FOR KEVIN'S SAKE

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ABSTRACT: The idiom 'for someone's sake' plays a central role in recent attempts to understand the distinction between impersonal values and personal values—e.g. between what is valuable or good, period, and what is valuable *for* or good *for someone*. In the first section three historical approaches to this distinction are outlined. Section 2 presents a modified fitting-attitude (FA) analysis of final 'value-for' interpreting value-for in terms of there being a reason to favour something 'for someone's sake'. Section 3 outlines two arguments against this sort of modified analysis, and then indicates what the rejection of these arguments would involve. This section also identifies an ambiguity in the analysis deriving from the fact that 'sake' may be used either evaluatively or non-evaluatively (descriptively). In Section 4, the modified FA analysis is further clarified. Section 5 focuses on Kevin Mulligan's recent suggestion that we are struck by personal value; finally, in Section 6, it is shown that an FA analysis admitting of two varieties of goodness may help us understand a certain kind of case that appears paradoxical as long as we assume that there is good, period, and no good-for.

Moral philosophy and value theory in general frequently make use of the idea that we should do something for someone's sake. Notwithstanding this, 'doing something for someone's sake' remains a somewhat obscure notion. Of course, examples of reasons or motives for doing such acts easily come to mind. For instance, I could come up with a number of reasons why I have contributed to this festschrift. Some relate to what I believe would be valuable for me. My paper should strengthen my association with a great philosopher, one from whom I have learned a lot over the years and hope to learn more—unless, of course, with this contribution, I have made a mockery of myself! And that association will very probably be good for me. But whatever purely prudential motives I might have, I am clearly motivated by the fact that he is a very good-hearted and amiable fellow whose emblematic Mulligian wit has made me burst into laughter on many an occasion. So, given who Kevin Mulligan is, I would say I have strong reasons to contribute to this collective tribute for his sake, not just my own. In fact, in my view there is a positive personal value accruing to this digital homage—a value for Kevin.[1] This personal value is best understood, I think, in terms of there being a reason to respond in a positive attitudinal way to this festschrift, and to do so for Kevin's sake.

But although I have some idea of how to answer our original question, I am still not quite sure what, precisely, it means to do something for someone's sake. Why am I doing this for Kevin's sake rather than for, say, Kevin? What, *if anything*, is the difference? What exactly is this *sake* that apparently plays some motivational role in my deliberation? These questions interest me for more than one reason. Besides the obvious one (that I want to know, of course, what I am doing), I have also a special interest in clarifying matters. Recently I examined in Rønnow-Rasmussen (2011a)[2] the possibility of expanding our value taxonomy with a new set of values. In doing so, I argued that there seemingly are two kinds of non-derivative value: value, period, and value-for. For instance, if we have a thin, fundamental, positive value in mind, such as goodness, there is, I argued, a conceptual role to be played not only by good, period, but also by the equally thin, fundamental, non-derivative good-for.

To understand these sorts of value I applied a slightly modified variety of an analysis which has, in recent years, attracted a good deal of attention among value theorists. On this analysis—the so-called 'fitting-attitude' (FA) analysis of value[3]—final values are understood in term of attitudes that it is fitting, or, more generally, that there is reason, to direct towards the value-bearer for its own sake. 'For someone/something's sake' attitudes obviously play a central role in this analysis. The kind of attitude involved in the analysis of value-for is more complex than the one required for the analysis of value, period.

In what follows I will consider an objection to my analysis which sets out from the idea that the idiom 'for someone's sake' is not obviously translatable into other languages. Besides allowing me to once more determine the role of the noun 'sake' in the analysis, the discussion will, I hope, highlight the fact that there are at least two ways to understand the notion of doing something for Kevin's sake. In addition to killing two birds with one stone, I will also,

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[1] For the rest of the paper I will refer to the "Jubilar" in a more friendly way as Kevin.

[2] *Personal Value*, Oxford University Press.

[3] Following Tim Scanlon, the FA analysis is sometimes called the 'buck-passing' account: see Scanlon, Thomas Michael (1998). *What We Owe to Each Other*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

in the final section, outline why I think it might be a good idea for an FA analyst to allow that there are two kinds of value: impersonal and personal. Meanwhile, since there is no consensus on this matter, I will begin by briefly saying something in support of the very idea that this sort of distinction can be made.

1. *Monism and Pluralism about varieties of good.*

Here is an example in which I feel that the distinction between good and good-for easily comes into play: the World Chess Championship 1972, which took place in Reykjavik, is considered by many aficionados as *the* match of the twentieth century. Bobby Fisher, of the United States, beat the defending champion, Boris Spassky, of the Soviet Union. It is sometimes said that, in making various unexpected demands and being, in general, unreasonable about the whole setting of the match, the eccentric Fisher was using mind games to undermine Spassky's confidence. Whether this is true is a matter of interpretation that I am not competent to get into (I was not there). However, it would be quite understandable for those who believe that Fisher 'psyched out' Spassky to think both that accomplishing this was good for Fisher and bad for Spassky *and* that it was bad, period, that the match was settled in an unfair way. Fairness and justice are bona fide examples of value, period.

Somewhat surprisingly, the idea that we should recognize good-for as another kind of value, alongside good, period, has not been generally accepted. In fact, it is possible to detect three major positions with regard to the distinction between good and good-for. Moorean monists, as I have referred to them elsewhere (Rønnow-Rasmussen 2011b),[4] believe that there is no good-for—or at most that this kind of goodness is somehow derivative from good, period. Moorean monists claim there is just one, unique kind of fundamental positive value (goodness), and that this is a non-relative, absolute or final. This is the kind of goodness that I am referring to as good, period. Of course, Mooreans do not deny that we sometimes speak about something being good for someone. However, they insist that, when this happens, the good-for is reducible to, or definable in terms of, something's contribution to, or constitutive role in, what is good, period—e.g. the goodness of person's life. Thus, the claim that Fisher's behavior was good for Fisher should be understood to mean that there is some good, period, accruing to a state of affairs such as the one involving Fisher's state of mind when he checkmated Spassky.

[4] Toni Rønnow-Rasmussen, 'Good and Good for', (2011b, forthcoming) in Hugh LaFollette (ed.), *International Encyclopedia of Ethics,* Wiley-Blackwell.

For Hobbesian monists—as I will refer to them, given Hobbes' insistence that there is nothing that is simply good, only "goodness to us"[5]—whenever we speak about goodness, it will always be because something is good for someone. There are reasons why one would be attracted by this sort of sinister claim (besides, I suppose, its sinisterness, which does seem to attract some people). But, fundamentally, Hobbesians will not accept the Moorean attempt to understand what is good for Fisher in terms of a good, period. Intuitively, it does seem reasonable to describe the case as involving something that is good for one person, and something that is bad for another person. It is less easy to see how one could be led to believe that all value is somehow person-relative in this sense.[6] For instance, Mooreans will be eager to point out that the badness of injustice should not be regarded as someone's badness (unless, of course, this person-relative badness is at some point reducible to badness, period). The Mooreans intuitively seem to have a point; but, again, it seems that they too are guilty of a adopting a narrow perspective.

Neither of these positions, in my view, is convincing. A more compelling view is taken by value pluralists, and specifically dualists, who recognize both kinds of value—the relative as well as the non-relative good—and conceive of these as phenomena that are understandable independently of each other (which, by the way, is quite consistent with the notion that both are analyzable with the same pattern of analysis). Value pluralism squares better with our intuitions; it offers a straightforward approach to the question how we should look upon the values involved in cases like the chess example. Both kinds of monist will have more explaining to do here. Moorean monists will try to do so, typically, by arguing that it does not make sense to say that an event, object or state of affairs is good for a person unless that event, object or state of affairs constitutes, or at least contributes to, the *impersonal* goodness of something else, such as the good, period, that they take to accrue to the life, welfare or wellbeing of the person. Not only dualists, but also the Hobbesian monist, will contest this claim, though. One line of reasoning is that there is no need to bring in any value-claim other than that something carries a value-for. Things that carry value-for often also carry value,

[5] I strongly suspect (but admit that it is a matter of interpretation) that Hobbes himself was a Hobbesian monist. See e.g. Hobbes 1969 [1889] *The Elements of Law: Natural and Politic*, ch. 7: p. 29.

[6] Recall Prichard's point that Plato regarded even justice as a kind of good-for. See Prichard, H. A. (1928), 'Duty and interest', reprinted in Prichard (2002), *Moral Writings*, Oxford, University Press, 21–49.

period. For instance, the present festschrift contains contributions all of which (with the possible exception of the present one) have value independently of their relation to Kevin. So it is expected that the festschrift will carry value, period, as well as a value for Kevin. Non-Mooreans would not deny this possibility; but they would insist as well that there is no conceptual need to admit that something like a festschrift has value, period, only because it has a positive value for a person.[7]

Naturally, value pluralism is the more complex view; it makes value aggregation and comparison quite complicated, and perhaps even impossible. Here monists do have an advantage over dualists. However, this is not the place to settle the controversy between monists and pluralists. I bring it up because I want to stress that some of the problems I have run into, in understanding good-for in terms of someone's-sake attitudes, are connected with my belief that we should not make this analysis dependent on ascribing value, period, to the person or, for that matter, his or her sake.

2. *Analyzing value-for*

According to the sort of view I am trying to understand, value-for might well accrue to an object rather than the person whose personal value it is. Again, if we have a positive value like goodness in mind, it might well be that 'this festschrift carries *value for* Kevin' should be understood to be about a person-relative value[8] that accrues to a certain festschrift. Suppose this makes sense. Now, since such an object might well also carry impersonal value, a fitting-attitude analysis has to tell us wherein lies the difference. In *Personal Value* I came to the conclusion that the distinction should be located, not in the normative component, but rather in the attitudinal element.[9] In the case an object carries both kinds of final value, given the analysis, there is a reason to favour the object for its own sake. It is just that when it comes to

[7] For more on the monist/pluralism matter, see Rønnow-Rasmussen, Toni (2011b)

[8] The expression 'person-relative value' is ambiguous. It might mean that the value is constituted by a certain subject (as a subjectivist would say that is the case with all values), or that it is a value from a certain person's perspective. However, this is not how it is intended to be understood here. Rather, if something is good for a person, this something carries a person-relative value, but this sort of value is not necessarily only analyzable by subjectivists; nor is it goodness only from a certain perspective.

[9] Nor is this necessarily a distinction between an 'objectivist' and a 'subjectivist' approach to value.

personal, final value, the sort of attitude involved is more complex: it is a case of favouring something for its own sake for the sake of someone else. We must also take into account that, just as there can be final and instrumental value, there can be final and instrumental value-for. However, here I will confine myself to so-called *final* personal value. In the case of *positive* final personal value, i.e. value-for, I suggested the following:

> FAP: an object x's *value for* a person a consists in the existence of normative reasons for favouring x for its own sake for *a*'s sake

'Favouring x for its own sake for *a*'s sake' is to be understood as a schematic place-holder for the different pro-responses that are called for by different kinds of valuable object. I devoted considerable space in *Personal Value* to the clarification of linguistically awkward-sounding attitudes of this sort, which I referred to as 'FFS-attitudes' (final for-someone's-sake attitudes). It would require too much space here to repeat my responses to the various questions and objections that I considered. Instead I would like to consider a possible objection to FAP that has to do with the attitude involved—one that I did not consider in *Personal Value*.

The objection is quite radical.[10] It deserves perhaps to be carved out in more detail than I can manage here, but the general idea is easy to state. It comes down to the claim that FAP should be rejected because the notion of an FFS attitude appears to be translatable only in some languages, and we simply cannot, the argument goes, tolerate an analysans that fails to work in some languages.

3. The non-translatability objection

The gist of what we might suitably call the non-translatability objection can be straightforwardly stated. An analysis aspiring, besides being true, to further conceptual clarity should not couch its analysans in terms that are not translatable into other major natural languages. Just how reasonable this claim is depends in part on what we understand by 'translatable'. For instance, we might require that the statement in the analysans should be fully translatable. By 'fully translatable' I mean that the translation should contain word-for-word equivalents of the original statement. But such a claim would surely be exaggerated. Translations from one natural language to another are hardly ever of this exact kind. A more

[10] I would like to stress that there are a number of other reasonable and interesting objections to FAP, but that I will not consider them here.

reasonable idea is to require, not a one-for-one replacement, but rather that the translation should express the core meaning of the original statement. Just what this means, other than that the translation should express to a high degree what the original statement expresses, is a difficult question. However, this question need not, I believe, detain us here. Obviously 'core meaning' is open to different kinds of qualification.

So let us rephrase the objection, taking this more cautious claim into account:

The non-translatability objection:

(1) An analysis in one natural language should be rejected if the core meaning of the analysans cannot be expressed by another natural language.
(2) FAP is formulated in terms of the expression 'for someone's sake'
(3) Some natural languages have no one-for-one replacement of 'for someone's sake.
(4) Natural languages that do not contain a one-for-one replacement of 'for someone's sake' cannot express the core meaning of the FAP's analysans.
(5) FAP should therefore be rejected; it cannot be expressed in some natural languages.

First, although this modification seems justified, it should be stressed that the kind of objection is not obviously reasonable for analyses in general. At least it seems wise to keep the door open to the possibility that, at some point in time, some natural languages might be conceptually more evolved or fine-grained than other natural languages. If that were the case, there would not necessarily be anything wrong with an analysis just because, at some point in time, it resists translation into another language, i.e. cannot be exactly expressed in that language. Still, although this might be the case with certain terms and expressions, it is hard to see that this comment really applies to our case. FAP is about good-for (value-for). Some of the languages apparently lacking a one-for-one replacement for 'for someone's sake' contain words expressing the idea that something is good, or valuable, for an agent. It would be very odd, from the point of view of the analysis, if we could not find a translation capturing approximately the same meaning even if that were done without any synonym of 'sake' as it is used in 'for his sake'.[11]

[11] The objection rests on several notions and ideas that stand in need of clarification, and so it is quite likely that it can be criticized for other reasons. For the sake of advancing the discussion I have set these criticisms aside.

Here is a list of the ways in which 'for his sake' would ordinarily be translated into some languages (most of which Kevin has mastered):

Catalan:	Pel seu bé
German	Für sein Willen
French:	Pour son bien
Italian:	Per il suo bene
Spanish:	Por su bien
Swedish	För hans skull.

A couple of features of this short list are worth pointing out. First, some languages translate the expression into what philosophers, at least, would describe as evaluative language. For example, 'bé' in Catalan, 'bien' in Frensh, 'bene' in Italian, and 'bien' in Spanish, translate the English word 'good'. However, translators in other languages seem to have thought they could do without an explicit 'evaluative translation'. Thus the Swedish 'skull' probably would not be straightforwardly classified as an evaluative term. The same can be said of the German 'willen', and, of course, the English 'sake'. (That they admit of evaluative interpretations is another matter, to which I will return in a moment). In the Latin languages the point is even more obvious, since they think that, in some contexts, they can manage without even a synonym of 'sake'. For instance, in French 'pour lui' would in some contexts work as translation of 'for his sake'.

The list I have provided is admittedly too short and culturally myopic. Nonetheless it raises some interesting issues[12] and provides evidence that 'sake' is an ambiguous term—one that may or may not express an evaluative idea. This conclusion is strengthened once we take into consideration a further aspect. Some languages appear to have more than one way of translating 'for his sake'; and, interestingly, both evaluative and non-evaluative translations exist within one and the same language. For instance, the distinction between 'para' and 'por' in Spanish is food for thought. 'Para' and 'por' signal quite different things. If you are employed by your son, you might express this in Spanish as "Trabajo *para* mi hijo". However, if you work for your son's sake you might say: "Trabajo *por* mi hijo". Sentences combining 'para' and 'por', aimed to express this distinction, often appear strange. But perhaps this would work. Someone taking care of a very noisy parrot, not because he cares about the bird, but as a favour to its holidaying owner, might say: 'I bought food for the bird

[12] I do not have in mind, primarily at any rate, questions about the value-theoretical background of translators: but perhaps it would be an idea to introduce some metaethics and formal axiology in the translator curriculum?

for Franscisco's's sake'. Spanish might express this in different ways, but one way would be to translate this as: 'Compré comida *para* el pajaro *por* Franscisco'.

The 'para'/'por' distinction is important if we wish to understand the non-evaluative notion of 'sake'. Clearly, it signals that there are at least two ways in which we can do something *for* someone (say, the bird or Franscisco). We can do it in the 'para' or the 'por' way. That is, I do not want to deny that there is more than one sense involved when we speak about doing something 'para'/'por' someone (i.e. that the distinction fulfils more than one function in language). However, among these senses, I believe there is, for my purpose, one salient one. Both 'para' and 'por' refer, in a sense, to the cause, motive or reason-constitutive ground[13] that explains why you did (or are doing, or will do) something, i.e. the purpose for which you act. However, using 'por' signals that we should not look for any further purpose. The thing, or the person, we did it 'for'/'por' is the final end—the cause, motive or reason for our acting or favouring. This is not the case with 'para'. Saying that we did it 'for'/'para' someone leaves at least the ultimate reason, cause or motive for which you did something open.

Languages have different ways of expressing this distinction. Although it is an entirely different kind of word, the Swedish 'skull' plays a role that is similar to 'por' in one respect.[14] When a Swedish speaker says that he has no further reason for doing something than that already referring to some person or wants to be explicit about not having an ulterior motive, he may do so by saying that he did it for this person's 'skull' (i.e. 'sake'). 'Skull' may refer to no specific set of properties of the person other than, say, 'being Kevin'. Of course, we might, and I suspect often do, have a precise set of properties in mind—e.g. the properties that constitute Kevin's welfare, wellbeing, or whatever is in his interest.[15]

I am no expert in French, but my impression is that it often accomplishes the same sort of distinction by iteration. For instance, 'art for art's sake', is frequently translated as 'l'art pour l'art'', and when, for instance, Barbara chants, at the beginning of her song,

[13] It should be borne in mind that 'sake' expressions are customarily translated into Latin by 'causa' or 'gratia'.

[14] Etymologically 'skull' is related to 'or*sak*' (cause) as well as to 'skuld' (culpability). This is even clearer in Danish, which translates our phrase as follows: 'For hans *skyld*'; 'being guilty' becomes in Swedish, as well as in Danish, being 'skyldig'.

[15] The complex relationship between good-for and notions such as welfare and wellbeing is examined in Rønnow-Rasmussen (2011a).

A mourir pour mourir,
Je choisis l'âge tendre,
Et partir pour partir
Je ne veux pas attendre,
Je ne veux pas attendre,

we feel (perhaps more than understand) that she wants to die for dying's sake, and to leave for the sake of leaving. So I venture to say that neither French nor Spanish has a problem expressing the core meaning of an analysans formulated in terms of 'sake', even when we take 'sake' in its non-evaluative sense. Naturally, this is but an outline of an argument the details of which will have to be left to another time. But in view of what I have said so far it is plausible to reject premise (4) of the non-translatability objection. Languages that do not employ the 'sake' idiom can still express what FAP states. For instance, languages that we have considered here have different means of expressing what FAP expresses with 'sake'.[16]

It might be said that even if the non-translatability objection is not much of an objection, some of the translations we considered introduce another difficulty. When FAP is understood in terms of the non-evaluative 'sake' it looks pleonastic; it employs one word too many to express its analysans; 'sake' is not needed. However, as we have seen, this objection is strictly not true. Simple removal of 'sake' from the analysans in FAP would strand us with a less clear formulation. Thus saying 'I am doing something for x' and saying 'I am doing something for x's sake' might well come close to the same meaning. However, it need not always be the case. The latter does not leave it open, as the former does, whether your act is being performed with an ulterior motive. The former makes it quite clear that the final "end" of your act refers to x. To modify FAP as suggested above would therefore make it ambiguous in a way that it is not in its original form. Hence this objection is not really convincing.

4. *Clarifying FAP*

However, as we have seen, 'sake' is in another sense itself ambiguous, since it can be understood in an evaluative or a non-evaluative way. This gives rise to the further question

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[16] Understanding final values in terms of 'sake' is not obviously right, though. Another possibility would perhaps be to have an analysis in terms of 'favouring something as an *end*'. However, there are different disadvantages with this suggestion. See here Rabinowicz and Rønnow-Rasmussen (2000) 'A Distinction in Value: Intrinsic and For Its Own Sake', pp. 47-48.

whether FAP should be interpreted as involving the evaluative or the non-evaluative ‘sake’? Should we, in other words, understand personal values in terms of reasons for favouring something ‘for someone’s good/bé/bien/bene’? Or should we take ‘sake’ in its non-evaluative sense—a sense signalling that the purpose, or the reason why we should favour something, is finally located in the person, period (for him or her/for his or her ‘skull’/skyld/Willen)?

From the point of view of FA analysis the response seems quite obvious. If values are to be understood, ultimately, in terms of the normative, the evaluative interpretation is not, unless it is qualified, at all welcome. We do not want to run into a value in the analysans if we can avoid it. In fact, even for the FA sceptic there is reason to be cautious about including a value in the analysans. One need not deny that sometimes, when we judge that we have reason to favour something for someone’s sake, what we have in mind is favouring for this person’s good. I am sure this occurs regularly. Indeed I think it is quite understandable that the sort of things that we regard as carrying personal value are precisely things that relate to people we somehow estimate, i.e. think of in terms of some value notion. Recall, for instance, what I said at the outset. When I discussed the value this festschrift has for Kevin and the rest of us, I mentioned several valuable features of Kevin. But notice, acknowledging this does not imply that the analysis of personal value must be couched in terms of some value accruing to the person. So although we are as a matter of fact interested in the personal value of people that we hold in high esteem, it would be a mistake to conclude from this that what is positively valuable for a person *a* must be understood in terms of *a*’s having a certain positive value. Even bad persons have personal values, be they good or bad for them.

One more thing needs to be added to this picture. In cases in which we ascribe value-for in terms of an evaluative ‘sake’ it is still an open issue whether this person’s good should be understood in terms of a Moorean impersonal good, period, or a Hobbesian good-for. Now, whether or not you adopt FA it would seem that you have at least a *prima facie* reason to be sceptical about including an impersonal value in an analysis of a personal value. Something simply gets lost in this reduction—namely, the idea that the value is personal. But perhaps such a reduction could nonetheless work. A number of people seem to think so. G. E. Moore is not alone on this matter.[17] However, for those, like me, who are unconvinced by these attempts, placing ‘good, period’ in the analysis of ‘good-for’ appears to be a bad idea.

[17] Moore, G. E. (1993 [1903a]). *Principia Ethica*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

The Hobbesian alternative suggested that favouring something for someone's sake is, in effect, favouring it for what is good for the person. Now, for obvious reasons, we do not want to analyze, say, *good-for* in terms of *good-for* (unless, perhaps, we qualify these notions in different ways). However, here it seems wise to make haste slowly. Personal values encompass more than what is good for persons. So it might be that some *values-for* should actually be understood in terms of *good-for*.[18] We should, I think (although it is not something I will argue for here), recognize the possibility that some personal values accrue to something in virtue of some other personal value. If that is the case, FAP should be able to handle such cases, too. I do not think it has any problems doing so. All of this would, at least, be consistent with the idea that among reason-constitutive properties there are value properties which themselves have to be analyzed in terms of FAP. If there is something to these speculations, we should concede that while some values-for are derivative and non-fundamental, others are non-derivative and fundamental. I see no reason why FAP cannot handle both derivative and non-derivative value-for.

5. *Vocation and being struck by personal value.*

FA analyses face some tough challenges. The most serious is perhaps the so-called 'wrong kind of reason' problem. This has certainly attracted most attention. However, there are other problems. The reductive nature of this analysis squares less well with some of our intuitions about values. For instance, Kevin himself has recently argued in 'On Being Struck by Value – Exclamations, Motivations and Vocations'[19] that we might be struck by personal value. Here a caveat is in place, however. What Kevin has in mind by 'personal values' is not quite what I am trying to capture with FAP. There is some overlap, though.

Kevin explains what it is like to be struck by personal value as follows:

> We sometimes discover what is non-extrinsically valuable for us, our personal values, what used to be called our vocation (Bestimmung). A vocation has all the properties which, Williams thinks,[20] are possessed by what recognition of practical necessity implies: "an

[18] For example, what is *desirable for* or *commendable for* me, should perhaps be understood in terms of what there is reason to desire or commend with an eye to what is good for me. Perhaps this is an example. It certainly needs to be further examined.

[19] See also Kevin Mulligan (2009a). 'Emotions and Values', in P. Goldie (ed.), *Oxford Companion to the Philosophy of Emotions*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 475–500.

[20] Williams, Bernard (1981), 'Practical Necessity', p. 130.

> understanding at once of one's powers and incapacities, and of what the world permits, and the recognition of a limit which is neither simply external to the self, nor yet a product of the will"[21] (Mulligan 2009b, pp. 147-148).

He then makes two important observations.

> Talk about knowledge of one's vocation(s) is doubly ambiguous. First, such knowledge may be negative or positive. The clearest and least controversial cases of discovery in this area are discoveries that a certain way of life is not *for me,* that a certain persona or occupation or habit is *not for me*. Perhaps all such discoveries are negative.[22] Secondly, when we talk about what is intrinsically valuable for Sam or Maria it is easy to overlook the difference between the individual or personal values themselves and their terms. Suppose that certain very specific ways of being generous are intrinsically valuable for Sam. Such individual or personal values are perhaps exemplified by Maria but they could be exemplified by someone else. If it makes any sense at all to talk of a person's vocation, then what is constitutive of such a vocation are the personal values themselves and only secondarily their contingent exemplifications and non-exemplifications. (Mulligan 2009b, p. 148)

Perhaps Kevin would accept that not all personal values are constitutive of a person's vocation. In that case my notion of a personal value would come closer to his. As we have seen, Kevin also examines the possibility that we are struck by our personal values. I am not sure whether he also would be ready to say that we may be struck by other people's personal value. Perhaps what makes personal values personal is rather the fact that they are constitutive of a person's vocation. Or perhaps it is necessarily the case that you must be struck by the value, *and* that it must relate in the relevant way to your vocation. These later suggestions sit less well with what I have in mind with personal values. In fact, as I see it, a personal value may accrue to some object despite the fact that the person for whom this is a personal value never will be able to recognize this value. Be that as it may. It is a fundamental, substantial issue. Perhaps the more obvious difference has to do with the sort of intuitionism that Kevin also considers—namely, the idea that we are *struck* by this sort of value. As he rightly points out (see 2009b, p. 159), this challenges a value-reductive analysis such as the FA analysis. For obvious reasons, value experiences do not fit an account that purports to 'do away' with values.

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21 Williams 1981, pp. 130-131.

22 The quote has here the following footnote: "On this idea in Scheler and Musil, cf. Mulligan 'Selbstliebe, Sympathie, Egoismus'".

I think Kevin is certainly right about us having what can, in a sense, be characterized as value experiences. However, there are, as Kevin knows better than I, different ways of accounting for such experiences. We should therefore, I think, recognize the possibility that such experiences need not actually involve values in a realistic sense, and hence that the FA analysis need not be jeopardized by value phenomenology.

6. A dualist dealing with the distance problem.

FA analysis has more recently been put to another kind of test. Consider the following case. Two children, A and B, are drowning, and only one of them can be saved by a man in a boat. Now, the state of affairs involving child A being saved has the same degree of value as the state of affairs of child B being saved. But, suppose now that the man in the boat is the father of A, and B is someone who he does not know at all. Intuitively, we would think it is only fitting that the father has a more intense desire to save A than he has to save B. But cashed out in terms of the FA analysis, the latter intuition then tells us that saving A is better than saving B. This runs counter to the original idea that the same degree of value accrues to saving A and to saving B.

Krister Bykvist, in a recent paper on the FA analysis, suggests that this sort of case sets a real problem for FA analysis.[23] Basically the problem is the following. Attitudes may differ in degrees of intensity. But values, too, come in degrees. As we saw, it is fitting that the father in our example wants to save his child with greater intensity. But, again, saving A has the same degree of value as saving B. What Bykvist argues is that FA analyses cannot handle "cases where the *degree* to which we should favour (disfavour) something does not correspond to the *degree* to which the thing is good (bad) in itself" (Bykvist 2009, p. 2).[24]

[23] Krister Bykvist (2009). 'No Good Fit: Why the Fitting Attitude Analysis of Value Fails'. *Mind*, 118 (469): 1–30. Besides the challenge to the FA analysis that I consider here, Bykvist's article contains other serious challenges meriting full discussion rather than the brief examination I have been able to provide here.

[24] The distance problem was pointed out by Brand Blanshard (1961) in his *Reason and Goodness*, p. 287. I thank Noah Lemos (personal communication) for pointing this out to me.

Bykvist also detects the source of this problem.[25] What determines the intensity of the fitting attitude is, at least in part, the "distance" (relation) the "attitude holder" is from the valued state of affairs. In cases like the one we have considered

> /…/ the degree to which it is fitting to positively respond to a state of affairs does not correspond to the degree to which it is good. How strongly one should favour an objectively valuable object depends on the 'distance' between oneself and the object /…/, [and] this distance has many dimensions, including modal distance, temporal distance, and 'personal' distance. It is, therefore, all too crude to say that it is always fitting to feel more strongly about a better state of affairs or to be emotionally indifferent between states of affairs of the same value. Note, however, that it does not seem fitting to *judge* a possible suffering as less bad just because it is a remote possibility, a condition of another person, or something past (Bykvist 2009), p. 16

Bykvist considers some possible rejoinders to this distance problem. He dismisses them, however. For example, he would reject the idea that the father in our boat should try to exclude any knowledge of his own personal relations to the children. Bykvist argues that equipping the person who should do the favouring with a veil of ignorance is not in every case a viable response. Such a veil, he thinks, would not work, because in some cases we cannot help having knowledge that would prevent us from disregarding our relations to the evaluated state of affairs; in other words, we would not be able to favour from "zero distance". [26]

Suppose Bykvist is right about it being somehow impossible not to have this sort of knowledge. I am not sure whether this overturns the veil of ignorance proposal. Perhaps I misunderstand Bykvist, but as far as I understand the veil of ignorance, all that it requires of us is that we should not permit our knowledge to play any relevant role when judging what it is fitting to favour. I am not sure that this is impossible. However, I will not pursue this line of thought here. Instead, I want to say something about the distance problem that relates to what we talked about earlier. Bykvist makes it clear that the FA analysis he wishes to confront with the distance problem only acknowledges good, period.[27] It might nonetheless be of interest in this context to outline how an enriched version (à la FAP) of the FA analysis accommodating at least two varieties of goodness deals with this sort of case.

[25] The Problem, as Bykvist also points out, is in effect a 'wrong kind of reason' problem for the analysis.

[26] See Bykvist(2009), p. 20.

[27] See Bykvist (2009), p. 16.

Suppose you are, not the father, but a bystander. It seems psychologically credible that at one point or another you might deliberate about saving A for his father's sake—imagine, say that A is the son of an old friend, now in the boat, and that this is the only thing you know about the children. You might end up thinking that this is what you should do. But, then again, despite realizing that you have some reason to save A for your friend's sake, you might reach the conclusion that, morally, you should disregard the fact that you know that A is your old friend's child. Perhaps you reflect that you should toss a coin, because you understand that saving A has the same value as saving B. However that may be, the idea that you might want to do something for the father's sake reflects, I think, that there is, if you like, more than one value involved in such as case. So just as Bykvist might be right about the common-sense intuition that it is fitting for the father to favour saving A more intensely than saving B, I suspect that common sense would eventually express this intuition as follows: there is an impersonal good (similar to the kind of goodness we detected in the Spassky-Fisher case), and then there is what is good for the father—and, most certainly, what is good for the children.

An FA analysis embracing good, period, as well as good-for appears to be better equipped to deal with the distance problem. When it is viewed in terms of what is impersonally good and personally good, the boating example ceases to appear paradoxical. It is just a case, among many others, in which we face the option of realizing one kind of value at the cost of another kind of value.

One might object to this value-dualistic approach by pointing out that there is something counterintuitive about the idea that the father should have a reason to favour the rescuing of his child *for his own* sake. It might be fitting for a witness to save A for the father's sake. But, surely, it is not becoming of a father to have this sort of attitude: he should save his son for *his son*'s sake. We have therefore removed a paradox at considerable cost to our intuitive sense of the father's moral engagement with the situation.

I think there is something in this objection. It would be unfitting for the father to *actually* favour saving his child for his own sake. This would certainly be the case if his sole motivating reason was the idea that the act was done for his own sake; in such a case it would be quite natural to be alarmed. The question is whether having a reason to save his son for his son's sake rules out the thought that the father also has a normative reason to favour saving the child for his own sake? I do not think so. The explanation for this is, I think, mainly twofold. First, in a situation like the one we are imagining here there will be several reasons to act rather than just one. Having a reason to save A for his own sake is quite consistent with the fact that he has other reasons to save A, including that he should do it for A's sake. Also, it is at least plausible to think that these reasons outweigh his reason for *actually* favouring saving the child for his own sake. So although you have reason for a certain kind of favouring, the weight of another reason may well mean that you should in fact not act on your first, pro tanto reason. So although there is something in the objection, it does not identify a genuinely counterintuitive implication.[28]

At first sight, FA analysts would therefore be well advised to incorporate the notion of a final good-for. The distinction between two varieties of goodness and value allows us to handle the distance problem. There is, as have already said, a price, though. Matters become more complicated once we allow personal as well as impersonal values to play a role in our deliberation. How should we weigh these values against each other? Is it possible to do so, or should we accept that in cases where both kinds of value are involved the situation calls for a choice that will in some fundamental way define who we are as persons? We might ask: are you (am I) someone who chooses the personally valuable over the impersonally valuable, or do we have different priorities?

These are difficult questions, and for the present I am not sure what to say about them. However, I am convinced that once Kevin has read these thoughts of mine, it will be fitting for me to take a mulligan and correct my infelicities—for, I venture to say, my own as well as Kevin's sake.[29]

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[28] In Rabinowicz and Rønnow-Rasmusen (2004), 'The Strike of the Demon: On Fitting Pro-Attitudes and Value', we suggested that in the case of favouring something for the *right reasons,* reasons might in fact have a dual-role. We favour the object on account of some of its properties. They appear in the intentional content of the pro-attitude. At the same time, they are supposed to make the object valuable. Consequently, they also provide reasons for favouring the object. However, the example of the father apparently suggests that there are cases in which the right reasons should not in fact be part of (or, more cautiously, exhaust) the intentional content of the pro-attitude, even if they are value-making properties.

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