralists</u>, 2 vols. (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1897), I:xxxiii-xxxv. He notes this meaning of fitness, but thinks that it is detrimental to Clarke.

[21]This is not circular reasoning given the logical distinction between morality and theology.

not always clearly distinguished in the word rightness.

Fifth, as C.D. Broad points out,[22] description in terms of fitness has "the great merit of connecting the ethical sense of right with other uses of the word."

> (3.6) It seems to me that, when I speak of anything as "right", I am always thinking of it as a factor in a certain wider total situation, and that I mean that it is "appropriately" or "fittingly" related to the rest of the situation. When I speak of anything as "wrong" I am thinking of it as "inappropriately" or "unfittingly" related to the rest of the situation. This is quite explicit when we say that love is the right emotion to feel to one's parents, or that pity and help are the right kinds of emotion and action in presence of undeserved suffering. This relational character of rightness and wrongness tends to be disguised by the fact that some types of action are commonly thought to be wrong absolutely; but this, I think, means only that they are held to be unfitting to all situations.[23]

Broad, like Clarke, is able to connect the sense of moral right with non-moral uses of the word, i.e. "the right key is that his using of which fits into a situation of which the other element is his wish to unlock a particular door."[24]

Finally, Clarke's purpose in Proposition I, and hence (3.4.1) to (3.4.5), is to demonstrate that moral obligation necessarily arises, that it has an a priori nature which is discovered in the life of every maturing person. This has been noted above in (3.1). His method in (3.4.1) to (3.4.5) is to describe the phenomenon of rational fitness, e.g. in geometry and arithmetic (3.4.1) and (3.4.2); and to describe the phenomenon of moral fitness, e.g. in persons in certain situations (3.4.3). A more particular example of being directly acquainted with moral fitness is given by Clarke in a near parallel passage in the Demonstration.

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[22]This is W.D. Ross's evaluation of Broad's account. See Ross, Foundations of Ethics, p. 51.

[23]Broad, Five Types of Ethical Theory, pp. 164-165.

[24]Ross, Foundations of Ethics, p. 51.

(3.7) Further; that there is a fitness or suitableness of certain circumstances to certain persons...must unavoidably be acknowledged by every one, who will not affirm that 'tis equally fit and suitable, in the nature and reason of things, that an innocent being should be extremely and eternally miserable, as that it should be free from such misery.[25]

Clarke's point is not that there is more than general agreement about the unfitness or wrongness about inflicting misery on an innocent person. He means the example to demonstrate that moral obligation 'necessarily arises' and therefore it is a priori the case that it is a (moral) 'property which flows from the essence' (3.4.5) of a moral-agent-in-relation.

This, then, is the development of the 'moral inclination' concept from Chapter II. That the moral inclination is an essential power of mind is found in the 'synthetic a priori situations' like (3.7). 'Properties' always are properties of, or flow from, some substance. Clarke is not suggesting that the example in (3.7), and those in (3.6), are universal innate moral ideas or propositions. He is arguing that the fact that rightness and obligation do 'arise' is proof of the essential, moral power of mind.

(3.8) Thus it appears in general, that the mind of man cannot avoid giving its assent...[26]

A particular, universal moral law is not to be found in Clarke. His innate dispositional theory does not require it. The 'argument' of Proposition I is to show that the ground of moral knowledge is the self-evident 'moral inclination'.[27]

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[25] Works II:571.

[26] Works II:618. His emphasis.

[27] Cf. Reid, Essays on the Active Powers of the Human Mind, p. 471: "The first principles of morals are not deductions. They are self-evident; and their truth, like that of other axioms, is perceived without reasoning or deduction."

III.3.i Hume's Criticism of Clarke on Fitness

The most famous portion of Hume's third volume of the Treatise, has come to be called "Hume's Law":[28] that ought cannot be deduced from is. And the one at whom fingers are most frequently pointed as the chief 'law-breaker' is Samuel Clarke.[29]

In the broader scope of Treatise 3.1.1, Hume has the doctrine of Cudworth, Clarke, Balguy, Wollaston, and possibly Locke in mind.[30] A.C. MacIntyre believes Hume was attempting to subvert the argument of the most popular moral treatise of the times, The Whole Duty of Man.[31] But it seems to me that Hume had more scholarly targets in mind. And in two of the four principal arguments in Treatise 3.1.1, it does seem to me that Clarke is particularly in mind. The passage that is taken to argue most damningly against Clarke is quoted below.

> In every system of morality, which I have hitherto met with, I have always remark'd, that the author proceeds for some time in the ordinary way of reasoning, and establishes the being of a God, or makes observations concerning human affairs; when of a sudden I am surpriz'd to find, that in stead of the usual copulations of propositions, is and is not, I meet with no proposition that is not connected with an ought, or an ought not. This change is imperceptible; but is, however, of the last consequence. For as this ought, or ought not, expresses some new relation or affirmation, 'tis necessary that it shou'd be observ'd and explain'd; and at the same time that a reason should be given, for what seems

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[28]E.g. Mackie, Hume's Moral Theory, pp. 61-63. Cf. Stanley Tweyman, Reason and Conduct in Hume and His Predecessors (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1974), pp. 73-87, 111-120.

[29]E.g. Mackie, Hume's Moral Theory, p. 56; D.D. Raphael, "Hume's Critique of Ethical Rationalism," in Hume and The Enlightenment, ed. by William B. Todd (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1974), p. 26.

[30]Hume may have had Locke, Essay 3.11.16, and 4.12.8, in mind, concerning his claim about the possible demonstrative science of ethics.

[31]A.C. MacIntyre, "Hume on 'is' and 'ought'," The Is-Ought Question, W.D. Hudson, ed. (London: Macmillan, 1979), p. 47.

> altogether inconceivable, how this new relation can be a deduction from others, which are entirely different from it. But as authors do not commonly use this precaution, I shall presume to recommend it to the readers; and am persuaded, that this small attention wou'd subvert all the vulgar systems of morality, and let us see, that the distinction of vice and virtue is not founded merely on the relation of objects, nor is perceiv'd by reason.[32]

It is true that Clarke answers Hume's description of an author who reasons to establish the being of 'a God' (the Demonstration) and then moves on to propositions about the obligations of natural religion (the Discourse). It is also possible that Hume interpreted (3.4.1) to (3.4.5) as Clarke's attempt to deduce moral obligation from factual statements about relations. But as I have already argued, the particular relations wherein moral fitness (obligation) arise, are ones with a moral-agent-in-relation. In Chapter II it was shown that, on Clarke's view, self-knowledge, strictly speaking, is assumed and presupposed in all reasoning. The nature of a person is his essential powers, not the least of which is the 'moral inclination'. Clarke's method in (3.4.1) to (3.4.5) is to demonstrate that because of the 'moral inclination', a person in a state of affairs, say, where one is asked if an innocent person ought to be made to suffer eternally, will know 'fitness' to unavoidably arise. The 'demonstration' is not one that moves from theology to natural religion; nor is it one that moves from is to ought. Rather, Clarke describes the 'facts' of a relation for a moral agent, and shows that a moral obligation will flow from such a state of affairs. Or, it is in the exercise of my rational and moral powers that their a priori nature is directly known.

The second place in Treatise 3.1.1 where Clarke[33] is particularly

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[32]Hume, Treatise 3.1.1 (pp. 469-470).

[33]Hume, Treatise 3.1.1 (p. 465).

in mind is in the argument that morality cannot consist in relations between situations and actions, because the same kind of relations can obtain without any notion of immorality obtaining, therefore showing that obligation cannot consist in relations of ideas.[34] He illustrates his argument by means of two examples. The first is that "any inanimate object, such as an oak or an elm" can drop a seed, which produces a sapling, that eventually "overtops and destroys the parent tree."[35] But no parricide or ingratitude is discoverable, as when a child murders his parent. Similarly, a relation of incest among animals is not criminal, as it is among the human species. Hence, as "animals are susceptible of the same relations, with respect to each other, as the human species" they would therefore "be susceptible of the same morality, if the essence of morality consisted in these relations."[36] Although "reason must find" these relations, it "can never produce them. This argument deserves to be weigh'd, as being, in my opinion, entirely decisive."[37]

This argument completely misses Clarke, however, because he argues that no 'inanimate object' is a moral agent. Only persons (angels, and God) are moral agents by nature. But even with this aside, Clarke's argument at (3.4.3) is not that morality resides in bare relations; rather, it obtains in particular states of affairs, or relations of persons in certain circumstances involving a choice between doing x or

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[34]Hume, Treatise 3.1.1 (pp. 466-467).

[35]Ibid., p.467.

[36]Ibid., p. 468.

[37]Ibid.

y. Inanimate vegetables cannot choose between alternative courses of action. Animals, on Clarke's common sense view, do not have contra-causal freedom, they are determined by their appetites, and are not morally responsible creatures. They are not moral agents as regards their essential powers. Clarke argues that it is the unique nature of a person to be able to know himself and in so doing to know themself as a being who cannot but have a moral (sympathy-independent) inclination to choose the right action. The wills (2.4 5) of all intelligent beings are constantly directed to give "assent" to do that which is discerned to be right, "unless their will [2.46] be corrupted by particular interest or affection, or swayed by some unreasonable and prevailing lust."[38] Even Mackie concedes this point:

> And this is surely how moral characterization has been understood throughout the whole history of moral philosophy. It is not merely that it is linguistically odd to use words like 'right' and 'wrong' with no prescriptive force... What is more important than this linguistic point is that Clarke, Butler, and many others are concerned to defend the metaphysical view which is represented by the way in which such moral terms combine a descriptive logic with a prescriptive force, namely that there are objective requirements or categorical imperatives in the nature of things.[39]

Thus Clarke does not fall prey to Hume's stronger argument of deducing moral propositions from purely factual propositions, nor does his relational theory of obligation crumble under his argument from barren, descriptive relations.

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[38]Works II:570.

[39]Mackie, Hume's Moral Theory, p. 55.

III.3.ii Hutcheson's Criticism of Clarke

Hume's moral theory owed a debt to Francis Hutcheson's 'moral sense' theory.[40] In fact, it was from Hutcheson's contention that all moral judgements rest not upon reason but solely on feeling that provoked Hume to a "new Scene of Thought".[41] But whereas the criticism by Hume of Clarke's ethical rationalism was designed to destroy it, Hutcheson argued that the fitness of things presupposes a moral sense.[42] Although the objectivity Clarke seeks to maintain is similarly undercut by the criticisms of both antagonists, Hutcheson's argument is different and therefore warrants independent consideration.

In Section II of Hutcheson's Illustrations on the Moral Sense (1728), specific attention is devoted to one of the other "explications of morality, which have been much insisted on of late," i.e. "Dr. Samuel Clarke's Boyle's lectures."[43] I believe Raphael[44] has clearly

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[40]E.g. In a letter written by Hume to Hutcheson, prior to the publication of Book III of the Treatise, he wrote: "I wish from my Heart, I could avoid concluding, that since Morality, according to your Opinion as well as mine, is determin'd merely by Sentiment, it regards only human Nature and human Life." See Letters of David Hume, ed. by J.Y.T. Greig (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1932), I:40. In this same letter Hume is expressing how a-theological or non-theological his moral theory is, i.e. it yields no data upon which a theology can be built.

[41]See Letters of David Hume, I:32-35; and Norman Kemp Smith, The Philosophy of David Hume (London: Macmillan, 1941), Chapter II, esp. pp. 41-51.

[42]Hutcheson says his criticism "is not intended to oppose his [Clarke's] Scheme" but rather to show that it "is no otherwise intelligible, but upon supposition of a moral sense." See Hutcheson, Illustrations on the Moral Sense, 3rd ed., p. 253.

[43]Raphael, British Moralists, I:313(§367).

[44]Rafilovitch, D.Phil. Thesis, pp. 62-67.

shown Hutcheson's criticism of Clarke's relational fitness to be ineffective because he assumes two contestable items. (1) Hutcheson makes the Lockean assumption that all simple ideas must be the perception of some sense.[45] And if he is to be read as saying that fitness is a relation (it is unclear whether Hutcheson thinks fitness is a relation or a quality), then he makes the very questionable assumption that simple relations must be perceived by sense. (2) If Hutcheson, on the other hand, thinks fitness is a quality,[46] then on his own theory it is a quality that denotes a successful means to an end.[47] But if that constitutes fitness, is not a means to an end something that is the work of the understanding to perceive? Alternatively, if it is simply granted that fitness is a quality, then it is only an empiricist's assumption that all qualities must be given to sense.

These two internal inconsistencies do not however prove Clarke's theory to be true by default. But the basic argument that is to hand for Clarke has been developed in Part II.5. Namely, sense-perceptions (whether moral sense-perceptions or natural sense-perceptions) necessarily presuppose a subject who perceives. It is an illusion to believe that perceptions (or bundles of perceptions) are ontological entities. The proper expression is always, 'I perceive grass', never 'Greenish after-image'. By Clarke's a priori method, if 'I perceive grass', it must be that I am a sentient being. And if 'I perceive a

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[45]See Hutcheson, Illustrations, 3rd. ed., p. 256.

[46]Hudson reads Hutcheson as thinking that fitness is not a relation, but a simple idea, hence an idea given by sense. See Hudson, Ethical Intuitionism, p. 36.

[47]Raphael, British Moralists, pp. 314-315(§367): "The moral fitness must be that of the ultimate end itself: the public good alone is a fit end, therefore the means fit for this end alone are good."

moral fitness of things', it must be that I am a sentient, moral being. On Clarke's view the basic moral awareness is direct acquaintance of the modification of my essential self. Certain relational states of affairs are the occasions of its exercise, but moral qualities are not 'out there', rather they are properties of persons.[48]

III.3.iii Antecedent Fitness in Hobbes

Thus far it has been shown that Clarke argues for the moral nature of the person straight-forwardly in the metaphysics of soul (Chapter II). It has also been shown that he offers a phenomenological argument at (3.4.1) to (3.4.5) in support of the same. A third approach is found in his criticism of Hobbes's view of moral obligation.

In the context of the first proposition of the Discourse, for the sake of discussion, Clarke gives Hobbes his contrasting account of 'Natural Law'. He grants Hobbes's starting point and asks whether or not it stands up to our actual moral experience; whether it is not then seen to be incoherent and indeed false. Speaking of 'The Laws of Nature', Hobbes feels that moral obligation is essentially (?) a matter of appetites and customs.

> (3.9) And the Science of them, is the true and only Moral Philosophy. For Morall Philosophy is nothing else but the Science of what is Good, and Evill, in the conversation, and Society of man-kind. Good, and Evill, are names that signifie our Appetites, and Aversions; which in different tempers, customs, and doctrines of men, are different: And divers men, differ not onely in their Judgement, on the senses of what is pleasant, and unpleasant to the taste, smell, hearing, touch, and sight; but also of what is conformable, or disagreeable to Reason, in the actions of common life. Nay, the same man, in divers times, differs from himselfe; and one time praiseth, that is, calleth Good, what another time he dispraiseth, and calleth Evil: From whence arise Disputes, Controversies, and at last War.[49]

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[48]There is then a similarity between Clarke's theory of moral powers and Hutcheson's moral sense. But for Hutcheson the power of receiving moral perceptions is occasioned from the "presence of an object which occurs to us, independent on our will" (from Hudson, Ethical Intuitionism, p. 19). For Clarke the 'moral inclination' is an implanted determination of the will, as in (2.45).

[49]Hobbes, Leviathan, Chapter XV (Everyman edition), p. 82.

Hobbes's view is that outside any society a man has a 'right' to everything, but inside a society there are Laws of Nature to be prudentially followed.[50] An interesting consequence of this would be to raise the question of whether Robinson Crusoe experienced the difference between moral right and wrong to vanish at one time, and later experienced it as a new or nearly forgotten feeling.[51]

Clarke questions Hobbes's pre-commonwealth antinomianism,[52] and shows that it is inconsistent as a moral theory, and incoherent with

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[50]An influential contemporary defence of Hobbes's basic view is by Kurt Baier, The Moral Point of View: A Rational Basis of Ethics (New York: Random House, 1958), pp. 148-157. Baier gives his answer to 'Why be moral?' He believes, "We should be moral because being moral is following rules designed to overrule reasons of self-interest whenever it is in the interest of everyone alike that such rules should be generally followed" (p. 155). And, "It must be added to this, however, that such a system of rules has the support of reason only where people live in societies, that is, in conditions in which there are established common ways of behavior. Outside society, people have no reason for following such rules, that is, for being moral. In other words, outside of society, the very distinction between right and wrong vanishes" (p. 157). "I conclude that Hobbes's argument is sound" (p. 154).

[51]The theologian Helmut Thielicke, in his major work Theological Ethics, ends up with quite the same view as Baier. Thielicke, however, rests his entire project upon the existential (relational) analysis of Martin Heidegger. See Helmut Thielicke, Theological Ethics (London: Adam & Clarkes Black, 1968), I:465-470. His existential ontology eventually leads him to claim that "Robinson Crusoe would not be a good example for the ethical situation...(He) would simply not exist as an ethical person, or ever know himself to be such a person" (p. 468). Philip Hefner, an American theologian, offers another assessment from his socio-biological viewpoint. He physically locates the source of value: "ethical philosophers intuit the deontological canons of morality by consulting the emotive centers of their hypothalamic-limbic system". See Philip Hefner, "Is/Ought: A Risky Relationship Between Theology and Science", Zygon 15 (December, 1980):380.

[52]Hobbes, Leviathan, Chapter 6, p. 24: "But whatsoever is the object of any mans Appetite or Desire; that is it, which he for his part calleth Good: And the object of his Hate, and Aversion, Evill; And of his Contempt, Vile and Inconsiderable. For these words of Good, Evill, and Contemptible, are ever used with relation to the person that useth them: There being nothing simply and absolutely so; nor any common Rule of Good and Evill, to be taken from the nature of the objects themselves; but from the Person of the man (where there is no Common-wealth;)..."

moral experience. His method is to take a basic 'moral' term in Hobbes's theory and determine the ultimate basis of it, namely an "antecedent"[53] fitness in the nature of things. His evaluation can be sketched in five examples of reductio ad absurdum arguments.[54]

Hobbes's scheme is self-contradictory (1) if one supposes with him that "All men, being equal by nature...have every one a right to every thing...and may every one justly do whatever at any time is in his power, by violently taking from others either their possessions or lives..."[55] This entails the absurdity of "saying that two rights may be contradictory to each other; that is, that a thing may be right, at the same time that 'tis confessed to be wrong."[56] For example, one man has a right to take the life of a man who has the right to preserve his own life. To the question, 'Which man is right?' the answer is 'Both'.

In order to avoid the absurdity in (1), Hobbes goes on to argue for another distinction which Clarke believes fares no better. In (1) there was no pretence of self-preservation. But now (2) Hobbes is found saying (i) that every man has a right to preserve his own life; and (ii) a right to do anything necessary to preserve it; and (iii) since in the State of Nature, men will necessarily "have perpetual jealousies and suspicions of each others encroaching", (iv) therefore "just precaution gives every one a right to endeavour, for his own

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[53] Works II:626.

[54] Clarke aims to show the "absurdities" of Hobbes's theory, Works II:631.

[55] Works II:631. Clarke is quoting from Hobbes Leviathan, Chapter 13, and De Cive, Chapter 1, §10.

[56] Works II:631. Clarke is here drawing on Richard Cumberland, De Legibus Naturae (1672), p. 217.

security, to prevent, oppress, and destroy all others...as being the only certain means of self-preservation".[57] Is it not beyond credibility "to imagine a war of all men against all, the directest and certainest means of the preservation of all?"[58] It is of course true that Hobbes does not stop here but rather goes on to make compacts obligatory, but that does not alter the obligation itself stated in (iv). And even if the necessity of entering into compacts is added, to make it obligatory to keep them, must "recur to an antecedent Law of Nature" (i.e. it being obligatory to keep compacts).[59] The absurdity is "this destroys all that he had before said. For the same Law of Nature which obliges men to fidelity, after having made a compact; will unavoidably, upon all the same accounts, be found to oblige them, before all compacts, to contentment and mutual benevolence, as the readiest and certainest means to the preservation and happiness of them all."[60]

Another inconsistency in Hobbes's scheme is that[61] he does suppose particular branches of the law of nature to be obligatory from bare reason, but plainly denies others which have the same basis. He

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[57]Works II:631-632. Clarke is here quoting from Hobbes De Cive, Chapter I, §12; Chapter 5, §1; and Leviathan, Chapter 13.

[58]Works II:632.

[59]Works II:632.

[60]Works II:632. Emphasis added. Douglas Lackey, in "Ethics and Nuclear Deterence", Moral Problems, 2nd ed., edited by James Rachael (London: Harper & Row, 1975), pp. 333-341, employs a similar argument to criticize the utilitarian argument in favour of nuclear deterence. He argues that, on utilitarian principles, nuclear deterence, as the threat to use force in order to secure self-preservation, can be shown to be dubious. It is not the best means by which to secure self-preservation. Clarke's undeveloped argument is that, on Hobesean principles, compacts are not the best means of self-preservation.

[61]Works II:632.

cannot have it both ways at the same time. This is a development of (2), and numerous examples in Hobbes are cited.[62] Compacts ought to be kept,[63] and enacting the compacts creates moral obligation to the effect that "human laws and constitutions have power to make light be darkness, and darkness light...to determine [by decree, answers to] questions philosophical, mathematical; and, because indeed the signification of words is arbitrary" to determine whether "two and three make five or not".[64] We do not naturally give assent to 'might (power) makes right'. In another place Hobbes admits that "a man ought not to murder his parents"[65] as something that is "antecedent" to, "independent" upon, and "unalterable" by all human constitutions whatsoever.[66] Such claims presuppose the nature of Clarke's a priori notions, but for Hobbes to allow some non-arbitrary, rationally founded moral obligations antecedent to compacts completely destroys his entire scheme.

The next issue Clarke takes up is (4) whether he or Hobbes has the more proper sense of the 'Natural State' of Nature. Hobbes would say a

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[62] Works II:632-635.

[63] De Cive, Chapter 3, §1.

[64] Works II:633. Hobbes actually comes close to explicitly stating as much, which Clarke references, in De Cive, Chapter 6, §11; Chapter 17, §12; and Chapter 18, §4.

[65] Hobbes, De Cive, Chapter 6, §13, in Works II:634.

[66] Clarke at Works II:634 quotes the latter terms from Hobbes, De Cive, Chapter 14, §10.

man is a rational and power desiring being.[67] Clarke says that man is a rational and moral agent. A moral reason is sufficient for the exercise of power, e.g. as God's exercise of absolute power, but there is no "natural and good reason to desire power and dominion"[68] as a non-moral end. As both Clarke and Hobbes agree that man is some sort of rational being, a sufficient reason is required, but not forthcoming, from Hobbes. Hence he cannot prove that war and contention are more 'natural' to the faculties of men than contentment and benevolence.

The final reductio argument Clarke raises is one aimed at the main foundations of Hobbes's system. (5) Hobbes believes that,

> (3.10) God's irresistible power is the only foundation of his dominion, and the only measure of his right over his creatures; and consequently, that every other being has just so much right, as it has natural power1; that is, that 'tis naturally right for every thing to do whatever it has power to do...[69]

This is notoriously false and absurd, seen in a single consideration.

> (3.11) Suppose the devil...as we conceive the devil to be; of extreme malice, cruelty, and iniquity; was endued with supreme absolute power, and made use of it only to render the world as miserable as possible, in the most cruel, arbitrary, and unequal manner that can be imagined: would it not follow undeniably, upon Mr Hobbes's scheme; since dominion is founded in power, and power is the measure of right, and consequently absolute power gives absolute right; that such a government as this, would not only be as much of necessity indeed to be submitted to, but also that it would be a just and right, and with as little reason to be complained of, as is the present government of the world in the hands of the ever-blessed and infinitely good God, whose love and goodness and tender mercy appears every where over all his works.[70]

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[67]Clarke cites Hobbes, Leviathan, Chapter 17 on this, in Works II:635, note g.

[68]Works II:635.

[69]Works II:636. In this passage Clarke cites Hobbes, Leviathan, Chapter 31; De Cive, Chapter 15, §5; and Spinoza. See Works II:636, notes g, and h.

[70]Works II:636-637.

In summary, these five replies show the alternative manner Clarke employs, i.e. reductio ad absurdum, to evince his position. There is a further approach that he could employ in order to defend his view, namely, by asking 'What would it be like if I could forget the moral difference of things?'

III.3.iv 'Can I forget the difference between right and wrong?'[71]

Samuel Clarke makes the positive claim, and seeks to defend it, that in the common moral experience of mankind each mature person affirms a proposition like, 'I know the difference between right and wrong.' He argues that this is plain, common sense (or natural), that it can be seen by transcendental argumentation to be necessary for an adequate explanation of our moral experience, and that reductio arguments can reveal the absurdity of denying this 'a priori' foundation of moral knowledge. But I have also argued that the ground of moral knowledge, in Clarke's theory, is the 'implanted' 'moral inclination'. The status of this is that of a directly known moral property of mind. It is said to be an essential, active power and therefore endures through time. It follows then that if this is an essential power of mind (or of myself), it should be that I can no more easily forget this moral fact than I can forget that I am myself.

Consider the following discussion.

Karen: "Why did you insult me in front of our dinner guests tonight? Don't you know the difference between right and wrong?"

Dewey: "Well honey, I did learn it once, but I have forgotten it."

Karen: "What a ridiculous thing to say!"

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[71] In this section I am indebted to an essay by Gilbert Ryle, "On Forgetting the Difference Between Right and Wrong", in Aristotle's Ethics: Issues and Interpretations, James J. Walsh and Henry L. Shapiro, eds. (Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1969), pp. 70-79. Ryle makes reference to a brief mention of the question in Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics, 1100b17 and 1140b29.

I think most all of us would tend to agree with Karen, that Dewey's comment is ridiculous. But if we learn and later forget many important things and most trivial things, what is the absurdity in Dewey's statement? The question of interest is not whether insulting one's spouse is wrong or not. In fact the question does not rest upon any presupposed agreement about what x is right or wrong. It may be the case that Dewey at one time thought insulting his friends in a joking manner was perfectly acceptable and good, but later changed his mind when one of his friends insulted him. This all happened before he had the very odd experience of memory failure, but the question is not what do I know to be right and wrong, but that I know the difference. Also, it is not that Dewey has forgotten a dictionary or philosophical definition of two words. There is no absurdity involved in forgetting such things, and that is not what we take to be Dewey's claim.

If it is at least prima facie ridiculous for a person to say that he forgot the difference between right and wrong, how is its seemingly indelible mark to be accounted for? It might be suggested that one cannot forget the difference between right and wrong because we are daily reminded of it. One lives in a society where moral judgements are overheard every day. But this account assumes that such a moral distinction is one with so many other factual pieces of information. Forgetting does go with factual instruction; but this basic moral distinction simply will not fit such a mould.

Maybe it is absurd to forget such a distinction because it is more like a skill or a technique that has been inculcated into one's upbringing. For example, it is often said that everything is black and white, either right or wrong, for a child who is first learning this skill. When the child matures some (or even most) actions that were once believed to be clearly wrong are now much more gray and believed to depend on more parameters of a particular situation. Might it not

be said that one's moral skill has developed? But such an example shows development or the maturing of an individual, but does it reveal that not forgetting the difference between right and wrong is a skill or technique? It is not obviously so. Even a skill that is mastered may become rusty with lack of exercise. But our knowledge of the difference between right and wrong does not get rusty; we do not keep up our honesty by giving ourselves regular exercises in it; nor do we excuse a malicious action due to lack of practice in fair-mindedness and generosity. It follows that the knowledge of the difference between right and wrong never decays. The virtue of one's character may be a habit or disposition that is capable of moral deterioration, but this does not equate with a decline in 'expertness'.

Perhaps this moral awareness is a variation on tastes and preferences that one may be trained to appreciate or dislike. But "to be honest or charitable on principle...involves knowing the difference between right and wrong.... Taste is educated preference, preference for recognized superiorities. To be able to recognize superiorities is to know the difference between good and bad."[72] Also, likings, whether natural or cultivated, can be lost. One may cease to enjoy weight-lifting, modern dance, red wine, or hide-and-seek. But such deteriorations of taste are not called forgetting. Thus to know the difference between right and wrong is not an aesthetic sensibility, a masterful skill, nor the result of factual instruction.

What then is one able to conclude about the oddness involved in saying 'I forgot the difference between right and wrong'? Gilbert Ryle

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[72]Ryle, "On Forgetting", p. 73. Hume says of himself: "He hath indeed denied the eternal Difference of Right and Wrong in the Sense in which Clark and Woolaston maintained them, viz., That the Propositions of Morality are of the same Nature with the Truths of Mathematics...not the Feelings of our internal Tastes and Sentiments." From David Hume, A Letter from a Gentleman to His Friend in Edinburgh (1745), ed. John V. Price (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1967), p. 30.

believes it "might be one source of the strength of the notion of The Moral Law".[73] Samuel Clarke believes that as well, but as he also has reason to believe in God (i.e. the Demonstration), he carries the fact of the 'moral inclination' to places that Ryle refuses to go. He embraces what Ryle is grudgingly aware of in this conception of The Moral Law, namely, "a Heaven-hinting innateness or trailing cloud of glory".[74] Clarke finds it eminently reasonable to believe the 'moral inclination' is 'implanted' by the Creator: an inclination that directs our gaze to moral perfection.[75]

III.4 Fitness, Mathematics and Geometry

Throughout Clarke's works, and especially in (3.4.5), he makes a clear link between the status of fitness and the nature of mathematics and geometry. He says that fitness or unfitness of a moral-agent-in-relation to a certain state of affairs 'necessarily arises' (3.4.4), or 'is as manifest, as that the properties which flow from the essences of different mathematical figures, have different congruities or incongruities between themselves' (3.4.5). The point of the analogy is to anchor firmly the objective status of the moral fitness of things, alongside that of the self-evident axioms of mathematics. The problem

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[73]Ibid., p. 79.

[74]Ibid., p. 71.

[75]The link between morals and theology is discussed in Chapter IV. A further argument could be developed on the question, 'Can I invent the difference between right and wrong?' Individuals or societies may invent rules, e.g. a rule prescribing that babies ought not to be used as coal on wintry days, but that does not mean we invent morality, e.g. that the rule is right or wrong. Cf. Jonathan Harrison, "Mackie's Moral 'Scepticism'," Philosophy 57(1982):173-191, esp. p.186.

frequently put forward against this analogy is that geometry is now held to be empirical and capable of various constructions. Hence an analogy with mathematics does not support the objective status of moral axioms, it rather shows that even the time-honoured objectivity of geometry is relative and contingent.

W.D. Hudson poses the problem of analogy as carefully as anyone. In his Ethical Intuitionism, he writes of the 'damning' consequences for those intuitional theories of the eighteenth century (when Euclidean geometry was believed to be the only geometry) in the wake of contemporary insights.

> (3.12) The breakdown of the analogy between mathematical axioms and moral principles would not matter if the analogy were simply a useful working comparison. But intuitionists such as [Clarke and] Price wish to argue that moral principles [moral fitnesses, for Clarke] are self-evident just as mathematical axioms are, and therefore the former, like the latter, constitute an intuition of the nature of things. Against that view the breakdown of the analogy is damning.[76]

Clarke's version of ethical intuitionism does not begin with the intuition of a full-blown moral principle. He believes that the moral fitness (obligation) of things 'flows from the essences' of the moral-agent-in-relation, grounded in the active moral property of the understanding. With this distinction, the analogy that Clarke draws is that 'fitness' is just as self-evident as the claim 'that the properties which flow from the essences of different mathematical figures, have different congruities or incongruities between themselves' (3.4.5). The analogy is between knowing fitness and congruency, not between knowing a moral principle and a mathematical axiom. Still (3.12) is appropriately applied to Clarke because his analogy between morals and mathematics is claimed to be just 'as manifest' (3.4.5) in the one as in the other. Hudson, in Reason and Right, states this weighty

[76]Hudson, Ethical Intuitionism, pp. 51-52.

objection in more particular terms. He offers it as a criticism of Price, but it holds for Clarke as well.

> (3.13) Since Price's day, mathematicians have shown that it is possible to invent new rules, axioms or definitions and, on the basis of these, to construct new arithmetics and geometries which are perfectly logical in structure and, in some cases, more useful than traditional ones for describing the external world. Non-Euclidean geometries and 'queer' arithmetics can have practical uses in dealing with the external world. In describing interstellar space, for instance, astrophysicists find the Riemannian geometry most useful; whereas, in describing 'visual space' (i.e. space as psychologically observed by people with normal sight), the Lobachevskian geometry is said to be best. The fact that various systems can all be useful in describing various aspects of the external world reinforces the conclusion that no one system of mathematical rules and axioms is to be regarded as containing an intuition of the ultimate nature of things.[77]

If fitness is just as manifest as congruency, and it is known that mathematical axioms are contingent, then both are contingent and relative. If so, Clarke has no objective discipline upon which to draw for comparison, which significantly weakens his argument.

The first reply that must be made is one of clarification of the meaning of 'mathematics', for Clarke believed that mathematics, in its pure form, is about abstract concepts. He also believed that mathematics has applications to the concrete world, especially because he adhered to the Newtonian theory of absolute space and time. Today, there is a sharp distinction which can be drawn between pure and applied mathematics. Hudson in (3.13) appeals to the disanalogy between eighteenth century intuitionism and twentieth century applied mathematics. If Hudson means that pure mathematics is relative and empirical, then he begs a very large question. There simply is not one authoritative, 'true' theory about the foundation (or lack thereof) of mathematics, as

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[77]Hudson, Reason and Right, pp. 42-43.

Hudson's passage might lead a novice to believe.[78]

In (3.13) the rather submerged premise which leaves Hudson's criticism to float is that mathematics describes 'the external world' and the external world is clearly capable of non-Euclidean description. It might be said that applied mathematics 'can have practical uses' but this misses the 'whole truth' about twentieth century mathematics, and in so doing is a straw-man criticism of Clarke (and probably Price).

The 'whole truth' about contemporary mathematics is that there is a spectrum of views about mathematical objects. In fact, the Clarkean preference is Platonic, and "Platonism . . . is the dominant attitude in the practice of modern mathematicians," the view that treats mathematical objects as existents independent of cognitive operations and not dependent in any way on the possibilities of verification.[79] There are also the various versions of "contructivism," one of the most prominent being that of L.E.J. Brouwer's "intuitionism."[80] The 'whole truth' is that there is no consensus position that pure mathematics collapses into applied mathematics, that 'mathematical rules' are practical and useful, but relative and subject to alternative definitions.

Stephan Körner, to appeal to an authority for the purpose of showing (3.13) to be an overstatement about the assumed necessary connection between mathematics and the external world, offers a clear defence of pure mathematics. He argues that pure mathematics is "disconnected

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[78]I.e. see Charles Parsons, 'Mathematics, Foundations of', Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 5:188-213, for a brief but broad survey of the philosophy of mathematics.

[79]Ibid., p. 201.

[80]Ibid., p. 204. See Anthony Kenny, The God of the Philosophers (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1979), Chapter 2, for a brief and penetrating discussion on the relation between God and mathematics.

from perception."[81] The point being that the 'other half' of the truth is that pure mathematics, the basis of Clarke's analogy, is not an outdated, erroneous view.

Another point which needs to be made, in fairness to Clarke, is that his analogy of morals and mathematics was grounded in Euclidean geometry at a time when Newtonian (absolute) space and time was the accepted view. The fact that non-Euclidean geometries are found today is simply inappropriate evidence against Clarke. The appropriate fact to make is that "Geometry as understood today by the pure mathematician, as the general study of structures analogous to Euclidean space, raises no philosophical problems different from those raised by analysis and set theory."[82] This adequately refutes Hudson in (3.13).

The comments above, however, show only that an analogy between morals and mathematics is possible. Is there any probable or actual connection of the two? This question has already been broached in Chapter II, where it was argued that for Clarke, epistemology and metaphysics intersect in the strict concept of personal identity. It was argued there that from his view of the self he could say that personal identity is the source of the concept of '=', and that the Law of Contradiction and the concept of congruity and discongruity (3.4.5) have the same conceptual source. Thus the basic moral characteristic and a (the?) basic concept of pure mathematics are grounded together in the nature of the 'rational and moral agent.'

In this chapter I have explained Clarke's moral theory in terms of

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[81]Stephan Körner, The Philosophy of Mathematics: An Introductory Essay (London: Hutchinson University Press, 1960), pp. 168-171. I.e. "Since all mathematical concepts are purely exact and all perceptual characteristics internally inexact, it follows that no mathematical concept includes, or is included in...any perceptual characteristic. We shall say that mathematical concepts and perceptual characteristics are (deductively) unconnected" (p. 170). On the issue of the empirical element in geometry see Lawrence Sklar, Space, Time, and Spacetime (London: University of California Press, 1974).

[82]Parsons, 'Mathematics', p. 190.

an innate 'moral inclination' of mind. I do not know of any other work that offers a similar interpretation of Clarke,[83] and such a novel reassessment suggests two questions. The first question is whether the interpretation offered above is accurate. In answer to criticism to that effect, the reader must judge for himself whether Clarke has been made to speak out of context, and a thorough refutation of Chapters II and III would need to be offered. The second question is, 'If this interpretation of Clarke is accurate, is he its modern originator?' The answer to this question rests upon a comparison of Clarke with the brief works on the moral disposition by Thomas Burnet.

III.5 Burnet's Moral Dispositional Theory and the Reply to the Argument from Relativism

Thomas Burnet of Kemnay (1656-1729), one of the most prominent, outspoken, early opponents of John Locke,[84] and Leibniz's[85] principal correspondent concerning the English intellectual scene, argued for the theory of an innate, moral disposition.[86] Some of the important similarities, as well as differences, between Burnet and Clarke are sketched out below; their similar reply to the argument from relativism is also included.

Burnet and Clarke dissent from following Locke in a typically

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[83]I think this is largely due to the fact that the Clarkean works discussed in Chapter II rarely see the light of day, and even less frequently are applied to an understanding of his moral theory.

[84]See Colman, John Locke's Moral Philosophy, Chapter III.

[85]See Nicholas Jolley, Leibniz and Locke: A Study of the New Essays on Human Understanding, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), Chapter III.

[86]This is found in three very short works. [Thomas Burnet], Remarks upon an Essay Concerning Humane Understanding: in a Letter Addres'd to the Author (London, 1697); Second Remarks upon an Essay Concerning Human Understanding: in a Letter Addres'd to the Author (London, 1697); and Third Remarks upon an Essay Concerning Humane Understanding: in a Letter Addres'd to the Author (London, 1697).

Scholastic approach to morals. Locke believed that there could be no such thing as conscience without general rules or precepts. For Burnet 'natural conscience' is 'sudden', 'quick', or an immediate apprehension by the mind of the specifically moral worth of things. This is different from an intellectual grasp of self-evident propositions.

> (3.14) This I am sure of, that the Distinction, suppose of Gratitude and Ingratitude, Fidelity and Infidelity, Justice and Injustice, and such others, is as sudden without any Ratiocination, and as sensible and piercing, as the difference I feel from the Scent of a Rose, and of Assa-foetida. 'Tis not like a Theorem, which we come to know by the help of precedent Demonst rations and Postulatums, but it rises as quick as any of our Passions, or as Laughter at the sight of a ridiculous Accident or Object.[87]

Clarke agrees with Burnet as regards the immediate apprehension of the fitness and unfitness of things without the clutter of innumerable practical principles upon which one is dependent before a moral judgement can be made. But where Burnet frequently compares his view to the manner of empirical perception, Clarke is much more distant from the 'moral sense' school and draws on the analogy with mathematics.

Burnet, like Clarke, is careful to stress the difference between moral good and evil, and natural good and evil.[88] And not only does natural conscience discern the moral worth of things, it also moves the agent preferentially with respect to them.

> (3.15) This shows us, that there may be a power in the Soul of distinguishing one thing from another, without ratiocination...such as Good and Evil, True and False...[which is] as a Spring and Motive of our Actions... in reference to Moral Good and Evil.[89]

Burnet is a substance dualist like Clarke, and links immediate awareness in the soul with a theory of action. Indeed, Burnet's three major

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[87] [Burnet], [First] Remarks, p. 5.

[88] [Burnet], Third Remarks, p. 8.

[89] Ibid., p. 9.

concerns with Locke's Essay are that it does not "give us a firm and full basis for morality, [nor] the certainty of Reveal'd Religion,... [nor] the Immortality of the Soul of Man."[90]

Burnet however goes to an extreme and sees no need for divine grace, as Clarke does (Proposition V, Discourse), in order to regenerate conscience. For Clarke, his views about the 'moral inclination' do not entail a doctrine of innate goodness of human persons (even though he would likely hold that persons bear intrinsic value[91]).

Burnet and Clarke likewise share the view that there is a non-reducible species of good which is intrinsically related to morality. Burnet complains that Locke has obliterated the distinction between moral and natural good.

> (3.16) How, pray you, do you preserve the Distinction (that good old Distinction, which it may be you despise) of Bonum Utile & Honestum? In your way, either the Parts are coincident, or Bonum Utile is superior to Bonum Honestum.[92]

Knowledge of moral goodness by direct acquaintance is then the epistemological foundation of morals for both Burnet and Clarke. Although Locke famously promised a mathematical demonstration of morals, Burnet replies that it is impossible upon the principles in the Essay.

> (3.17) But I cannot discern from what sure Foundation, or in what Method you can make out this Demonstration. If you make Natural Religion and Morality to depend upon Future

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[90][Burnet], [First] Remarks, p. 3.

[91]I will leave this undeveloped, but if Clarke is granted the essential, moral property of mind, then it is a short step to say that persons, as the source of moral value have intrinsic or implicit value. Consequently all persons are morally responsible beings, or "accountable" creatures (Works II:651). The intrinsic value of a person never changes but one would grow (or decline) in merit or virtue. 'Merit' refers to all those kinds of valuable qualities in respect of which persons may be graded, provided they are acquired. Merit would represent what one has made of his natural endowments, not least of which is his moral capacity to do good. Merit or virtue can be acquired; intrinsic value is 'implanted'. A person may become more or less virtuous, but never non-moral or amoral. Consequently, convicted criminals ought to be treated 'humanely', i.e. as bearers of intrinsic value.

[92][Burnet], Second Remarks, p. 25.

> Rewards and Punishments, as I think you do, then they must depend upon the Immortality of the Soul; And if they depend upon That, and that be only Probable by the Light of Nature, then neither can the other by the Light of Nature be Mathematically demonstrable.... This is something like your Indian Comparison. If the Earth stand upon an Elephant, and the Elephant upon a Tortoise, then what supports the Tortoise?[93]

In explicit deference to Locke's volitionalism, Burnet argues, like Clarke, that if God is said to be subject or inclined to reason, why not also to the right and good?

(3.18) For, if the Difference of True and False be immutable, or not determin'd by the arbitrary Will of God, I see no reason why we should not make the same Judgement as to the Difference of Good and Evil; or why Moral Truths should not be as fixt and unalterable as any other.[94]

He goes on in the same passage to draw the comparison between mathematics and morals, and even speaks of "congruity and Incongruity"[95] as the point of analogy.

Clarke acknowledges that some moral decisions may be 'gray', but this in no way destroys the fact of the difference between black and white.[96] Burnet writes,

(3.19) 'Tis true, Moral Cases are commonly more Complex [than mathematical cases], and so not so easily stated; but in those that are Simple and General, or clearly stated, Propositions about them are as certain as other Truths.[97]

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[93]Ibid., p. 20.

[94]Ibid., p. 26. Cf. Works II:627, "Hence God himself, though he has no superiour, from whose will to receive any Law of his actions; yet disdains not to observe the Rule of Equity and Goodness, as the Law of all his actions in the government of the world; and condescends to appeal even to men, for the equity and righteousness of his judgements (Ezek. xviii). To this Law, the infinite perfections of his divine nature make it necessary for him...to have constant regard..."

[95]Ibid.

[96]Works II:611.

[97][Burnet], Second Remarks, p. 25.

The objection drawn from the variety of opinions of learned men, and the varied laws of different nations concerning right and wrong, is not overlooked by Clarke. Locke had stated this as forcefully as anyone, and believed that universal assent was a necessary condition for innateness.[98]

Locke asserts that "there is nothing more commonly taken for granted than that there are certain principles, both speculative and practical...universally agreed upon by all mankind: which therefore, they argue, must needs be constant impressions which the souls of men receive in their first beings...[but]...it is evident that all children and idiots have not the least apprehension or thought of them."[99] Since universal assent is absent even in the case of speculative principles, it seemed to Locke "near a contradiction to say that there are innate truths imprinted on the soul".[100] And in the case of morality it was perceived to be no less evident. This was based on a sweeping generalization about the "history of mankind," namely, that "there is scarce that Principle of Morality to be named, or Rule of Vertue to be thought on" which is not either "slighted", "condemned", and even contradicted by opposite opinions among even "whole societies of men".[101]

The report of varieties of moral practice is a familiar first move in arguments for moral relativism. Burnet and Clarke have similar replies; Clarke suggests at least three counter-moves. The first is an analogy with colour. In painting two different colours may be diluted

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[98]Locke, Essay 1.2.5.

[99]Locke, Essay 1.2.2, 5.

[100]Locke, Essay 1.2.5.

[101]Locke, Essay 1.3.10.

each by the other, very slowly and gradually, so that even a skilful eye may not be able to determine exactly where one ends and the other begins. But this in no way proves that there are not colours entirely different in kind as red and blue, or white and black.

> (3.19.1) So, though it may perhaps be very difficult in some nice and perplext cases (which yet are very far from occurring frequently,) to define exactly the bounds of right and wrong, just and unjust; and there may be some latitude in the judgement of different men, and the laws of divers nations; yet right and wrong are nevertheless in themselves totally and essentially different; even altogether as much, as white and black, light and darkness.[102]

A second counter-move to the argument from cultural relativism is that different and even contrary moral practices do not necessarily entail wholly different or contrary beliefs. Clarke uses an example of the Spartan Law which permitted their youth to steal.[103] But this only shows a different view about property rights within a society. The Spartans clearly assented to the absolute (culture-independent) injustice of taking another's goods by violence, force, and murder. Thus different moral practice does not necessarily entail a difference in moral belief.

A third reply in reference to the absence of universal assent implicit in Clarke's theory of an innate, moral inclination is that on his account, he can accommodate the fact that all men (children and idiots) do not assent to 'innate practical principles'. The moral inclination of mind is a power with the capacity to apprehend and assent to the right and the good. It is something that develops in the individual, and may be inhibited or perverted by carelessness, early prejudices, sensual appetites, passions, worldly business, vicious

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[102] *Works* II:611. Cf. *Works* II:625.

[103] *Works* II:611.

habits and practices.[104] Clarke's innatism, like Burnet's, does not require a universal assent. A widespread assent is sufficient empirical evidence for Clarke's view.[105]

A final reply to the argument from cultural relativism is that it is completely beside the point. For the argument to work, i.e. tribe x believes 'y' is right, it must carry a hidden premise: 'Isn't that revolting!' Hence the argument from cultural variation actually entails the autonomous, moral knowledge that everyone ought to know 'y' is wrong. If this is not acknowledged as entailed, and one doggedly adheres to relativism, the 'argument' has no power to convince anyone of its 'truth'. This is because of the simple fact that person z can make only a relative judgement 'a' on the relative judgement 'y' of tribe x. The result is a failure to be able to explain the nature of moral disagreement. We do not argue when one says 'I like bananas', and another 'I don't'. Such judgements are accepted as relative preferences. But when Hitler says 'Genocide of the Jews is right and good', there is a moral disagreement that all good men will raise. Even J.L. Mackie admits "there are a few feelings so natural to man that they are found everywhere".[106] Absolute relativism cannot account for our shared moral experience.

Returning from this short digression, the final comparison of Burnet and Clarke can be noted, which leads into the final section. Although both held a similar view about the nature of direct moral acquaintance by 'natural conscience' of things moral, Burnet roundly dismissed moral principles. He objects to Locke's "List of the Laws or Principles of Conscience" as do "the Papists", and goes on to give his

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[104] Works II, Proposition V, pp. 652-656.

[105] See Colman, John Locke's Moral Philosophy, p. 57.

[106] J.L. Mackie, "A Refutation of Morals", Australasian Journal of Psychology and Philosophy (1946), p. 78.

single, general rule.[107]

> (3.20) As to the Dictates or Principles of Natural Conscience, (call them Laws of Nature, or what you please) we say, in general, that they are for the distinction of Moral Good and Evil: But the Cases are innumerable, (as in other Cases of Conscience) wherein there may be occasion for their Exercise. The general Rule is, Appeal with Sincerity to your Conscience for your Direction: If that be obscur'd, perverted or sear'd, we cannot help it.[108]

Clarke is opposed to enthusiasm[109] and Burnet's antinomian appeal to 'sincerity', would leave a door wide opened to it. Clarke gives significant space to the development of 'general' principles and rules, which are natural consequences of three types of relations, at least two of which are common to all mankind. (This is the topic of the next section.) Thus, by comparison of Clarke with Burnet, significant similarities are evident. But Clarke alone has given the more developed theory, and as Burnet's is more easily accommodated in the 'moral sense' school, it is fair to take Clarke as the modern originator of the sentiment-independent, moral-inclination theory.

III.6 From Formal to Particular Obligation: The Branches of Duty

Clarke devotes most attention to the "formal obligation"[110] that 'arises' in the mind of man. The phenomenological description of this has been termed 'a moral-agent-in-relation'. Attention is, however, briefly turned to the principal, particular moral obligations of 'natural religion'. These may similarly be termed the duties which

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[107][Burnet], Third Remarks, p. 15.

[108]Ibid.

[109]Works I:133, 136, 584; II:126, 195. Locke similarly rejected such dogmas, Essay IV.xix.5.

[110]Works II:618.

arise from a moral-agent-in-relation (1) to God, (2) to others, and (3) to oneself. Strictly speaking then, obligation does not adhere to actions, laws, or universal moral principles; moral obligation 'flows' from moral agents in relational contexts.[111] The most determinative 'relation' from which even a Robinson Crusoe could not escape (and hence not vanish as a moral agent) is the relation one unavoidably has with oneself. Since the self-knowing moral agent knows moral obligation as an objective fact,[112] i.e. in knowing himself 'in relation' he knows moral obligation, the order of knowing is reversed from Clarke's scale of precedence. Thus, appropriate to this chapter, duties to self and duties to others will be touched upon, and duties to God will wait until Chapter IV.

III.6.i The Duty of Sobriety

When Clarke moves to particular duties, he exchanges the formal term, 'fitness', for "the Rule of Righteousness".[113] The Rule all men know toward themselves is the duty of sobriety.

> (3.21) With respect to our selves, the Rule of Righteousness is; that every man preserve his own being, as long as he is able; and take care to keep himself at all times in such temper and disposition both of body and mind, as may best fit and enable him to perform his duty in all other instances. That is: he ought to bridle his appetites, with temperance; to govern his passions, with moderation; and to apply himself to the business of his

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[111] Cf. W.D. Ross, Foundations of Ethics, p. 56: "In fact, obligatoriness is not a characteristic that attaches to acts; obligation is something that attaches to persons."

[112] Ross, in speaking of prima facie duties did not mean one's first impression of what is right, but rather "an objective fact involved in the nature of the situation, or more strictly in an element of its nature, though not, as duty proper does, arising from its whole nature." See W.D. Ross, The Right and the Good, (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1930), p. 20.

[113] Works II:618-624.

> present station in the world, whatsoever it be, with attention and contentment.[114]

In a sense Clarke is unmistakably a deontologist. Frankena adds that Clarke is a rule-deontologist, along with Price, Reid, Ross, Kant, "and perhaps Butler".[115] It is clear, e.g. (3.21), that one has a duty of sobriety, not because of the nonmoral good of one's future pleasure or happiness being sustained, but because of the moral obligation to do what is fit so that one can continue to perform one's duty in all other instances.[116] One's duty is not the promotion of one's own happiness. Clarke believes that one's happiness is coincident with, and finally dependent upon, doing what is morally obligatory. Thus the appetites and passions are governed by particular moral duties.

The most serious offence against the duty of sobriety is suicide. Suicide is abominable, not because God forbids it, but "because what he [man] is not himself the Author and Giver of, he can never of himself have just power or authority to take away".[117] The end of man is not defined in terms of happiness, but in terms of moral perfection,[118] as man is a moral agent. Clarke quotes Plato, Cicero, and "that excellent

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[114] Works II:622-623.

[115] Frankena, Ethics, p. 16.

[116] Cf. Immanuel Kant, Lectures on Ethics, trans. J. Macmurray (London: Methuen, 1930), p. 125: "First there is the universal duty which devolves upon man of so ordering his life as to be fit for the performance of all moral duties. This demands that he should establish in himself principles and moral purity and strive to act in accordance with them."

[117] Works II:623. This contrasts sharply with Hobbes's Law of Nature, discussed above.

[118] Sermon CXLIV. "Christians ought to endeavour to attain Perfection," Works II:182-189.

author, Arrian",[119] in support of the negative duty of not killing oneself, because life is not an absolute possession which a creature has a just authority over. Our duty does not extend to that which is out of our domain. What is in our domain is the positive duty of sobriety.

This may be put another way. Intemperance will "incapacitate a man to perform his duty".[120] It can lead to melancholy. This may result from a dismissal or forgetfulness of the true nature of things. That is, in comparison with "the natural and material world..."

> (3.22) The moral world, is of infinitely greater importance; and without which, this beautiful and stupendous fabric of the inanimate universe is nothing.[121]

Or melancholy may result among the pious when they look upon as impossible their duty "to be perfect, even as their Father which is in Heaven is perfect."[122] Moral perfection which is commanded in Scripture, however, "does not consist in works of supererogation",

> (3.23) But true perfection, and that which is possible and necessary for us to attain, consists...in these three things, in the uprightness, the universality, and the habitualness of our obedience.[123]

The true nature of Christian perfection can therefore remove needless fears. But we are indispensably obliged to be perfect in kind, and so

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[119] Works II:623.

[120] Works II:624.

[121] Works II:28. His emphasis.

[122] Works II:188.

[123] Works II:188.

resembling God, but "infinitely inferior in degree".[124] Finally, melancholy may be caused by "bodily disorder"[125] which is erroneously conceived to be "in his mind" or conscience. Proper remedies must be applied. In contrast with the hedonists on suicide, Clarke would likely agree with Kant.

> (3.24) We find, as a rule, that those who labour for their happiness are more liable to suicide; having tasted the refinements of pleasure, and being deprived of them, they give way to grief, sorrow, and melancholy.[126]

II.6.ii The Duty of Benevolence: Of Equity and Love

The second great and principal branch of duty is in respect of our fellow creatures. Here the Rule of Righteousness is,

> (3.25) that in particular we so deal with every man, as in like circumstances we could reasonably expect he should deal with us; and that in general we endeavour, by an universal benevolence, to promote the welfare and happiness of all men. The former branch of this Rule, is Equity; the latter, is love.[127]

Clarke's discussion of equity is brief and straight-forward. It is interesting to note however that he does not emphasize freedom (like Kant) and individual initiative. Rather he sides with the 'socialists' and emphasizes equality and social justice.[128]

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[124] Works II:188.

[125] Works II:369. See Sermon CLXXII. "Of Religious Melancholy." Works II:367-374. Kant also discusses this in Lectures on Ethics, p. 134.

[126] Kant, Lectures on Ethics, p. 154. Cf. Michael J. Seidler, "Kant and the Stoics on Suicide," Journal of the History of Ideas (July, 1983):429-453.

[127] Works II:619.

[128] Clarke is a 'socialist' in the sense employed in D.D. Raphael, Moral Philosophy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981), Chapter 7.

Concerning the latter branch of benevolence, universal love, Clarke has much to say as it links his theory of justice with his theology. In terms of the former category he seems to have two things to say, one logical and one empirical.[129]

The logic of love(!) reflects a Leibnizian influence of God so acting as to create the best of all possible worlds. In respect of how men ought to relate to each other, Clarke argues that if it is reasonable to seek the good of others, then it is most reasonable to seek this to the fullest extent; "that which is the greatest good, is always the most fit and reasonable to be chosen ...the goodness of God extends itself...by doing always what is absolutely best in the whole".[130] And on the presupposition that one's duty is to be rational (and God is perfectly rational, i.e. omniscient), then "every rational creature ought in its sphere and station, according to its respective powers and faculties...do all the good it can to all its fellow-creatures."[131] Given his presupposition, this argument is valid.[132]

Clarke also attempts to "deduce" this great duty from a different perspective. In fact he argues from the natural (non-moral sense) good found in men seeking to establish societies of friendship, from which he deduces that men ought to be universally benevolent. He credits Cicero with this form of argumentation;[133] within Clarke's theory this

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[129]These distinctions are drawn by Hudson, Ethical Intuitionism, p. 45.

[130]Works II:621.

[131]Works II:621.

[132]This is Hudson's view as well. See Hudson, Ethical Intuitionism, p. 45.

[133]Works II:622, note i.

violates his otherwise consistent approach of not deducing 'ought' from 'is'.

Clarke has much more to say on the topic of love, a topic that collapses into his theism. It is one aspect which unites the branches of virtue, i.e. natural religion, with a revealed superstructure.

III.7 Summary

In Part III, Clarke's moral epistemology (Part II) has been linked with his more well known moral theory found in the Discourse. The concept of 'fitness' has been discussed and Hume's two major objections to Clarke's ethical rationalism have been replied to. Support has also been given for Clarke's repeated analogy $\overset{\text{between}}{\wedge}$ moral obligation (fitness) and mathematical concepts, and the particular branches of duty, of sobriety and of benevolence, have been discussed.

Clarke's argument presented in Part II was that one knows oneself directly, and the moral relation wherein obligation arises, (3.4.1) to (3.4.5), can best be understood as a 'moral-agent-in-relation' either towards oneself (duty of sobriety), or towards others (duty of benevolence). The remaining 'Branch of Duty' which is left for discussion in Part IV, is a moral agent's relation to God (duty of piety).

In the following part Clarke's moral theory is seen to finally come together in his moral theology. His arguments in each of the preceding chapters have been aimed at atheistic or deistic views, and his moral theory is best understood as an attempt to satisfy the demands of the 'new science', moral autonomy, and theism. His most prominent critic in this aspect, concerning the use of revelation in morals, is the author of the English 'deist's Bible', Matthew Tindal.

PART IV

MORALITY, REVELATION AND THE DIVINE NATURE

IV.1 Overview

The most extensive criticism of Clarke's argument about the relation between morality and revelation comes from the famous deist Matthew Tindal. In his classic work, Christianity as old as Creation: Or, the Gospel, a Republication of the Religion of Nature (1730), Tindal argues that if reason discerns the moral fitness of things, then revelation is unnecessary. Either reason is sufficient for morality or it is not, and given that Clarke does accept the autonomy of reason, Tindal argues (and Ferguson seconds the motion) that appeal to revelation is redundant. Clarke's reply to Tindal is the content of IV.2; he clearly rejects the radical rationalism of such deism.

The deists were the chief targets of Clarke's moral theology. The major bone of contention with them was over the need (and fact) of revelation. But in order to have a coherent moral theology two other opponents were close to hand, the enthusiasts and the School-men, where the principal concern was the nature of moral language. Clarke argues that the enthusiasts' vile life-styles refute their claim of personal revelation of God who is goodness itself. But, more substantially, the School-men are found to deny the moral attributes of God in principle. That is to say, their view of moral language as analogical

is utterly destructive of the obvious and clear meaning of statements about the goodness of God. Clarke's arguments against the enthusiasts and the School-men, against the denial of the moral attributes of God in practice and in principle, are the substance of IV.3.

Although Clarke argues against analogical language in predicating moral properties of God, his own univocal view is in serious trouble, at least prima facie. It has been shown in Part II that the epistemological ground of Clarke's moral theory is the directly known moral property, the moral inclination. But all moral knowledge is undermined if that which is known is completely subsumed in an unknown and unknowable substratum. Thus, in IV.4, the relation of known moral powers (that are univocally predicated of God) and their incomprehensible substratum is evaluated.

It is then assumed that Clarke has given sufficient justification, with suggested clarifications, for the meaningfulness of the statement, 'the divine nature is goodness itself.' Thus the argument for the existence of the prefection and goodness of God is discussed in IV.5.i. Then, as there are two major concepts in Clarke's metaphysics (or moral theology) which bear a close resemblance to similar concepts in Leibniz, the particular distinctiveness of Clarke's view is identified in IV.5.ii.

In IV.6, the principle of imitation (which has been discussed in IV.2) is found to be evident from IV.5, and is the culmination of Clarke's moral theology. The principle of imitation, however, is not purely an individualistic enterprise. It is, in fact, the communal moral activity in the Kingdom of God.

IV.2 Deism: Radical Rationalism Rejected

The most elevated statement of English deism comes from Matthew Tindal, Fellow of All Souls College, in Christianity as old as the

Creation. In his Chapter XIV he takes on Clarke who argues that revealed religion builds upon and more fully explains natural religion.[1] The aim of his argument is to show that ethical rationalism[2] demonstrates the case in favour of "true Christian deists"[3] and simultaneously refutes any need for a revelation.

Tindal picks up his argument against Clarke by correctly noting the later's adherence to 'the moral horn' of the Euthyphro Dilemma.[4] In Proposition I Clarke has argued that,

> (4.1) in matters of natural reason and morality, that which is holy and good . . . is not therefore holy and good, because 'tis commanded to be done; but is therefore commanded of God, because 'tis holy and good.[5]

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[1]Tindal's criticism was the most forceful one put forward. One of the first to argue that Clarke's moral theology contradicts his moral philosophy is found in John Clarke, [Master of the Grammar School, Hull; not John the brother of Samuel Clarke], The Foundation of Morality in Theory and Practice Considered, In an Examination of the learned Dr. Samuel Clarke's Opinion, concerning the Original of Moral Obligation; As also of the Notion of Virtue, advanced in a late Book, Entitled, An Inquiry into the Original of our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue, (York, n.d.), p. 28.

[2]Although Tindal believes that reason alone is sufficient for morality, he subtly reinterprets Clarke as an ethical hedonist. E.g. "the Dr's hypothesis is" that God has made mankind to know his will from actions "resulting from...their [natural] good or hurt...to do the one, and to avoid the other" (p. 359). Also, Tindal identifies happiness with goodness, and where Clarke is quoted in reference to God's commands being holy and good (both carrying the weight of strict moral properties), Tindal thinks there "is only a verbal" distinction between his view and Clarke's position (p. 355). For Tindal, "the only innate Principle in man is the desire of his own happiness" (p. 363).

[3]Tindal, Christianity as old as Creation: Or, The Gospel, a Republication of the Religion of Nature (London, 1730), p. 368.

[4]See Plato, Euthyphro, 10 a-d. In the structure of this section on Tindal's criticism and Clarke's reply, I am indebted to the concise argument by Basil Mitchell, Morality: Religious and Secular (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980), pp. 146-156.

[5]Works II:626-627.

Tindal and Clarke agree that moral choice is fundamentally determined by the moral judgement and not by religious belief. Also, both agree that the existence of moral judgement depends entirely upon the will and good pleasure of God.[6] But they disagree about the applicability of the Euthyphro Dilemma to the moral experience of mankind. Tindal argues for the extreme position, for an either/or antithesis, that is, if natural reason is adequate in part, it is adequate to deliver a full, clear moral theory. He argues that

> (4.2) 'tis the Reason, or the Fitness of the thing, that makes it a divine Law; and consequently, that they who never heard of any external Revelation; yet <u>if they knew</u> from the Nature of Things <u>what's fit</u> for them to do, <u>they know all</u> that God will, or can require of them; since his Commands are to be measur'd by the antecedent Fitness of Things . . . how can they be ignorant of their Duty?[7]

Tindal assumes that the dilemma refutes not only an extreme voluntarism or divine command theory; he also assumes that the dilemma proves that religious beliefs and revelation can add no significant scope or content to morality.

By contrast, Clarke believes the dilemma poses a false antithesis, one that cannot account for "the great ignorance and undeniable corruptness of the whole heathen world."[8] In terms of the two competing horns of the dilemma, he seeks to argue a both/and position. The understanding can be said to be the ground of moral knowledge, and the fitness of things can be in principle rationally demonstrated.

> (4.3) But this speculation, tho' necessary to be taken notice of in the distinct order and method of discourse, <u>is in itself too dry</u> . . .[9]

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[6]<u>Works</u> II:627.

[7]Tindal, <u>Christianity as old as the Creation</u>, p. 357.

[8]<u>Works</u> II:670.

[9]<u>Works</u> II:627. Emphasis added.

Reason may be too dry to be pursued by each person in particular; it also requires a certain amount of time and ability[10] in order to unfold the a priori nature of moral obligation. But that which can be formally demonstrated as arising in the nature of things, can more easily and clearly be found in revelation. In a sermon, 'Of the unchangeable Difference of Good and Evil,' Clarke sums up his position as to the scope that revelation adds to unaided reason.

> (4.4) This eternal difference of good and evil, God has now confirmed with new authority, illustrated with greater light, distinguished with plainer and clearer bounds, and enforced men's observation of this Rule, with new motives and stronger obligations.[11]

The disagreement between Tindal and Clarke is not epistemological and formal, but practical. Tindal would retort to (4.4) with the question, 'How can the Dr. know these things in revelation are good, except by the light of nature?'[12] Clarke would reply that Tindal is correct on formal grounds, but seriously overextended when he claims that bare reason, or "internal revelation"[13] does in practise supply all that revelation offers (4.4). And even if, for the sake of argument, one supposes with "modern deists" that where right reason is cultivated "all the obligations and motives of morality" could be discovered and explained clearly,[14]

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[10] Works II:13.

[11] Works I:701.

[12] Cf. Tindal, Christianity as old as Creation, p. 381.

[13] Ibid. p. 369.

[14] Works II:670. Tindal claims exactly this, e.g. Ibid., pp. 357, 367, 378, 402, 410.

(4.5) yet even this would not at all prove, that there is no need of revelation.[15]

Clarke's point in (4.5) is that Tindal's either/or paradox, is an either/or fallacy. He holds, among other arguments, that the revelation of "the coming of Christ" can illustrate "the great pretences of modern deists", who deny any "assistance" to moral reasoning from revelation.[16]

The type of argument that Clarke is going for, to dispel the deists, is clarified by Professor Mitchell's discussion of "religious pattern-morality."[17] Tindal argues the same as the critic of the religious-pattern morality: 'To recognize a pattern (like the life of Christ) as a good one is to possess criteria already to hand, therefore it cannot tell him more than he already knows.'[18] Tindal asserts that "there's the least Difference between the Law of Nature and the Gospel."[19] Kant puts the issue even more starkly: "Even the Holy One of the Gospels must first be compared with our ideal of moral perfection, before we can recognize him as such."[20] The assumption is that if 'inner revelation' is the judge of the moral character of Christ's life, then it already knows the criterion, and therefore there is no need to copy an example.

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[15]Works II:670.

[16]Works II:670.

[17]Mitchell, Morality: Religious and Secular, p. 147.

[18]This is a paraphrase drawn from Mitchell, Ibid., pp. 147-148.

[19]Tindal, Christianity as old as Creation, p. 378.

[20]Kant, Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysics of Ethics, trans. by Abbott, p. 30, quoted by Mitchell, Ibid., p. 148.

What is highly paradoxical about this argument is that "it appears to prove the logical impossibility of a process with which we are all perfectly familiar - the process by which we develop spiritually (and in every other way) by taking people we admire for models and imitating them."[21] Just because Tindal can know by natural conscience that the life of Christ was virtuous, it does not follow that he possesses a complete understanding of moral perfection. As Clarke argues,

> (4.6) 'Tis <u>one thing</u> to see that those Rules of Life, which are before hand plainly and particularly laid before us, are perfectly agreeable to reason; and <u>another thing</u> to find out those Rules merely by the Light of Reason, without their having first been any otherwise made known.[22]

Just because one exercises one's moral insight in affirming that the Ten Commandments are morally good, or that the Sermon on the Mount delivers great moral ideals, it does not mean that one could invent ten more just as good or create a sermon even more impressive.[23] Tindal's either/or assumption is pragmatically absurd.

Now if the above argument goes in Clarke's favour, as it seems to me that it does, then Tindal's radical rationalism fails in its criticism of Clarke, and Ferguson's assessment is erroneous. Ferguson writes that "the unity of the <u>Discourse</u>", on the relation of reason and revelation, "is thus not one which can stand the force of criticism, and under Tindal's relentless attack, the inconsistencies between the earlier and later parts of the <u>Discourse</u> are exposed and castigated."[24] Castigated they are, but what Tindal's arguments actually expose are

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[21] Mitchell, <u>Morality: Religious and Secular</u>, p. 148.

[22] <u>Works</u> II:670-671.

[23] Cf. Mitchell, <u>Morality: Religious and Secular</u>, pp. 150, 153.

[24] Ferguson, <u>The Philosophy of Clarke</u>, p. 237.

his own false alternatives, an either/or fallacy which is unable to offer an adequate explanation of human moral experience. It will now be assumed that from the failure of Tindal's argument against an appeal to reason and revelation, Clarke can proceed with the development of his position.[25]

IV.3 Moral Language and the Divine Nature

It is a basic doctrine of Christian theism that God is by his very nature that morally perfect being whom mankind should worship. But a Supreme Cause who is only self-existent and intelligent (omniscient) is not an adequate notion of God. The eternity and immensity of God do amaze our thoughts, and his omnipotence, if considered by itself, may fill us with fear and dread. But it is "goodness that finishes the idea of God; and represents him to us under that lovely character of being the best, as well as the greatest, being in the universe."[26] The meaningfulness of this claim raises the issue of moral properties and God-talk.

The problem of religious language is a topic well beyond the scope

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[25]Though some further problems may be raised about the relation between reason and revelation, Clarke has replied to the major argument raised against his position.

[26]Works I:86(sic). Clarke's emphasis; the page number is erroneously printed as 90, rather than 86. Note also Leibniz's influence upon Clarke's idea of God as the best possible Being. Cf. Keith Ward, Rational Theology and the Creativity of God (Oxford: Basil Balckwell, 1982), p. 187: "God is not the best possible being, in the sense of having a logically maximal set of absolutely maximized properties; as with the best possible world, such a notion is incoherent. But he is the greatest conceivable being, in the intelligible sense that he alone possesses intrinsic values maximally." Clarke holds God to be the best possible, 'Perfect Being'; he does not say that this world is the 'best of all possible worlds'.

of this thesis,[27] and the parameters of the following discussion will be those that can be gleaned from Clarke and the rather skimpy amount of space he devotes to his opponents. Clarke has in mind, and argues against, two views as to the nature of religious language. They are the 'enthusiasts' and the view of 'the School-men'.

Who the 'enthusiasts' are, by name, Clarke does not say. What is meant by enthusiasm is most clearly stated in a few of Clarke's sermons. In 'Sermon XXI: Of being the Children of God,'[28] the enthusiasts are those who make a pretence to personal divine revelation but put forward their conviction without reason and do not live virtuous lives. They deny then the moral perfection of God in practice. The enthusiasts are in sight when reference is made to God having "mercy on whom he will have mercy, and compassion on whom he will have compassion."[29] The meaning of this is "not that God will act arbitrarily and without reason; as some have absurdly understood these words."[30] Shortly thereafter direct reference is made to the view and life style of the enthusiasts.

> (4.7) That nothing can be more absurd, nothing can be more contrary to the whole tenour of the Gospel, than the notions of those men, who take their own enthusiastic imaginations to be the testimony of the Spirit of God.[31]

Clarke does not reject the possibility of personal divine revelation, but requires more than a bare testimony to the claim. He continues:

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[27]For a recent argument of a position very similar to what Clarke holds, see Swinburne, The Coherence of Theism, Part I.

[28]Works I:130-135.

[29]Works I:133.

[30]Works I:133.

[31]Works I:133.

(4.8) Such persons judge not of the tree, by its fruit; they compare not the course of their lives, with the Rule of God's Commandments; they judge not of their being spiritual persons, or having the Spirit of Christ, by their practice of those virtues, which the Scripture calls bringing forth the fruits of the Spirit.[32]

Any claim to personal divine revelation must meet (at least) a moral criterion. The 'children of God' are not simply those who lay claim to the title; their lives must bear the mark of the practice of virtue before they can be believed. The passage at (4.8) continues:

(4.9) But they have a strong, confident conceit, that they are the elect, the chosen people of God; and the mere strength of this groundless imagination, they apprehend to be the Spirit of God bearing witness with their spirit, that they are the children of God. But this is so senseless a notion, so manifestly destructive of all virtue, and of all the true difference between good and evil; that it needs barely be mentioned among persons of common understanding, to expose the folly of it.[33]

Personal divine revelation and miraculous gifts from God are made evident by their real and visible (virtuous) effects. Clarke does not mean by this that recipients of divine revelation will be 'saints'. But the truth of the Gospel and the gifts bestowed are known to the persons themselves if they are "conscious in their own hearts of their being sincere in their profession, and virtuous in their practice . . ."[34] The practice of religion "consists in keeping the commandments;" it is "enthusiastic knowledge of Christ," "expressions of imaginary love towards him," and in effect "groundless conceit" to claim that we know Christ and not to keep his commandments.[35]

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[32]Works I:133.

[33]Works I:133.

[34]Works I:133. Cf. Works I:584.

[35]Works II:126. Clarke quotes I John 2:3 and Luke 13:26.

The relevance of 'enthusiasm' to Clarke's view of religious language is twofold. On the positive side, he agrees with the enthusiast that experience is foundational to statements about God. Clarke does not conceptualize and rationalize religious language so as to disassociate God from any experiential basis. But on the negative side, although linguistic expressions about God have an experiential base, it is held that experience is not meaningful unless it is conceptualized, even though there will always be more in the divine nature than a person can experience. And statements about God who is the morally perfect Creator must also be 'fitting' to one's experience as a moral agent.[36] In a sense it can be said that Clarke has a 'model' language about God. There is an "empirical fit"[37] which has no scientific deductions emerging to confirm or falsify the claim about the divine nature. But for Clarke, there is <u>one</u> true model namely that which moves from the known essential properties of the moral self to statements about the moral property of the goodness of God. That model is 'morally fit.'

The other view that Clarke argues against is that of the 'School-men' whom he understands as denying the moral perfection of God in <u>principle</u>. He makes reference in the <u>Demonstration</u> to their view on the self-existent nature of God but he would hold the same position concerning their notion of the moral attributes of God. In robust preaching style, he says:

> (4.10) From hence appears the <u>vanity of the School-men</u>; who, as in other matters, so in their disputes about the Self-existent Being, when they come at what they are by no means able to comprehend or explain; lest they should seem ignorant of any

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[36]Cf. Ian Ramsey, <u>Models and Mystery</u> (London: Oxford University Press, 1964), pp. 13, 15-17, 19-20.

[37]Ibid., p. 13.

> thing, they give us terms of art, and words of amusement, mere empty sounds, which, under pretence of explaining the matter before them, have really no manner of idea or signification at all. Thus when they tell us concerning the essence of God, that he is Purus Actus, mera forma, and the like; either the words have no meaning, and signify nothing; or else they express only the perfection of his power, and other attributes; which is not what these men intend to express by them.[38]

In reference to religious language, (4.10) expresses Clarke's rejection of God-talk by way of analogical language. He argues for a univocal basis or core of meaning, i.e. knowing a moral property (in knowing oneself), is understood both of moral agents and of the Perfect Being. He argues, again, primarily by reductio ad absurdum, but these arguments can be put more strongly by arguing for the necessity of univocal concepts of God, e.g. holding so-called analogical concepts to be impossible.[39]

Aquinas, of course, flatly rejected the insistence on univocal God-language, i.e.

(4.11) It is impossible for anything to be predicated univocally of God and a creature.[40]

The brief argument given by Clarke against the analogical view is found in Sermon XXI. The chief passage on the meaningfulness and applicability of predicating moral attributes of God follows.[41]

(4.12.1) In the 1st place, 'tis necessary to show briefly in general, what goodness is. For unless we clearly and distinctly understand what goodness is, 'tis evident we mean nothing, when we say God is good; and consequently cannot be certain

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[38]Works II:538-539.

[39]Cf. John Duns Scotus, Philosophical Writings (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1962), pp. 18-28.

[40]Aquinas, On the Power of God, trans. by English Dominican Fathers (Westminster, Maryland: Newman Press, 1952), VII, 7.

[41]Works I:87 (sic).

whether we honour him, or dishonour him, in giving him an unknown character.

(4.12.2) Nothing therefore can be more absurd, than the doctrine which has sometimes been advanced; that goodness in God, is not the same thing as goodness in men; but something altogether transcendent, and which we understand not.

(4.12.3) This I say, is highly absurd: because, if this were the case, it would plainly follow, that when we affirm God to be good, we should only affirm we know not what; that is, in reality we should affirm nothing at all.

On Clarke's view, one does have a clear and distinct idea of what goodness is (4.12.1), because each knows himself to be a moral agent. Goodness then refers to the virtuous disposition of a person.

(4.13) Now goodness in men signifies a benevolent disposition.[42]

Goodness is known in being of a benevolent disposition. It is not spoken of as an abstract ideal. Nor is a benevolent disposition innate.[43] Dispositions develop, but Clarke's argument in Part III was that from the fact that one can become more or less virtuous, an innate moral power, property, or 'inclination' is necessarily presupposed. This is held to be known by all. A good disposition may be known 'by acquaintance' by the good person, and indirectly by an impious individual, e.g. by seeing a good person in action.[44] Hence we understand what is meant by goodness.

In (4.12.1), it may be that Clarke is replying to a moral sceptic, one who believes that the difference between good and evil is just a misty haze. Consequently, if that position is true, the affirmation that 'God is good' would be a vanishing mist. A similar view is that which says moral language about God is equivocal, i.e. our concept of

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[42]Works I:87 (sic).

[43]Cf. Aquinas, Summa Theologiae, Ia2ae, Q51, Art.1.

[44]This has been discussed above in terms of the religious pattern-morality.

goodness has two totally different senses in reference to men and God, respectively. The consequence of the equivocal alternative is that Christians, paradoxically, will not be able to honour or dishonour God, except by accident. But if they only happen to act so as to honour God, not being sure if they are or not, it is clearly not a meritorious action on their part.

In (4.12.2) Clarke argues against analogical God-talk. Goodness in men, on this view, is known but in attributing it to God, its meaning is analogical or 'something altogether transcendent.' The transcendent meaning is not understood.

In (4.12.3) Clarke replies to the transcendentalist. His argument is that analogy either has a univocal element in it or it does not. If it does not, it is ultimately equivocal talk (4.12.1), which leaves one in 'holy' scepticism about God. On the other hand, if analogy does have a univocal core, then it really contains a univocal concept after all, which entails true knowledge about God.[45]

Theistic language is not equivocal or analogical for Clarke, it is univocal, at least in so far as the basic, core concepts are concerned. Moral goodness constitutes a moral kind. It can vary in degree but it is known in kind by all rational beings.

(4.14) Goodness is everywhere of the same nature, though not in the same proportion; and in all beings whatsoever, in whom it is

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[45]This argument may be a bit over generous in drawing all these qualification from (4.12.1) to (4.12.3). The basic structure is clearly found there however in Clarke's reductio of the transcendentalist view. The same argument for the necessity of a univocal concept is found in Stuart Hackett, The Resurrection of Theism, (Chicago: Moody Press, 1957), pp. 127-130; W.G.T. Shedd, Dogmatic Theology, (New York: Charles Scribner & Sons, 1868-1894), I:89; and Norman L. Geisler, Philosophy of Religion (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975), pp. 268-272.

A contemporary proponent of analogical moral language is H.P. Owen in The Moral Argument For Christian Theism (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1965), p. 31: "It is true that we do not predicate any terms (not even moral ones) of God univocally." Thus his view is subject to the same incoherence as the view in (4.12.2).

> found at all, it is the same in kind, though not in degree.[46]

The univocity in our moral concept of God is fundamental to Clarke. If there is no univocal 'kind,' then one is forced into scepticism (or an infinite regress of non-univocal concepts) about the nature of God, and utter uncertainty about living a religious pattern-morality.

> (4.15) If goodness in God, were (as some have imagined,) we know not what; how could we be commanded to imitate, what we do not understand? or how should any man know, whether we were likely to fare the better or the worse, by means of that which he knows not what it is? What comfort can we draw from the consideration of the divine goodness, if he means thereby only he know not what; any thing that Power, any thing that Dominion, any thing that Sovereignty can do, whether it be beneficient or not?[47]

The principle of imitation is central in Clarke's moral theology, and his ethical theory seeks to set a firm basis for it. He argues for objective moral knowledge, and then for a univocal theory of religious language. There is however a significant problem latent in Clarke's metaphysics that shakes the entire structure, namely his adherence to the substratum view of substance. If persons and God have essential moral properties that are known, then Clarke has a coherent argument. But if the moral properties reside in an unknowable substratum, his argument is significantly weakened, if not destroyed.

IV.4 Known Powers and their Incomprehensible Substratums: Of Man and God

The concept of substance is one of the most important philosophical topics in seventeenth and eighteenth century thought. Descartes, Spinoza, Locke, Leibniz, Berkeley, Hume, and Kant were all careful to scrutinize it and the group of philosophical and theological (e.g. the

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[46] Works I:87 (sic). His emphasis.

[47] Works I:87 (sic). His emphasis.

nature of the soul and the nature of Christ) problems that surround it. The distinction between things and their properties is, of course, a common sense or pre-philosophical notion as well.

In this section, however, I shall try only to settle a narrow, single question about the nature of substance. The question is this: Does Clarke think of the 'substance' or 'substratum' of properties as an entity distinct from all its properties (or powers)?[48] The importance of this question is that as Clarke has been shown to argue, we do have knowledge of essential properties or powers, and this is the foundation of his epistemology, but these properties reside in a substratum which is 'incomprehensible'. The prima facie paradox is that if the ultimate constituents of entities ('substrata') are unknown, then Clarke's epistemology of morals can attain at best the status of a reasonable hypothesis and at worst that of blank ignorance.

Clarke develops his view of powers and their substratum in distinction from the view of Descartes. Substance, according to Descartes, is "that which so exists that it needs no other thing in order to exist."[49] In the wake of Spinoza, Clarke saw that such a causal independence definition leads to atheism, i.e. it makes "matter a necessarily-existing being."[50] In the light of Newtonian physics, the nature of matter, motion, time and space would likewise be in grave conflict with Descartes.[51] After all, "the best mathematicians in the

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[48]A similar question is asked of Locke, which can compare by contrast with the question I am asking of Clarke, by M.R. Ayers, "The Ideas of Power and Substance in Locke's Philosophy," in Locke on Human Understanding, p. 77.

[49]Descartes, Philosophical Works, I:239-240.

[50]See Works II:581-587.

[51]E.g. see Works II:583.

world have demonstrated" the Cartesian hypothesis "to be false."[52] But the Cartesian hypothesis is understood by Clarke as a form of dualism, the view that there are two kinds of substances, namely God and matter, and the "essence" of each is known by "intuition".[53] Concerning the kinds of substances that there are, Descartes's answer must be: "One (uncreated) or three (uncreated, created thinking and created extended)."[54] Concerning the Cartesian knowledge of the essences of things by intuition, Clarke misunderstands Descartes. For Descartes, all we perceive directly are attributes and their modifications, so substance must be inferred from the presence of attributes.[55] On this corrected understanding of Descartes, Clarke does not differ, except that he (unlike Descartes) does not include extension as the essential property of matter. Matter and extension are two "entirely different things".[56]

That Clarke adopts an unknown substratum view of substance is evident throughout his works, especially in the Demonstration: e.g. "attributes or modes of existence are necessarily inherent [in a substance]"; "For modes and attributes exist only by the existence of the

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[52]Works II:581.

[53]At least this is the form of Cartesianism that he criticizes. See Works II:581-582.

[54]Jolley, Leibniz and Locke, p. 77. Cf. Jonathan Bennett, "A Note On Descartes and Spinoza," Philosophical Review 74 (1965):379-380.

[55]Descartes, Philosophical Works, I:223, 240; II:53, 101. However, Clarke likely has Descartes's ontological 'idea of God' in mind as regards God being known by 'intuition'.

[56]Works II:583. Extension is the essence of absolute space, not of matter. Thus where no matter obtains, there remains the existence of absolute space.

substance to which they belong;"[57] Proposition IV reads, "what the substance or essence of that Being, which is self-existent, or necessarily-existing, is; we have no idea, neither is it at all possible for us to comprehend it."[58] And it is not only the self-existent Being whose substance is unknown, "we are utterly ignorant of the substance or essence of all other things; even of those things which we converse most familiarly with, and think we understand best."[59] 'Substance' and 'essence' in these contexts refer to the unknown substratum.

It is therefore clear that Clarke adopts a theory of an unknown substratum, but on his view properties 'are necessarily inherent' in the substratum. The question then becomes: What is the epistemological gap between the properties and that in which they are inherent? The partial answer to this, which is clear, is that he does not distinguish ontologically between substance and attribute (or power). A substance is not other than its properties.

> (4.16) Nay, there is no substance in the world, of which we know any thing further, than only a certain number of its properties or attributes.[60]

A substance is its properties; God is his attributes:

> (4.17) the word essence [substance] ... [signifies] that by which a thing is what it is: For in that sense, the attributes of God do constitute his essence; and solidity, or impenetrability is the essence of matter.[61]

The full answer to the question asked then, is that for Clarke a substance is its properties, and a certain number of an entity's essential

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[57] *Works* II:527.

[58] *Works* II:537.

[59] *Works* II:538. His emphasis.

[60] *Works* II:538. His emphasis.

[61] *Works* II:581, note a. Emphasis added.

properties are known (4.16), but not necessarily all its properties. Hence Clarke does not mean that the unknown substratum is ontologically different and distinct from its known essential powers. He has strong (motivating) reasons for holding this view of 'partial knowledge' of substances because of his theological position: i.e. a created mind cannot completely know the self-existent Being; and Clarke also adopts this commonly held account of substance in order to mark off a natural unity among the powers that are known to be included under one complex or association.[62] Substance then is not a 'dummy' concept. Rather, it signifies the natural unity among the powers that constitute an entity. On this view of substance, then, Clarke's moral epistemology is not left in blank ignorance nor with the status of a reasonable hypothesis. The status which it claims to maintain is that in which knowledge and a priori understanding can be achieved.[63]

IV.5.i The Perfection and Goodness of God

Given Clarke's intellectualist theory of moral knowledge, and given an omniscient Supreme Being, it is evident that such a Being cannot but know and do that which is 'fittest to be done.'

> (4.18) The Supreme Cause therefore, and Author of all things; since (as has already been proved) he must of necessity have infinite knowledge, and the perfection of wisdom; so that 'tis absolutely impossible he should err, or be in any respect ignorant of the true relations and fitness or unfitness of things, or be by any means deceived or imposed upon herein:

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[62] Cf. Ayers, "Ideas of Power and Substance", p. 85.

[63] It seems to me however that Clarke would be further ahead if he did not cloud his epistemology with substratum notions. Rather, a simple definition in terms of essential properties would be preferable. E.g. Alvin Plantinga, Does God Have a Nature? (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1980), p. 7, note 1: "The nature of an object can be thought of as a conjunctive property, including as conjuncts just those properties essential to that object."

> and since he is likewise self-existent, absolutely independent and all-powerful; so that, having no want of any thing, 'tis impossible his will should be influenced by any wrong affections; and having no dependence, 'tis impossible his power should be limited by any superior strength; 'tis evident he must of necessity, (meaning, not a necessity of fate, but such a moral necessity as I before said was consistent with the most perfect liberty,) do always what he knows to be fittest to be done; that is, he must act always according to the strictest Rules of Infinite Goodness, Justice, and Truth, and all other moral perfections.[64]

The fitness of things is an eternal and necessary moral truth that is known to God which is 'antecedent to will,' that is, independent of the will of God. But it does not therefore have an independent, ontological status over and above God, i.e. as the Director of his will. Clarke is not so naive nor so unorthodox as to make such a claim. Rather, fitness 'appears to be' in the 'understanding'; it is an eternal truth of things existing in his understanding alone.

But the argument at (4.18) does not resolve perfect moral knowledge ultimately into dry abstractions, or mentalistic ideals bearing the status of ideas in the mind of God. Knowing the fitness of things is a sufficient reason for action, but fitness (as rightness) and goodness are two moral terms that do not reduce to one another. They do, however, require each other in order to fully consider the moral evidence for the divine being.[65] The passage at (4.18) carries the argument in favour of a Supreme Being who knows every right and best choice, and it is inextricably bound to the goodness of the character of God who does always what he knows to be fittest to be done. Thus,

> (4.19) In particular: the Supreme Cause must in the first place be infinitely good; that is, he must have an unalterable disposition to do and communicate good or happiness: because, being himself necessarily happy in the eternal enjoyment of

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[64] Works II:571-572. His emphasis.

[65] On the ways in which rightness and goodness are related, see J.H. Muirhead, Rule and End in Ethics (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1932).

> his own infinite perfections, he cannot possibly have any other motives to make any creatures at all, but only that he may communicate to them his own perfections...[66]

Thus, the infinite goodness of God is evident from his 'happiness' (4.19), and alternatively from his all-sufficiency.

> (4.20) That he must be infinitely good, appears likewise further from hence; that, being necessarily all-sufficient, he must consequently be infinitely removed from all malice and envy, and from all other possible causes or temptations of doing evil; which, 'tis evident, can only be effects of want and weakness, of imperfection or depravation.[67]

A similar argument is constructed from the Rule of Equity (III.6.ii) which is known to all thinking beings, and lastly, it is evident that the Supreme Cause of all things must be true and faithful.[68] The latter is evident because the only possible reason of lying or being false, is either

> (4.21) rashness or forgetfulness, inconstancy or impotency, fear of evil, or hope of gain; from all of which, an infinitely wise, all-sufficient and good being, must of necessity be infinitely removed...[69]

Hence,

(4.22) The divine nature is goodness itself.[70]

To this "argumentation a priori,"[71] one major objection may be

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[66] Works II:572. His emphasis.

[67] Works II:572. His emphasis.

[68] Works II:572.

[69] Works II:572.

[70] Works I:646. Thus God is not goodness in the teleological sense of goodness, i.e. as signifying man's final end in the vision of God. He is that, but such is goodness from a human standpoint. The 'goodness' of God refers to the actual, moral property (of moral perfection) which is the divine nature itself.

[71] Works II:573.

raised, namely that drawn from the observation of the unequal distributions of providence in the world. Clarke's reply to this objection is, in effect, that this world is not the best of all possible worlds, but it is the best means to the best of all possible worlds, the world yet to come. There "every thing will clearly appear just and right."[72]

Goodness and rightness, then, are perfectly united in the nature of God, for by his omniscience he knows the fitness of things perfectly (he knows all the parameters of every possible state of affairs), and his goodness inclines his will to do that which is fittest to be done. Put another way, the unity of the right and the good that is only known in a fractured way by persons, is supremely unified in God. Persons are irreducibly moral agents, but the fitness of some actions is grey and the virtue of my character can always find room for improvement. But the divine nature is goodness itself, being subject to no imperfection; the Supreme Cause of all things is therefore the full and final Moral Ground of personal existence.

IV.5.ii Leibniz and Clarke on the Theology of the Moral Inclination and 'Fitness'

Mention of Leibniz was indirectly made above in comparison of Clarke's view with the doctrine that this is the best of all possible worlds. Indeed, Clarke has numerous concepts in contrast, and in common, with his most prominent opponent. There are two concepts (that are the most important ones found in Clarke's moral theory) which must warrant a more careful comparison than I have offered as yet. The first concept that finds a strikingly similar counter-part in Leibniz's meta-ethics is the concept of the moral inclination.

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[72] Works II:573. Cf. John Hick, Evil and the God of Love, 2nd ed. (New York: Harper & Row, 1978).

In the Discourse on Metaphysics, Leibniz answers his query about "how God inclines our soul without necessitating it."[73] His answer remains side by side with the Principle of Pre-Established Harmony. Consequently, the action of God on the human will is

> (4.22) by virtue of the decree which he has made that the will should always tend to the apparent good, expressing or imitating the will of God in certain particular respects with regard to which this apparent good always has some truth in it, he determines our will to the choice of that which seems the better, nevertheless without necessitating it.[74]

But the Principle of Pre-Established Harmony is unacceptable to Clarke, as it is "so strange an hypothesis."[75] (1) It is 'strange' because it claims "the soul and body of a man have no more influence upon each other's motions and affections, than two clocks, which, at the greatest distance from each other, go alike, without at all affecting each other."[76] (2) It constitutes a rejection of contra-causal freedom, because God foresees the inclinations of every man's soul and contrives the great machine of the universe to move by harmonia praestabilita. (3) Also, given the great variety in kinds of motion of the human body, it hardly seems "possible" they "should be performed by mere mechanisms, without any influence of will and mind upon them."[77] (4) If one can be persuaded that one's body is a mere machine, then (a) one does

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[73]G.W. Leibniz, Discourse on Metaphysics, trans. by Peter G. Lucas and Leslie Grint (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1961), p. 48.

[74]Ibid., p. 49. As this was written in 1685-6 but not published until 1846 it would not have been known to Clarke from this source. He may have first come by it in the Leibniz-Clarke Correspondence.

[75]Leibniz-Clarke Correspondence, p. 115.

[76]Ibid., pp. 115-116.

[77]Ibid., p. 116.

not indeed see, hear, feel, or move his body, "but only dreams"[78] such things; (b) and from such a fiction one will soon conclude that the machine is the whole man. (5) Finally, Clarke distinguishes himself from Leibniz by asking, 'What difficulty is avoided by so strange an hypothesis?' The problem of interactionism between immaterial substance and matter is as easy to conceive as how matter acts on matter, or how rays of light can be reflected from a surface which they never touch.[79] Besides, given theism, God is an immaterial substance, yet he acts upon matter. Must we change our theology to fit such a strange position?

The second chief comparison of Leibniz's and Clarke's theology of morals, is in regard to the concept of fitness. This is paired up with the concept of 'moral necessity' (4.18), especially in reference to the choice of God. In The Monadology, Leibniz links the ideas of fitness with the Principle of Sufficient Reason.

(4.23) 53. Now, as in the Ideas of God there is an infinite number of possible universes, and as only one of them can be actual, there must be a sufficient reason for the choice of God, which leads him to decide upon one rather than another.
54. And this reason can be found only in the fitness [convenance], or in the degrees of perfection, that these worlds possess, since each possible thing has the right to aspire to existence in proportion to the amount of perfection it contains in germ.[80]

The Monadology (1714) and the Théodicée[81] (1710) were too late in print to have been read by Clarke prior to the Demonstration (1704)

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[78]Ibid.

[79]Ibid., p. 117.

[80]G.W. Leibniz The Monadology, trans. by Robert Latta (London: Oxford University Press, 1925), p. 247. His emphasis.

[81]Cf. G.W. Leibniz, Théodicée, 8, 10, 74, 130, 167, 350, 201.

where he first speaks of the 'fitness' of things. Clarke would have been knowledgeable of Leibniz from lesser works and letters, i.e. the correspondence with Arnauld, as well as from general information in circulation from Leibniz's visit to London where he visited Robert Boyle and (probably) Thomas Hobbes.[82] Thus Clarke likely developed his ideas with Leibniz's work being no more than 'in the air' at the time. Nonetheless there are impressive correlations, yet such that the two views are clearly distinguishable.

The major distinction to note between Leibniz and Clarke on the concept of fitness, is that the former employs it in reference to possible choices on the part of God. This, of course, results in the view that God, being perfectly wise, powerful, and good, is obliged to choose the best among possibles if he decides to create anything. However, this is a contingent truth about the free choice of God, as he metaphorically mulls over which world to create. Clarke employs the term not presupposing God's goodness, but rather to explain the phenomena of moral obligation itself. Leibniz's sense refers to general philosophical principles; Clarke's sense refers more to the psychology (and metaphysics) of obligation.

Both Leibniz and Clarke fully agreed, however, in opposition to Descartes.

(4.24) 46. We must not, however, imagine, as some do, that eternal truths, being dependent on God, are arbitrary and depend on His will, as Descartes, and afterwards M. Poiret, appear to have held. That is true only of contingent truths, of which the principle is fitness [convenance] or choice of the best, whereas necessary truths depend solely on His understanding and are its inner object.[83]

They agree that Descartes is wrong to take final recourse in the will

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[82]Leibniz, The Monadology, p. 7.

[83]Ibid., pp. 242-243.

of God because, as Leibniz says,

> (4.25) If truths and the natures of things are dependent on the choice of God, I do not see how knowledge [scientia] or even will can be attributed to Him. For will certainly presupposes some understanding, since no one can will except in view of some good [sub ratione boni]. But understanding presupposes something that can be understood, that is to say, some nature.[84]

For Leibniz, unlike Clarke, the principle of 'convenance' is the same as the Principle of Sufficient Reason.[85] Clarke admits the importance of the Principle of Sufficient Reason, but rejects it as a causal principle to account for events (Clarke always interprets it in this sense). Even the 'best' reason is never the true source of action. It is always the agent who acts, albeit as in God, He does act upon the fitness of things.[86]

God, then, is perfect goodness who is not caused to act by 'moral necessity' (as Clarke understands Leibniz to say[87]), but rather, God is perfect goodness and consequently wills to act according to a 'moral necessity' (4.18). The difference is, for Clarke, that between agent-causation (true both of finite rational beings and of God), and the causal understanding of the Principle of Sufficient Reason. A rational being may (in principle on Leibniz's position) be unable to act if he has a good reason for doing either M or N, but no reason for doing one rather than the other. But an ass between two identical stacks of hay will arbitrarily choose one rather than die of starvation; man and God

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[84]Leibniz in a letter to Honoratus Fabri (1671), quoted from Leibniz, The Monadology, p. 242, note 72.

[85]See Leibniz, The Monadology, p. 243, note 74.

[86]See Leibniz-Clarke Correspondence, p. 99; also the Fifth papers, section 9.; and pp. xxii-xxiii.

[87]Ibid., Fifth Paper, Section 9.

may act on things which are identical alternative choices, or in matters that are morally indifferent because a reason provides a motive but the agent remains the efficient cause of action.

IV.6 The Duty of Imitating the Holiness of God

In Part III, only two of the three general branches of duty were discussed. The duty of a moral-agent-in-relation towards himself, and towards others was addressed, but the most important of the three branches has been left until now, namely, the duty of a moral-agent-in-relation towards the Perfect Being. This is the most crucial, full, and final relation wherein virtue can develop. Clarke develops his ideas on this in a sermon, 'Of Imitating the holiness of God.'[88] It is in the imitation of the perfection of the Person that the a moral agent comes to acquiesce in his quest, and is able to fulfill his greatest potential.[89]

The principle of imitation is one that holds in the relation between a 'rational and moral agent' ("frail and finite"[90]) and Perfect Reason (God).

> (4.26) That is to say; all rational and intelligent beings are, by the Law of their Nature, obliged to endeavour to become in their several degrees and proportions like unto Him, who alone is Perfect Reason and Understanding. This is an original obligation, founded in nature itself, requiring us to imitate what it necessitates us to admire.[91]

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[88] *Works* I:154-159. Cf. 'Of Loving God,' *Works* I:135-141.

[89] *Works* I:194.

[90] *Works* I:155.

[91] *Works* I:155. Those who do *not* practice this duty, will not have that ample pleasure and satisfaction which comes from having done the greatest good, of their having best answered the ends of their creation, *Works* II:621. Cf. *Works* I:156, and II:619.

The imitation of moral perfection, however, is never an abandonment of one's critical faculties.[92] Nor is it robot-like 'see and do'. The imitation is an imitation of God's holiness, not an imitation of an action but of a perfect moral character, namely love. It is

> (4.26) the foundation of all religion, and the true spring, the inward and natural principle and ground of happiness...[93]

Strictly, "This imitation of God, is in Heaven."[94] But the Kingdom of God is a Moral Kingdom. And the glory in such a kingdom is habitual holiness, a constant established practice of virtue, in the course of our lives. For now we live in the natural Kingdom, then we shall live in his moral Kingdom.

> (4.27) God is himself a Being of infinite holiness and goodness; a perfectly just and righteous, as well as Supreme, Governour of the Universe: and the glory of such a Governour, is the establishment of his Moral Kingdom, the universal establishment of the dominion and power of virtue, in the wills of all reasonable and intelligent creatures. His natural Kingdom is by necessity; for the material world cannot but obey him: But his moral Kingdom which is his greatest glory, is the dominion of righteousness and virtue.[95]

IV.7 Summary

Clarke's view on relation between morality and theism (revelation) has been discussed in IV.2, in reference to his chief critic, Matthew Tindal. Tindal's argument was found wanting, being referred to as an example of an either/or fallacy. Clarke's position is that moral know-

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[92]Cf. James Rachels, "God and Human Attitudes", in Divine Commands and Morality, edited by Paul Helm (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981), pp. 34-38. Rachels argues that no being could ever be worthy of worship, except on pain of abandoning one's human autonomy.

[93]Works I:646.

[94]Works I:646.

[95]Works I:116.

ledge is epistemologically autonomous, but it is greatly aided in its task by the Christian revelation. Revelation confirms, illustrates, distinguishes clear boundaries, enforces moral observation, and gives new (stronger) motives for developing a virtuous life. Deism (i.e. Tindal's) by contrast, is a radical rationalism which is extreme to the point of being unable to explain the basic concept of human moral development, and it completely misses the obvious fact of mankind's sinful condition and need for revelation.

The use of moral language and the predication of moral properties of God are topics which are discussed by Clarke, the content of IV.3. He argues against a mere analogical view of language, and in favour of a univocal core, which is grounded in one's self-knowledge of moral properties. The enthusiasts deny in practice what the School-men deny in principle. There must necessarily be a univocal core in our moral language if statements about the goodness, justice, truth and love of God are to be meaningful and coherent.

In IV.4 a significant problem is raised which is at the foundation of Clarke's moral theory as well as his moral theology. It is the question of what ontological gap he actually suggests in his distinction between the known moral properties of things, and the unknown substrata in which they reside. It was argued that an entity is its essential powers, and the doctrine of an unknown substratum is unnecessary. This criticism is not altogether at odds with what Clarke believed about the relation of powers and substratum.

In IV.5.i, Clarke's arguments for the existence of the moral attributes of the Supreme Cause were discussed, and in IV.5.ii, two concepts in Clarke's moral theology were compared with the concepts of Leibniz. Implicit in this comparison is the fact that Clarke's most distinctive ideas are seen either as original ideas of his own, or refinements, not on the ideas of Locke, but on those of Leibniz.

The culmination of Clarke's moral theology is discussed in IV.6, which is the duty of imitating the holiness of God. This, however, is not a beatific vision, but rather life in the Kingdom of God, which is eminently a moral kingdom where the highest end of every created being can be finally and fully satisfied.

CONCLUSION

The principal aim of this work has been to establish a clear understanding of Clarke's moral theory which has suffered from neglect and misunderstanding. The assumption, that Clarke gives 'rational intuitionism' little if any epistemological grounding, has been shown to be mistaken. The secondary aim of this thesis was to show the relevance of Clarke's ideas to contemporary discussions in philosophy of mind, moral theory, and moral theology. Although Clarke is sometimes mentioned by moral philosophers, he is very rarely acknowledged by contemporary moral theologians. This is so in spite of the fact that Clarke's moral philosophy is consciously constructed so as to refute the moral theories of Hobbes and the deists, while remaining true to traditional Christian theism.

In Part I the largely unknown work and influence of Clarke was introduced. In his own time he bore a high reputation, especially as a philosopher-theologian, and was considered by many to be the intellectual successor of John Locke. The paradox in the association of Clarke with Locke, however, is the fact that Clarke does not fit into the 'historiographic orthodoxy' that views British thought about the problem of knowledge to be progressive refinements of Locke's tabula rasa

belief. Quite to the contrary, Clarke debates Anthony Collins, a disciple of Locke, on the nature of the soul. Even more to the point, in relation to the later work of David Hume, Clarke is one of the chief targets of his empiricist attacks. Thus he may be called 'Hume's Heretic,' being largely responsible for the construction of 'Hume's Law.' Although Clarke had heterodox views about the Trinity, he was orthodox in his defence of dualism (as the traditional view of Christian theism), special revelation, and miracles. Unlike Locke he was unwilling to admit any possibility to the notion of 'thinking matter.' Thus his theism, his close association with the ideas of Sir Isaac Newton, his rejection of deism, and his similarities with Leibniz are better measuring sticks by which to understand Clarke than a comparison of him with Locke.

In Part II, Clarke's philosophical analysis of the nature of the moral self, the nature of 'individual personality,' was ascertained, clarified, and presented as the epistemological foundation of his moral theory. The importance of this in terms of Clarkean scholarship, is that it overturns the assumption that Clarke has little or no epistemology to offer in support of his 'ethical intuitionism.' Most of this content is drawn from the Letter to Dodwell and its Defenses, but it is also latent in Clarke's arguments in the Demonstration, about the natural immortality and immateriality of the soul.

There are also three major historical corrections, in terms of the more broad history of ideas, that follow from the study of Clarke's extensive work on the nature of mind. Two ideas that are usually attributed to Joseph Butler are actually Clarke's conceptions, viz. 'the strict' and 'the abstract' (or 'loose') concepts of personal identity were first distinguished by Clarke, whose work Butler acknowledges. The second idea wrongly credited to the originality of Butler is the distinction that memory does not constitute personal identity

(Locke's view), but rather, memory presupposes and entails a perfectly enduring substance. There is one further idea that is rightly credited to Clarke rather than to Thomas Reid, namely, the theory of agent-causation. This was discussed in II.9 and it forms a crucial notion within the metaphysics of Clarke and his view of human liberty. It, in effect, puts Clarke two notches up on Hume and one up on Leibniz. That is to say, for Hume reason is the slave of the passions, for Leibniz a 'sufficient reason' is causally determinative of action (at least on Clarke's interpretation of Leibniz), and for Clarke neither the passions nor reason is necessarily determinative. All three of these concepts are coherently interwoven in Clarke's moral epistemology, and are also extremely important in current discussions in philosophy of mind and the theory of action. The single most important concept, discussed in II.9.ii, is 'the moral inclination', an innate moral tendency of the will that inclines a person to the right and the good without necessitating action. This is an 'ingenious idea' (Rom Harré) on Clarke's part, invoked to protect moral autonomy, freedom of the will, and a moral objectivism that does justice to the theological doctrine of conscience (Rom. 2) and the 'image of God.'

In PartIII, the moral epistemology uncovered in Part II was linked with Clarke's more well known doctrine of the 'fitness of things' in the Discourse. The significant explanatory power of the 'moral inclination' in reference to the usually slippery concept of 'fitness' is further justification in support of the interpretation of Clarke being offered. My interpretation of 'fitness' in III.3 is that rightness or obligation is a relation, but it is always that of a moral-agent-in-relation. Consequently Hume's criticism, in Treatise 3.1.1, does not damage the ethical rationalism for which Clarke argues. Hutcheson's criticism is not as significant as Hume's, and suffers from internal difficulties as Raphael has already shown.

Two additional arguments are added to those which spring from Clarke's work. The first argument, in III.3.iv, asks 'Can I forget the difference between right and wrong?' The answer given is that I can as easily forget the difference between right and wrong as I can forget that I am myself. This is taken as collateral support for an innate 'moral inclination.' The second argument added in Clarke's defence, III.4, concerns his frequent analogy between morals and mathematics. Numerous contemporary moral philosophers would dismiss such an analogy because Euclidean geometry is now accepted as having an empirical element which removes it from the pedestal of a priori truth. In response to this it was argued that Clarke's analogy is more properly understood as an analogy between fitness and 'pure mathematics,' and it is simply not the case that pure mathematics has been proven to be an empirical discipline. In fact, 'Platonism...is the dominant attitude in the practice of modern mathematicians.'

After a comparison and contrast was drawn between Clarke's theory and the moral dispositional theory of Thomas Burnet (III.5), and their similar treatment of the argument from relativism was discussed, two branches of particular moral duties were discussed (III.6). Here again it was seen that understanding fitness as a moral-agent-in-relation towards oneself (III.6.i) and towards others (III.6.ii), has significant explanatory power and is further support for the interpretation of Clarke that I have been offering.

Finally, in Part IV, Clarke's moral theory is seen to come fully into focus in his moral theology. Indeed, his understanding of the nature of the irreducible moral properties of God (his goodness, justice, equality, and truth) are very strong reasons for Clarke constructing his rational objectivism in the first place.

The major critic of Clarke's argument for the use of reason and revelation in morality, was Matthew Tindal. His criticism was

discussed in IV.2 and was found seriously wanting. Tindal's argument against Clarke is an either/or paradox. Either reason is sufficient for morality or it is not. As Clarke holds that reason is essential, Tindal assumes that reason is all that is necessary, thereby making revelation redundant. Clarke's reply to such a criticism, it was suggested, would amount to showing that Tindal has actually employed an either/or fallacy which is self-defeating and ineffective in getting at Clarke's position.

In IV.3 Clarke's argument for univocal language in God-talk was uncovered, in distinction from the positions of the 'enthusiasts' and the 'School-men.' The enthusiasts are said to deny the goodness of God in practice, and the School-men, if their analogical language is taken seriously, deny the moral attributes of God in priciple.

A substantial criticism of Clarke was then offered in IV.4. If his moral objectivism is grounded in the known moral powers of persons (powers which are univocally predicated of God), then his theory of an 'incomprehensible substratum' in which the powers reside creates significant problems. It was argued that a definition of substance simply in terms of essential powers, without 'residence' in any further substratum, is needed in order to preserve the tenability of Clarke's moral theory (and his theory of mind as well).

In IV.5.i Clarke's argument for the moral perfection of God was discussed, and it is compared and contrasted with Leibniz in IV.5.ii. The summation of Clarke's moral theory, reflecting his personalism, comes in the duty of imitating the holiness of God. In this moral relationship alone does a 'frail and finite' moral agent behold Moral Perfection, for the divine nature is goodness itself. But the end of the duty of imitating the holiness of God is not an individualistic enterprise, it is the activity of the Kingdom of God.

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