

Human Rights as the Safeguard of the Intellect Against Society

The human rights applications of the Metaphysics of Quality

University of Oslo
Faculty of Law

Candidate number: 7009
Deadline for submission: [12/01/2017]
Number of words: 20,0.00
1.2.2017

Table of Contents

i:	Preface.....	3
ii:	Table of acronyms and terms.....	3
I:	Introduction.....	4
II:	Methodology.....	7
	2.1 Use of literature.....	9
III:	Assessment of the Metaphysics of Quality.....	10
	3.1 Objection (Obj) Must reality = value?.....	10
	3.1.1 Reconceiving reality: the Metaphysics of Quality.....	15
	3.1.2 The first division: static and Dynamic Quality.....	15
	3.1.3 4 levels of static quality: 1) inorganic 2) biological 3) social 4) intellectual.....	21
	3.1.4 The relationship of the levels.....	27
	3.1.5 Obj: Why this hierarchy of levels?.....	30
	3.2 Definition of the social level.....	33
	3.3 ‘Definition’ of the intellectual level.....	35
	3.3.1 Obj: Is the social really discrete from the intellectual?.....	38
IV:	A MOQ account of Dignity and Human Rights.....	39
	4.1 the boundary problem.....	41
	4.2 Dignity as value within the Metaphysics of Quality.....	45
	4.3 The locus of human rights in MOQ.....	47
V.	Evaluation of my human rights account.....	49
	5.1 Why not capacity?.....	49
	5.2 Does my human rights account give a recognizable definition of human rights?.....	50

5.3 Does the Metaphysics of Quality human rights account contribute to the cross-cultural application of human rights?.....52

VI. Conclusion.....53

VII. Bibliography.....56

iii. Appendix: published email source.....60

i: Preface/Acknowledgments

Sincere thanks for advice and feedback from Anthony McWatt, Jakob Elster, Simon Jernsletten, Jana Opsahl, Marina Logacheva, and Wim Nusselder. Thank you very much to Paul Turner, Bodvar Skutvik, and Kjersti Skarstad for furnishing some of my arguments. My gratitude to the rest of my ad-hoc Lila Squad: Nick Summerhayes, John McConnell, Doug Renselle, and David Harding. Thank you for the loving support from Nina Pupalová and Margo and Laurie Lafontaine. Dedicated to those who seek quality.

i *Table of Acronyms and Key Terms*

culture: social patterns plus intellectual patterns. See p34 of chp3	MOQHRA: the Metaphysics of Quality human rights account. My theory, laid out in chp4
concept by intuition: something derived from immediate sense experience (via Northrop)	QE: the Quality Event
concept by postulation: something not derivable from immediate sense experience, but rather must be deduced with the scientific method, e.g. sub-atomic particles	society: an entity that exists solely on the social level. See p34 of chp3
DQ: Dynamic Quality	SOM: Subject-object metaphysics: any philosophy that accepts Descartes' mind-matter distinction. Basically, conventional Western philosophy

HR: human rights	SPoV: Static Pattern of Value
human right: a protection of that which is necessary to maintain the independence of the intellectual level over the social level	SQ: Static Quality
<i>inter alia</i> : among others; not exhaustive.	UDHR: the Universal Declaration of Human Rights
metaphysics: “The branch of philosophy that deals with the first principles of things, including abstract concepts such as being, knowing, identity, time, and space.” (In Oxford English Living Dictionaries 2017)	ZAMM: Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance
The MOQ: The Metaphysics of Quality	

I Introduction

What is quality? The question seems so initially straightforward, so readily apparent as to warrant a flippant response. But if one probes the question deeper, one may realize that what is considered quality for a football player does not correlate to a quality professor or a quality wall. It may become much more of a struggle to define quality than initially thought.

Human rights (HR) are established in international law, and for the most part are accepted as holding inherent value. Important exceptions exist, such as Russia’s recent claim to reject Western values and China’s insistence on excluding political rights for the same reason.¹ In these cases, the universality of human rights is still disputed, even if solely on a tacit level. While contemporary geopolitics certainly holds most of the blame, part of this challenge stems from the fact that human rights have largely emerged from the Western

¹ Bershidsky; Freedom House

intellectual tradition. Therefore it is possible for these powers to try to paint human rights as a Western intervention on their sovereignty.

A parallel problem exists within the Western definition of human rights. To some extent that definition lacks solid philosophical grounding. The de facto justification comes from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR): “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.”² However, the notion of what humanity’s inherent ‘dignity’ is, and is not, has received insufficient explanation.

I aim to demonstrate that these three problems are intertwined, and employing one philosophy may elucidate all three. Robert Pirsig’s *Metaphysics of Quality* (MOQ³) emerges from the Western intellectual tradition, notably influenced by William James and F.S.C. Northrop, while incorporating a significant amount of Eastern ideas, mostly Zen Buddhism.⁴ On this merit it can go some distance towards addressing the universality issue of HR’s current foundation. The MOQ conceptualizes the world in terms of quality, and derives that many notions of confused morality actually come from conflicts between separate levels of existence, and are vertical not horizontal. It leads to the conclusion that HR are in fact essential for the Intellect to survive. Applying the MOQ to human rights can yield a practical definition of dignity and may in fact give HR a more solid philosophical foundation on which to stand, one that emanates from experience. First, a brief biography of Pirsig.

[Robert] Pirsig was born in Minneapolis, the son of a University of Minnesota law professor. He graduated from high school at 15 and enlisted in the Army after World War II. While stationed in South Korea, he encountered the Asian philosophies that would underpin his work. He went on to study Hindu philosophy in India and for a time was enrolled in a philosophy Ph.D. program at the University of Chicago. He was hospitalized

² UDHR A1

³ Grammatically the ‘o’ should be lower case, but writing it as MOQ has been the convention since Pirsig. Ditto for ZAMM.

⁴ McWatt 2011 p9

for mental illness and returned to Minneapolis, where he worked as a technical writer and began writing his first book.⁵

That book, *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance* (ZAMM) set the Guinness record for most rejections by publishers: 121. It was published in 1974 and went on to become “the biggest-selling philosophy book ever,” selling 5 million copies.⁶ His follow-up book *Lila* did not post similar numbers but was still a success in its own right: it was a Pulitzer Prize finalist, sold at least 600,000 copies, and has at least 474 citations.⁷ For a standard of reference, a human rights account from my syllabus, by James Griffin, is ranked 688,381 of all books on Amazon.com.⁸ ZAMM is ranked 19,362.⁹ Hitherto academia has not taken Pirsig seriously. Such enduring popularity could signify more than ‘pop’ philosophy. With an explicit passage about human rights in *Lila*, it is worth investigating whether Pirsig can contribute to the field. My research question is as follows:

Is a Pirsigian account of human rights worth taking seriously?

My thesis will proceed as follows: after delineating my methodology and criteria for inquiry, Chapter 3 will recapitulate the Metaphysics of Quality, with six portions of the chapter for exegesis of this philosophy alternating with three portions where I answer objections to it. In Chapter 4 I create a MOQ-based human rights account employing a redefinition of dignity. Chapter 5 is for an evaluation of my human rights account, and then I conclude.

It is worthwhile to mention at the onset that Pirsig formulates his philosophy in opposition to what he terms subject-object metaphysics (SOM). SOM is Cartesian metaphysics, which stems from Rene Descartes’ assertion that mind and body are completely different.

⁵ Wamsley

⁶ <http://www.litrejections.com> . Adams

⁷ Pirsig 2005. Pulitzer. Google Scholar

⁸ ‘On Human Rights’

⁹ ‘ZAMM’ Amazon

Because Locke rejects that mind originates from matter, it sets up a hitherto difficulty in determining their relationship. There are a great many names for this tradition, from ‘the Ghost in the Machine,’ to “the Newtonian, the Cartesian, the mechanistic, the mirror of nature, the reflection paradigm.”¹⁰ It may also be called mainstream or conventional Western philosophy, because, “Most philosophers, psychologists and religious teachers subscribe, with minor reservations, to its main articles and, although they admit certain theoretical difficulties in it, they tend to assume that these can be overcome without serious modifications being made to the architecture of the theory.”¹¹

These days there is disagreement within this tradition, to the extremes of certain physicalists rejecting that consciousness even exists, and some idealists maintaining that objects only exist because they stem from the mind of God. But they have only gone to the extremes on one axis because they accept the same common set of parametric vocabulary: mind/matter, which basically corresponds with subject/object. Their shared vocabulary, that reality is composed of some combination of subjects and objects, makes it worthwhile to group them; Pirsig sets out his account in opposition to that vocabulary. Though the term SOM originates with Pirsig, I will mostly employ that term instead of others for brevity. Pirsig goes on to reject this metaphysical axis and suggest a new axis based on value.

II Methodology

This is a non-juridical thesis. There will only be an evaluation of human rights in the philosophical sense. That said, I on occasion will use legalized rights as a point of reference. My research gap is about as wide as you can get: this is the first academic paper exploring the connection between the MOQ and human rights. As I said, the unrivaled popularity of

¹⁰ Wilber p58

¹¹ Ryle p13

Pirsig's ideas warrants an academic investigation into their applicability, even if his philosophy did not originate from the 'ivory tower.'

A definition of human rights will establish a baseline. Joseph Raz's definition creates as many problems as it solves: "'X has a right' if and only if X can have rights, and, other things being equal, an aspect of X's well-being (his interest) is a sufficient reason for holding some other person(s) to be under a duty."¹² But what constitutes a sufficient reason to compel another? The well-being derived from adultery? Of avoiding censorship or torture? As the MOQ explains, the problem is misconceiving the concept of well-being; these examples operate on different levels. Once the levels are clear, it becomes easier to differentiate.

An alternate definition from James Nickel is less problematic, at least at the onset. After laying out a number of prudential and utilitarian reasons, and drawing from a handful of moral norms,¹³ Nickel creates his 8 criteria: 1. They are rights.¹⁴ That denotes *rightholders*, and *addressees* (bodies that have assigned duties/responsibilities) and *scopes*, a focus on particular freedom(s), protection, or benefit. 2. They extend to every person living today. 3. Human rights are high priority norms. They are not absolute, but win out most of the time. They need a strong justification as such: Nickel then links it to the UDHR and the dignity of human beings as the root, as well as the requirements for international peace. 4. HR are not contingent on recognition by particular govt(s). They exist as legal norms. 5. HR are international standards of evaluation/critique unrestricted by political boundaries, a neutral rubric for 'outsiders' like NGOs or UN to benchmark a regime. 6. They are primarily political norms rather than interpersonal standards. Racism mostly happens on an interpersonal level, but the primary addressee in HR is the government. HR gets around this by charging governments with the responsibility to prevent discrimination. 7. They are numerous and specific, not few and general. HR are not merely a restatement of Locke's life, liberty, and property, but there are 24, roughly, specific rights. 8. HR set minimum standards, they do not

¹² Raz p166

¹³ Nickel p53-66

¹⁴ Nickel p9-10 for all of the numbered list

describe an ideal world. This will provide a workable definition of human rights for the reader, and I will reevaluate this definition after I connect the MOQ to human rights.

Griffin's most important test for a philosophical foundation of human rights is resolving the indeterminacy from when human rights conflict. This is quite a practical consideration, as anyone who has read, *inter alia*, *Leyla Sahin v. Turkey* will know. I have chosen not to select this criterion. My reason is that if human rights are grounded in a universally applicable philosophy, it will enhance the common cause to rectify current human rights violations, as well as lending greater clarity in how to resolve human rights conflicts once a common framework is agreed upon. Weighing between rights is a worthwhile subject for future research, but is beyond the capacity of this work. For the same reason I will not be able to give a full account of Griffin and Jeremy Waldron's human rights accounts, but only to use them as a source of questions or challenges to pose when evaluating my HR account in chapter 5.

There are three criteria I will investigate as I lay out the MOQ as a human rights account: 1) What is a human right? 2) Who is entitled to human rights? For example, why are humans entitled to them, but highly intelligent animals are not? I will refer to this as *the boundary problem*. 3) Are human rights absolute entities that act as trumps, or are they relative? I use these criteria because they are a common way to establish a philosophical human rights account.

In addition to my previous reason, I have selected my research question because I do not have the space for a full comparison of this philosophy plus human rights account and another. To answer my research question, I will evaluate in two parts. In Chapter 3 I will have several subsections evaluating the logical consistency of the MOQ. In Chapter 5 I will evaluate my human rights account based on the following criteria: 1. Why do I opt not to resolve the boundary problem with capacity? 2. Does my human rights account give a recognizable definition of human rights? 3. Does it contribute to the cross-cultural application of human rights? I chose these criteria because the second and third criteria will initiate my human rights account into the greater discussion, and the first because cross-cultural application of human rights can significantly alleviate the charge that human rights are relative.

2.1 Use of literature

My method is qualitative and my theoretical framework is philosophical. My first recourse in the literature is primary Pirsig sources: His two books *Lila* and *ZAMM*, as well as a conference paper and smaller sources. If there is conflict between Pirsig's statements, I will follow the general axiom that a writer's later or last comment on a topic should be considered the most authoritative. One of my sources is *Lila's Child*, a chronicle of an Internet discussion group around the MOQ. This is an unorthodox choice that I have made for two reasons 1) there is a general dearth of academic information on Pirsig and the MOQ 2) not only does it touch on subjects that bear directly on my project, it also has annotations from Pirsig giving definitive answers to resolve conflicting interpretations. Anything I cite from that chronicle that was not written by Pirsig I will cite by the editor's name.

I have leaned quite heavily on the work of Professor Anthony McWatt for the following reasons. Pirsig does not say enough on a few topics, and McWatt provides an interpretation of the intellectual that results in a human rights account that I view as more worthy of being taken seriously. Pirsig named McWatt "his *dharma* successor" after years of correspondence.¹⁵ McWatt is the first to write a PhD on the Metaphysics of Quality.¹⁶ I have been in contact with him and several other prominent MOQ thinkers, and when I cite that personal correspondence I will indicate it as such. In my Chapter 3 recapitulation when I refer to the MOQ I mean Pirsig's work, unless I say otherwise explicitly. In Chapter 4 I will extrapolate from the MOQ and write my own human rights account, so all interpretation from then on is my own unless noted otherwise.

III Assessment of the Metaphysics of Quality

3.1 Objection: does reality really equal value?

Pirsig spends *ZAMM* deconstructing the problematic aspects of Cartesian metaphysics (SOM), leading to the conclusion that Quality exists in the split-second pre-intellectual reality before subjects and objects, and while Quality itself is a mystic undefinable entity, one can

¹⁵ McWatt 2005 p3

¹⁶ Glover p.viii

nevertheless conclude that Quality is source of subjects, objects, and ergo all things. To summarize this book fully is beyond the capacity of this thesis and his sequel *Lila* is more appropriate for my inquiry. Before I start on *Lila* it is worth weighing the following objection to Pirsig's ideas as they stand after ZAMM: if it can be conceded that Quality is what precipitates the recognition of subjects and objects (i.e. reality), why then does it follow that Quality goes a step beyond that to be the source of subjects and objects? This objection can be thought of as the absolute manifestation of Hume's law: 'is' does not necessarily mean 'ought.' Sneddon only supports the validity of the first statement.¹⁷ Pirsig's *reductio ad absurdum* argument in ZAMM only establishes that Quality exists, not that it is the source.¹⁸ The concept of Quality came to Pirsig dynamically:

Quality was adopted dynamically. The term itself had high Quality. I just felt 'Quality' had quality the way the students just 'felt' some student papers were better than others. I used to give the students the advice, 'First you just "see" what has quality, then you figure out why. Don't reverse the process, or you will get all confused.' It is important to restate this now to avoid the perennial literary critics' trap of thinking that the pivotal term quality is the result of some rational, analyzable process.¹⁹

This pre-intellectual concept will prove important. Pirsig then proceeds to analyze and compare Quality to other possible concepts for his totality. The Absolute is discarded because its connotations are remote and unchanging (though it has a primacy that Quality lacks), 'mind of God' because scientists would not listen, and the Buddhist concept of nothingness is passed over because of its confusing association with physical space and imperceptibility to his mostly

¹⁷ Sneddon

¹⁸ McWatt 2011 p68-9

¹⁹ quoted in McWatt 2011 p64

Western audience (though McWatt argues that it better demonstrates that this totality can never be conceptualized).²⁰

To say that the world is composed of nothing but quality is confusing. Moreover, it is also confusing because the spectrum of high to low quality all exist within the one term. Pirsig responds to the latter by saying that quality can be positive and negative in the same way that wealth or temperature can be; one beautiful implication of using Quality is that “existence *as a whole* is fundamentally valuable.”²¹ He responds to the former concern by agreeing that the value in a good chair or a good government look completely different. He will demonstrate that they are outgrowths of the same historical evolution of patterns of value. Furthermore, once one is accustomed to the different levels it is easy to assess what the high marks of quality are for each.²²

What if it is not Quality but some other entity that is the source of subjects and objects? Quite simply, it is not likely that we would be able to distinguish much at all in the way of subjects and objects. Without a way to evaluate and sift sense data, “our consciousness would be so jammed with meaningless data we couldn’t think or act. So we pre-select on the basis of Quality.”²³ It is clear that an alternate reality, one in which each person was aware of all the sense data around them, is possible, and in fact some have experienced such a condition when very stressed or on drugs.

Science provides evidence in support of a pre-intellectualized reality: Benjamin Libet demonstrated that there is a consistent lag of a half-second, in which unconscious processing occurs, before we are consciously aware of stimuli.²⁴ It is the same kind of processing as

²⁰ McWatt 2011 p62, 71

²¹ quoted in McWatt 2011 p70

²² with certain limits, because everything is evolving in pursuit of DQ

²³ Pirsig 2006 p400

²⁴ ‘Libet’s delay.’ Blackmore 2004 p26 confirms it is generally accepted by scientists, though aspects of his other work remain controversial.

thinking, without the self-awareness. The intellectualized object from the sense data exists in the past, even if by a half-second. Strictly speaking, then, it does not exist and by extension neither does the subject that is conscious of it.²⁵ “Reality is always the moment of vision before the intellectualization takes place.”²⁶ It is quite doubtful that ones immediate reality can exist of these subjects and objects that come via thinking if there is no ‘I’ conceptualizing them in that half-second.

Other experiments reinforce this view. Another neurologist stated that experiments are showing that experience is entirely filtered through the right brain before being passed on to the left. The left is not aware of this or able to see the right brain as an object.

This would explain why everyone knows that something is better than other things but no one can define what this betterness is. All they get are the quality messages but they don't know where the quality messages are coming from. This is not to say that the right brain creates the quality, only that it filters it before passing it along to the left brain for conceptualizing.²⁷

Again, this pre-intellectual reality, even if it only exists for a split-second, is paramount. Perhaps if the left brain processed experience first we would be able to precisely define what quality is in every circumstance. But because it is likely that the right brain does the initial processing, we are left with value judgments that often are held as intuition. I am reiterating this line of reasoning to prove the point that quality is essential to our primary experience, and because it precedes and filters our primary experience it is likely that quality itself is the source of these primary experiences, from which we later spin out concepts, subjects and objects.

²⁵ McWatt 2011 p74

²⁶ Pirsig 2006 p315

²⁷ Pirsig 2000 for this paragraph

Furthermore, I suspect it engenders a reticence to believe that this quality, that we cannot precisely define in all circumstances for some strange reason, could be the source of everything. Such a reticence would be one of the sources of this ‘Quality cannot equal reality’ objection.

This dispenses with the ‘is’ of Hume’s law. Before I start with the ‘ought’ I need to unpack part of Pirsig’s vocabulary. Pirsig uses Quality and value interchangeably. Quality is usually thought of as inhering in objects, more a characteristic than something experienced. Not here. The value of primary experience, “is more immediate, more directly sensed than any ‘self’ or any ‘object’ to which it might be later assigned... It is the primary empirical reality from which such things as stoves and heat and oaths and self are later intellectually constructed.”²⁸ Value as a sense of better or worse is fundamental to all of our actions; on some level we decided it would be better to get out of bed today versus not.

Returning to Hume’s ‘ought:’ the very first concepts are probably ‘before and after’ and then gradually a general sense of time. But the concepts of good and bad emerge before the concepts of subjects and objects arrive and therefore value is more likely to be elemental.

Pirsig posits that a single-celled amoeba near a drop of sulfuric acid might think only in terms of good and bad.²⁹ Moreover, Adam Morton observes that quality does not divide neatly into subjects and objects: “It is hard to explain why we put qualities in different things at different times.”³⁰ William James also notes this intermingling around emotions and pain.³¹ Why this intermingling on such a fundamental level? Pursuing a similar inquiry, Hilary Putnam notes that it takes five separate concepts just to make sense of the ‘banal’ phrase “the cat sat on the mat.”³² Why go to all of this effort to conceive different kinds of objects if that information

²⁸ Pirsig 1992 p76

²⁹ bad, in this case. Pirsig 2006 p319-20; some weak evidence to support this experiment of Payne

³⁰ Morton p431

³¹ James p34

³² Putnam p201-2

can be communicated more clearly? ('it is there,' for example) Again, the 'is' of Hume's fallacy does not apply here because I just suggested a much simpler and alternate way that does in fact exist. Occam's razor says why bother with the more complex formulation?

It is likely that it is because there is more value in doing so. This premise is easily borne out in the myriad ways that taxonomies of objects have benefitted, by setting diverse information into an accessible hierarchy; the sheer ease of reference it creates is probably a sufficient justification. Because value is the reason for and also the antecedent of subjects and objects, it is reasonable to conclude that Quality is the source of subjects and objects. McWatt concludes that, "[i]t seems, therefore, that notions of subjects and objects only arose much later on in evolutionary history than the more primitive notions of good and bad - probably when organisms (such as human beings) developed sentience and then thought the subject-object distinction would be one of *value* to hold."³³ (emphasis original)

3.1.1 Reconceptualizing reality: the Metaphysics of Quality

In his book *Lila* Pirsig develops his Metaphysics of Quality (MOQ). The layout of this section is as follows: I will recapitulate his decision to divide reality into static and Dynamic Quality and describe their relationship. The Dynamic/static division sheds new clarity on intractable issues within conventional Western philosophy, such as the existence of free will and the increasingly obscure definition of reality.

Pirsig further divides his metaphysics into four levels: 1) inorganic 2) biological 3) social 4) intellectual. I detail how his philosophy is thoroughly grounded in the theory of evolution. It expands those principles to become a theory of cosmological evolution. Then I relate how the four levels exist quite discretely from each other, which is why their rules look very different. This helps to explain the discrepancy in modern morality, because that seemingly homogenous term in fact describes the quite separate conflicts between the biological and social levels, and between the social and intellectual levels.

³³ McWatt 2011 p77

3.1.2 The first division: static and Dynamic Quality

The Metaphysics of Quality subscribes to what is called empiricism. It claims that all legitimate human knowledge arises from the senses or by thinking about what the senses provide...The low value that can be derived from sitting on a hot stove is obviously an experience even though it is not an object and even though it is not subjective....

[There is a] metaphysical assumption that all the universe is composed of subjects and objects and anything that can't be classified as a subject or an object isn't real. There is no empirical evidence for this assumption at all. It is just an assumption.

It is an assumption that flies outrageously in the face of common experience. The low value comes first, then the subjective thoughts that include such things as stove and heat and pain come second. The value is the reality that brings the thoughts to mind.³⁴

He terms this the Quality event. Conventionally one would list the events:

I → on stove → low value (my buttocks is too hot) → response.

The MOQ reverses this chain, instead:

low value → I → stove → response.

I admit this new progression appears strange. The pain that is felt by that person on the stove surely has to be the reason that person gets off the stove, not some primary empirical reality. Pirsig hones in on the notion of pain. Pain is not solely subjective, because when someone claims to be in pain but medical professionals see no evidence and contradict him or her, they will hold that 'subjective valuation' of pain as cause for insanity. But on the other hand, pain is not objective either, because when a patient is unconscious doctors can find something that is likely causing pain, but no instrument can directly measure or find the pain

³⁴ Pirsig 1992 p113-4

itself. Instead, pain occurs first purely as negative quality. Afterwards the experience gets defined.³⁵ From those definitions come subjects and objects, stove and the notion of pain. The MOQ starts from primary experience.

The first 'division' of Quality is between static quality (SQ) and Dynamic Quality (DQ).³⁶ He arrives at this through a story of the Zuñi tribe in southwest United States. A member of the tribe, strong and magnetic but also dark and dangerous, is accused of being a '*brujo*' (witch) by the tribe's war priests. The man had extended contact with the (white, colonialist) government authorities, and during his torture he sends for them to free him, which they do. One of the war chiefs considers his authority broken. But the '*brujo*', instead of contenting himself with this vengeance, remains an active part of the tribe, and partially due to his incredible memory for oral history, he becomes the tribe's chief. He possessed skills, of how to deal with the white administration, that upset the established order, but yet were vindicated as a vital improvement that eventually became the tribe's new static patterns.

In this way the relationship between static quality and Dynamic Quality is that of the shaman and the priest. The shaman seeks to upend the priest's established order the same way the '*brujo*' did for the Zuñi war priests.

Priests work in a rigorously structured hierarchy fixed in a firm set of traditions. Their power comes from and is vested in the organization itself. They constitute a religious bureaucracy. Shamans, on the other hand, are arrant individualists. Each is on his own, undisciplined by bureaucratic control; hence a shaman is always a threat to the order of the organized church.³⁷

Dynamic Quality is the pre-intellectual cutting edge of reality, the source of all things, completely simple and always new. It was the moral force that had motivated the *brujo* in Zuñi. It contains no pattern of fixed rewards and punishments. *Its only perceived good is freedom* and its only perceived evil is

³⁵ Pirsig 2003a p377, 384-5

³⁶ Pirsig 1992 p123-40 for the remainder of this paragraph.

³⁷ Pirsig 1992 p130, citing E.A. Hoebel

static quality itself - any pattern of one-sided fixed values that tries to contain and kill the ongoing free force of life.

Static quality, the moral force of the priests, emerges in the wake of Dynamic Quality. It is old and complex. It always contains a component of memory. Good is conformity to an established pattern of fixed values and value objects. Justice and law are identical.³⁸ [emphasis mine]

“Dynamic Quality is not structured and yet it is not chaotic. It is value that cannot be contained by static patterns.”³⁹ Static quality can be defined with a great deal of precision, but Dynamic Quality is undefinable. While Dynamic Quality can be a very abstract concept, consider it a leap forward that perhaps is not thought so at the time but is definitely vindicated by hindsight. Some concrete manifestations of it have been “sexual choice, symbiosis...communality, communication, speculative thought, curiosity and art.”⁴⁰ One way to explain it is by asking: where does a scientist find a new hypothesis to test? That hypothesis was not lying dormant in a certain cell waiting to be observed under a microscope.⁴¹ It is a mental revelation, properly categorized here as an advance of Dynamic Quality on the intellectual level. Dynamic and static quality, though often in conflict, also complement each other in a dialectical monism. “To cling to Dynamic Quality alone apart from any static patterns is to cling to chaos...Neither static nor Dynamic Quality can live without the other.”⁴²

An important example of the complementarity of Dynamic and static quality is that a Dynamic advance can be later retained in the form of static quality. The scientist’s Dynamic advance of a hypothesis, if it yields new information, will be saved as the static quality of new published science. Pirsig’s other example (which has a strong resonance with the economic law of diminishing returns) is hearing a new and amazing song for the first time. It stops you

³⁸ Pirsig 1992 p133

³⁹ Pirsig 1992 p166

⁴⁰ Pirsig 1992 p170

⁴¹ Pirsig 1992 p343

⁴² Pirsig 1992 p139

flat in your tracks. Later on you can remember precise details of that experience: where you were, who you were with. You find and purchase the song. You are excited and listen to it again before you go to sleep. It is still really good. You listen to it again when you wake up. It is starting to miss some of that sparkle it had the first time you listened, but you still enjoy it.

But you file it away and once in a while play it again for a friend and maybe months or years later bring it out as a memory of something you were once crazy about.

Now what has happened? You can say you've gotten tired of the song but what does that mean? Has the song lost its quality? If it has, why do you still say it's a good record? Either it's good or it's not good. If it's good why don't you play it? If it's not good why do you tell your friend it's good?...The first good, that made you want to buy the record, was Dynamic Quality. Dynamic Quality comes as a sort of surprise. What the record did was weaken for a moment your existing static patterns in such a way that the Dynamic Quality all around you shone through. It was free, without static forms. The second good, the kind that made you want to recommend it to a friend, even when you had lost your own enthusiasm for it, is static quality.

Static quality is what you normally expect.⁴³

The Dynamic advance becomes sustained progress when it is preserved through static quality. Pirsig refers to such a process as latching, and shows that such an interplay exists in protein and DNA. Examples of static latches are "shells...clothes, houses...rituals, symbols, laws, and libraries. All of these prevent evolutionary degeneration."⁴⁴ Sometimes there is no static latching after a Dynamic advance; then a regression occurs. Pirsig details the fall of Rome: "They paralyzed the patterns of Roman social structure to a point where everybody just forgot what that structure was. Taxes became uncollectible. Armies composed of hired barbarians

⁴³ Pirsig 1992 p134-5

⁴⁴ Pirsig 1992 p169-70

stopped receiving pay. Everything just lapsed. The patterns of civilization were forgotten, and a Dark Age settled in.”⁴⁵

The Dynamic-static division lends new insight to the earlier example of the Quality event.

[W]hen the person who sits on the stove first discovers his low-Quality situation, the front edge of his experience is Dynamic. He does not think, ‘This stove is hot,’ and then make a rational decision to get off. A ‘dim perception of he knows not what’ gets him off Dynamically. Later he generates static patterns of thought to explain the situation.⁴⁶

In doing so, Pirsig indicates another culturally inherited blind spot in Western thought: even though there is only a split-second between when the man on the hot stove experiences low quality and when he fits that sensation into his paradigm of ‘this stove is too hot,’ (that same half-second from Libet’s experiment) there is no reason to believe that pre-intellectual split-second is unimportant. “A subject-object metaphysics presumes that this kind of Dynamic action without thought is rare and ignores it when possible.”⁴⁷ But even though conventional Western philosophy pays little attention to this pre-intellectual moment, for Pirsig it is Dynamic Quality and the foundation from which ‘stove’ and ‘hot’ and all other subjects and objects flow.

With this new conception of reality in hand, Pirsig finds new insight into many of the intractable dilemmas in conventional Western metaphysics. I will highlight two: the existence of free will and the nature of reality. The question of free will vs. determinism is clearly relevant to this thesis. If determinism is correct and we are only material forces, and therefore any decision is just predetermined chemical reactions and not a true choice, it jettisons any morality as such. If free will exists it goes a long way to guaranteeing a place for morality. In the MOQ this dilemma disappears: “To the extent that one’s behavior is controlled by static patterns of quality it is without choice. But to the extent that one follows Dynamic Quality,

⁴⁵ Pirsig 1992 p350

⁴⁶ Pirsig 1992 p133-4

⁴⁷ Pirsig 1992 p134

which is undefinable, one's behavior is free."⁴⁸ The *brujo*, because he was acting against the (static) rules of the tribe in pursuit of a vaguely conceived sense of betterness, was following Dynamic Quality and exercising free will.⁴⁹

Have you ever tried to define reality? If you did, you likely found it more complicated than you thought to give a complete, consistent definition of everything from quanta to your opinion of baseball. Now that a definition of reality relies on understanding 'the multiverse,' 'dark energy,' 'dark matter,' 'quarks,' and so on, it seems such a definition is only within reach of advanced scientists.⁵⁰ "Should [reality] be something that *changes* from year to year as new scientific theories are formulated? Should it be something about which different schools of physics can *quarrel* for years with no firm resolution on either side?"⁵¹

With the Metaphysics of Quality, reality is no longer something only a handful of the world's best scientists can understand but something understood by all things and people everywhere. From a firstborn infant to the world's smartest scientists. Quality isn't something one thinks about intellectually. It's something everyone experiences. It is experience itself.⁵²

We all experience reality; how is it that only advanced scientists can say what reality truly is? The MOQ asserts that reality is the one that all people understand, value.⁵³ Not only is such an explanation remarkably simple, it is valuable. Reality is grounded in everyday experience more so than quarks. If one accepts materialism (as roughly 2/3 of modern philosophers do),⁵⁴ it follows that we have no free will. Facing a world that cannot be fully understood, in

⁴⁸ Pirsig 1992 p180 for this paragraph

⁴⁹ Pirsig 1992 p131-2

⁵⁰ Brooks. "Quark..."

⁵¹ Pirsig 1992 p118

⁵² <http://www.moq.is/> 'Beautifully coherent'

⁵³ Some evidence suggests this applies for the disabled as well; cf *A Point of View*

⁵⁴ Chalmers p.xiii. Even quantum theory was subsumed into the determinist paradigm with the many-worlds interpretation.

which one cannot make choices freely, a profound and sometimes destructive alienation can result. A more accessible conception of reality could help mitigate this.

3.1.3 Four levels of static quality: 1. inorganic 2. biological 3. social 4. intellectual

In this section I will relate Pirsig's four levels and explain how they relate to the commonly conceived notion of subjects and objects. Pirsig does not explain how he came up with this fourfold division of static quality and acknowledges its not an original idea; therefore its general corroboration with the world we know can be considered a strength: 1. inorganic (rocks, steel) 2. biological (plants, animal and human bodies) 3. social (society, animal cooperation) 4. intellectual (the ideas of freedom and rights).⁵⁵ They are listed in an ascending order of evolutionary complexity and morality. Here are the specifics of the top three:

Patterns at the organic level react to their experiences according to the laws operating at this level studied by geneticists, microbiologists, botanists and zoologists. Instances of biological quality include physical health and pleasure. This is the morality of the 'law of the jungle' where biology triumphs over the inorganic forces of starvation and death.

Patterns at the third level consist of social patterns of value. These evolved from the organic level and include institutions such as family, church and government which seek to control biological behaviour. These are the patterns of culture that the anthropologist and the sociologist study.

The fourth level (which emerged from the social level) consists of intellectual patterns of value including such disciplines as science, theology, philosophy and mathematics.

⁵⁵ Pirsig 1992 p173. McWatt 2005 p40

The intellectual level is the 'highest' evolved static pattern and includes such values as the seeking of truth, justice, the ideas of democracy, human rights, trial by jury and freedom. The placement of the intellect in this position makes it superior to society, biology and inorganic patterns but still inferior to the Dynamic-static code of Art. The latter is not a level but a 'code' which says: 'what's good in life isn't defined by society or intellect or biology. What's good is freedom from domination by any static pattern, but that freedom doesn't have to be obtained by the destruction of the patterns themselves.'⁵⁶

I think the most accessible feature of this philosophy is how it is completely grounded in and extrapolates the theory of evolution. The MOQ's portrayal of the progression of life from carbon atoms to a chemistry professor is in lockstep with evolutionary theory. The MOQ can even accommodate opponents of evolution. They posit a finalistic program to answer for the same progression of life; the contemporary example is Intelligent Design. The MOQ digs into then substantiates a surprisingly awkward aspect of evolutionary theory: everyone knows the phrase 'survival of the fittest,' but what does 'the fittest' actually mean? The strongest? Sometimes, while other times it could mean the animal with the best coloring to serve as camouflage. To say the fittest means 'the fittest for survival' is a tautology. Fittest must mean best, best for its situation, and that means different things depending on the situation. Ernst Mayr and other scientists have concluded that this 'best' cannot be defined.⁵⁷

Good! The 'undefined fittest' they are defending is identical to Dynamic Quality. Natural selection is Dynamic Quality at work. There is no quarrel whatsoever between the Metaphysics of Quality and the Darwinian Theory of Evolution. Neither is there a quarrel between the Metaphysics of Quality and the 'teleological' theories which insist that life has some purpose. What the Metaphysics of Quality has done is unite these opposed doctrines within

⁵⁶ Pirsig 1992 p345

⁵⁷ Pirsig 1992 p166

a larger metaphysical structure that accommodates both of them without contradiction.⁵⁸

The MOQ achieves this reconciliation by corroborating the evolutionists' conclusion that evolution follows no preset laws. Evolution is a migration towards Dynamic Quality, which is undefined.⁵⁹ The MOQ can accommodate Intelligent Design because evolution, in pursuit of Dynamic Quality, does have a certain kind of purpose. Charles Darwin wrote that, "Natural selection works solely by and for the good of each being, all corporeal and mental endowments will tend to progress towards perfection."⁶⁰ Dynamic Quality can be substituted for 'perfection' with no loss in logical consistency.

The MOQ extends the logic of evolution so that it becomes a cosmology. Blackmore notes that, even without a master plan, existence has had an incredible progression from primeval soup to vast biological diversity and complexity.⁶¹ Employing the same line of thinking, one can observe that humans have gone from simply organized tribes to societies of vast diversity and complexity, from subsistence hunting and gathering to thousands of people living under one (skyscraping) roof. The same principles of biological evolution are at play, that the social groupings of Quality that survive are the 'fittest,' with plenty of examples of societies that have not survived, such as ancient Rome.⁶² The same line of thinking can be applied to the intellect, from its origins within the myths of the first recorded peoples to the vast diversity and complexity of quantum theory, Scandinavian social democracy, and multivariable calculus. In fact, a line borrowed from Julian Huxley becomes one of the simplest summations of the MOQ: "Man discovers that he is nothing else than evolution become conscious of itself."⁶³

⁵⁸ Pirsig 1992 p166

⁵⁹ Pirsig 1992 p160

⁶⁰ Darwin p459

⁶¹ Blackmore p13

⁶² but social Darwinism does not apply, as I will soon explain.

⁶³ de Chardin p221

Extending the logic of evolutionary theory, just as what is ‘fittest’ for a silverback gorilla varies from what is ‘fittest’ for a swallow, what is ‘fittest’ for the biological level is not ‘fittest’ for the intellectual. This is a significant help in explaining why what is moral looks different on each level (so different that we have not even applied the term morality to the bottom two) and why these moralities conflict. But yet it is plain to see there is still value at play.⁶⁴ Drawing from Darwin, if the general tendency is towards perfection, then the beings that persist now have generally higher quality than the ones that preceded us. Those with the ‘corporeal and mental endowments’ closest to perfection are the most Dynamic, and higher quality is preferable to lower. Therefore the MOQ’s general moral code is “given a choice of two courses to follow and all other things being equal, that choice which is more Dynamic, that is, at a higher level of evolution, is more moral.”⁶⁵ This will prove crucial for my human rights account in chapter 4.

The MOQ can now give a thorough answer to the question of Quality’s relationship to subjects and objects. Quality is the source of all things, whether subjects or objects. Quality is experienced in the interaction between subjects and objects, but it is the cause of, rather than the result of, said subject and object. Pirsig writes:

In the MOQ, experience is pure Quality which gives rise to the creation of intellectual patterns which in turn produce a division between subjects and objects.

Among these patterns is the intellectual pattern that says ‘there is an external world of things out there which are independent of intellectual patterns’.

That is one of the highest quality intellectual patterns there is.⁶⁶

“It is the point at which static patterns emerge where there were no static patterns before.”⁶⁷

The inorganic and biological levels correspond to what we think of as objective. The social

⁶⁴ else we would not recognize a value-less world; cf p.20

⁶⁵ Pirsig 1992 p183

⁶⁶ McWatt 2011 p65

⁶⁷ Pirsig 2003 p213

and intellectual levels correspond with subjective. The four levels have an evolutionary relationship.⁶⁸ “Both mind [subjects] and matter [objects] are completely separate evolutionary levels of static patterns of value, and as such are capable of each containing the other without contradiction”⁶⁹ (brackets mine). *The distinction of subjects and objects is an intellectual construction.* It is such a good one that for many it has become a given, and should still be used “*as long as we remember they are just levels of value, not expressions of independent scientific reality.*”⁷⁰ [emphasis mine]

[I]f [a baby] is normally attentive to Dynamic Quality he will soon begin to notice differences and then correlations between the differences and then repetitive patterns of the correlations. But it is not until the baby is several months old that he will begin to really understand enough about that enormously complex correlation of sensations and boundaries and desires called an object to be able to reach for one. This object will not be a primary experience. It will be a complex pattern of static values derived from primary experience. Once the baby has made a complex pattern of values called an object and found this pattern to work well he quickly develops a skill and speed at jumping through the chain of deductions that produced it, as though it were a single jump. This is similar to the way one drives a car. The first time there is a very slow trial-and-error process of seeing what causes what. But in a very short time it becomes so swift one doesn't even think about it. The same is true of objects. *One uses these complex patterns the same way one shifts a car, without thinking about them.* Only when the shift doesn't work or an 'object' turns out to be an illusion is one forced to become aware of the deductive process. That is why we think of subjects and objects as primary. We can't remember that period of our lives when they were anything else. In this way static

⁶⁸ Pirsig 1992 p344

⁶⁹ Pirsig 1992 p178

⁷⁰ Pirsig 2003a p.530-31

patterns of value become the universe of distinguishable things. Elementary static distinctions between such entities as 'before' and 'after' and between 'like' and 'unlike' grow into enormously complex patterns of knowledge that are transmitted from generation to generation as the mythos, the culture in which we live.⁷¹ (emphasis mine)

From the beginning of our life we perceive, first patterns, then collections of patterns that we term an object. We learn to make this deduction so fast and automatically that years later as adults we have no recollection that we still do this process unconsciously. As our mental faculties grow we build up an entire worldview around these objects and us as subjects, and any value that we experience must inhere in one of the two categories. Pirsig posits that we have gotten it entirely backward.

3.1.4 The relationship of the four levels

Each level is dependent on the lower level(s) to function, but operates in its own way. For example, that Angela Merkel is a living celebrity is dependent on her biological level continuing to function. However, the social pattern that designates her as Chancellor of Germany, and a celebrity, operates on an entirely different level. It is like writing a novel on a computer and trying to find the physical location of that novel in its circuits. It cannot be done. The novel is dependent on the hardware, but operates according to its own rules in the software.⁷² Furthermore, since no scientific instrument can be invented to differentiate a Chancellor of Germany from someone else, it reinforces the notion that Merkel's position is a social construction, operating on the social level under rules that do not apply to the other three levels.⁷³

In a similar fashion, the modern notion of morality gets tangled because it is in fact operating on different levels. Each of the levels is in conflict with the adjoining levels:

⁷¹ Pirsig 1992 p137-8

⁷² Pirsig 1992 p173-6

⁷³ Pirsig 2003 p143

First, there were moral codes that established the supremacy of biological life over inanimate nature. Second, there were moral codes that established the supremacy of the social order over biological life - conventional morals - proscriptions against drugs, murder, adultery, theft and the like. Third, there were moral codes that established the supremacy of the intellectual order over the social order - democracy, trial by jury, freedom of speech, freedom of the press. Finally there's a fourth Dynamic morality which isn't a code. He supposed you could call it a 'code of Art' or something like that, but art is usually thought of as such a frill that that title undercuts its importance. The morality of the *brujo* in Zuni - that was Dynamic morality.⁷⁴

Pirsig addresses why value looks so different on each level:

Now this vagueness is removed by sorting out values according to levels of evolution. The value that holds a glass of water together is an inorganic pattern of value. The value that holds a nation together is a social pattern of value. They are completely different from each other because they are at different evolutionary levels. And they are completely different from the biological pattern that can cause the most sceptical of intellectuals to leap from a hot stove. These patterns have nothing in common except the historic evolutionary process that created all of them. But that process is a process of value evolution. Therefore the name 'static pattern of values' applies to all.⁷⁵

The confusion is because the term 'morality' is used to describe conflicts *both* between the biological/social levels and the social/intellectual levels. The problems between the biological and social levels are that of armed robbery, adultery and the like. These problems are best solved by deterrents: in the case of robbery, the police. But the problems between the social and intellectual levels are that of societal suppression of the higher level, how the Nazis burned books and organized their society around racial homogeneity rather than the better ideas of democracy and equality. This level requires a different response. Pirsig notes that a

⁷⁴ Pirsig 1992 p187-8 and Glover p185

⁷⁵ Pirsig 1992 p176

lot of frustration in the 20th century has come from the intellectual level trying to directly control the biological level when it is ill-equipped to do so:

Morals can't function normally because morals have been declared intellectually illegal by the subject-object metaphysics that dominates present social thought. These subject-object patterns were never designed for the job of governing society. They're not doing it. When they're put in the position of controlling society, of setting moral standards and declaring values, and when they then declare that there are no values and no morals, the result isn't progress. The result is social catastrophe.⁷⁶

A level is dependent on the levels below it; in this case, the intellectual level will collapse if it does not enable the social level to restrict the excesses of the biological level that threaten them both. In this quote he refers to science's objective outlook and its dearth of inquiry into morals.⁷⁷ In order for the highest evolutionary level, intellect, to protect itself against the social level, morality coalesces around what we consider human rights:

What is meant by "human rights" is usually the moral code of intellect-vs.-society, the moral right of intellect to be free of social control. Freedom of speech; freedom of assembly, of travel; trial by jury; habeas corpus; government by consent - these "human rights" are all intellect-vs.-society issues. According to the Metaphysics of Quality these "human rights" have not just a sentimental basis, but a rational, metaphysical basis. They are essential to the evolution of a higher level of life from a lower level of life. They are for real.⁷⁸

In sum we have a reconceptualization of reality. The new terrain is as follows:

⁷⁶ Pirsig 1992 p351

⁷⁷ Pirsig 1992 p343

⁷⁸ Pirsig 1992 p352

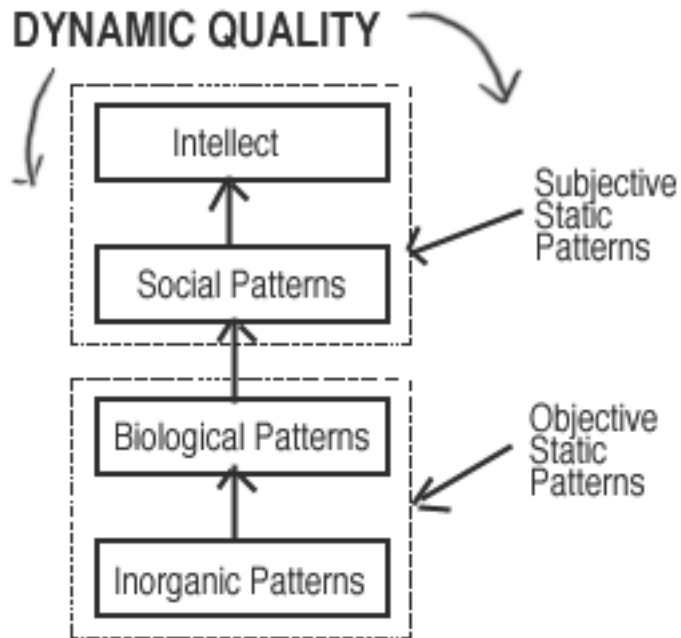


Figure 1:
Dynamic
Quality is

outside static quality yet permeates it.⁷⁹

The first proposition of the MOQ is that everything is value, and that the primary division is between Dynamic value and Static value, not between subjects and objects. The undifferentiated, undefined, pre-existing source of all things is referred to as Dynamic Quality, but in this undifferentiated “ocean,” there have formed sets of stable “wave patterns” of which the first is the material universe itself. The MOQ recognizes four such discrete value patterns (other terms are levels, dimensions, and areas). They are...Static Intellectual Value (Ideas), Static Social Value (Socially prescribed interactions and reactions), Static Biological Value (Life), Static Inorganic Value (Matter). Each of these levels offers freedom from the constraints of the lower parent level, but each is also dependent on that parent level for its existence.⁸⁰

⁷⁹ Pirsig 1995

⁸⁰ Glover p185-6

Pirsig finds his simplest summation of the MOQ at the end of Lila: “Good is a noun.”⁸¹ Good is not an adjective, dependent on another noun for its existence. Good has an independent existence.

3.1.5 Objection: Why this hierarchy of levels?

This concern challenges Pirsig’s assertion that a value evolution has occurred. The idea that intellectual values are superior to social values is not particularly new or controversial. Parallels exist from Maslow’s hierarchy to the Argentinian case to come in section 4.1.2 to Nietzsche.⁸² I will demonstrate that the hierarchy of the four levels is rational.

MOQ thinker Platt interprets freedom to be the most important principle.

To create ever higher levels of awareness, Dynamic Quality strives for freedom from all static patterns.⁸³ Freedom is the core value and highest Good in the Metaphysics of Quality. Thus, the best social and intellectual patterns are those that promote freedom consistent with maintaining the static patterns necessary for survival.⁸⁴

I propose to take his analysis one step further and apply it to the lower two levels as well. The move from the inorganic to biological level enables the freedom of movement. From the biological to the social the forces of starvation are restrained and one gains the freedom to choose ones lifestyle. From the social to the intellectual one gains the freedom to think for oneself, and embrace new ideas and experiments with all the benefits they can entail. If one accepts the presupposition that freedom is a great enough value with which to prioritize moral

⁸¹ Pirsig 1992 p468

⁸² McWatt 2011 p201; for example the judgment on p55;

⁸³ cf p17

⁸⁴ Glover p292

choices,⁸⁵ it follows that this hierarchy that is based on greater amounts of freedom is rationally ordered.

Pirsig agrees with this limit to freedom.⁸⁶ As previously stated, even though the higher levels operate according to different rules and a different morality, they are still dependent on the continued success of the lower levels in order to survive. Therefore the intellectual freedom that may be beneficial on its level but also threatens the survival of the biological level is *immoral*. I will incorporate this same limit into my human rights account.

A credible objection is that humanity has had a serious imbalance of too much freedom and not enough responsibility, with each generation unresolved degradation to the next generation. The most dire consequence is climate change. The MOQ takes almost a Panglossian approach to the trajectory of the world. I retort that the aforementioned limit to freedom can account for this; when climate change threatens the continued survival of society, it is no longer moral to permit it. Admittedly in this case there are clear benefits for a threshold that applies before climate change becomes an existential threat; this is a weakness in the MOQ. But it is not deaf to this peril: the freedom that threatens the survival of the lower levels will in turn threaten the survival of the intellectual level as well, and is therefore immoral.

One mitigating factor of this weakness is that the MOQ shares the most important part of the scientific method: the ability to change as new results come in. When intellectual efforts in renewable energy and engineered meat preclude the need for dangerous levels of carbon production, it will be moral for polluters to cut their emissions. This is in line with McWatt's addendum to the general moral code: the choice which applies more widely has higher Quality.⁸⁷

⁸⁵ reasons to do so include: freedom is the basis of 26/42 of the International Bill of Rights, the justification for sundry revolutions, and a prerequisite for any credible morality.

⁸⁶ Pirsig 1992 p355

⁸⁷ personal communication, McWatt 2017c

The MOQ is open to the unknown and says, even regarding its own prescriptions, that “the pencil is mightier than the pen.”⁸⁸

I have already listed one broad limit for when the prioritization of a higher level over a lower does not apply; are there others? “[W]hen a society undermines intellectual *freedom* for its own purposes it is absolutely morally bad, but when it represses biological *freedom* for its own purposes it is absolutely morally good.”⁸⁹ (emphasis mine) The key criterion is freedom: when a university adds significantly more funding for its football team (social level) but leaves the funding for the engineering department unchanged, social value is added without damaging intellectual freedom. However, if this funding comes directly at the expense of the engineering department, and they are forced to cut all its classes in 3D printing, then intellectual freedom is curtailed and this action is immoral. Bearing in mind these two limits, it is clear that the MOQ does not take the prioritization of the levels to be a complete absolute, and displays the pragmatic influence in its formation. Would-be dilemmas dissolve when these limits are applied: the high quality social value of the solidarity of the eponymous Polish trade union movement does not impede intellectual freedom (to the contrary, it enhanced it with the greater intellectual freedom that followed post-Soviet Union). Similar trade-offs between the social and intellectual levels can be resolved in the same intuitive way.

In the same vein, human rights are structured around intellectual freedom. Freedom of speech, of assembly, trial by jury: these are the essential protections of the intellectual level’s independence that are worth overturning a society to protect.⁹⁰ Structural societal change on this level is precisely what the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women calls for.⁹¹ This is why human rights in the MOQ match Nickel’s criterion that they be high-

⁸⁸ Pirsig 1992 p255

⁸⁹ Pirsig 1992 p355

⁹⁰ Pirsig 1992 p352; p185. Pirsig phrases it as ‘an idea killing a society’ but I think a perfectly acceptable example for him would be the mostly peaceful change in American society after MLK Jr’s civil rights movement.

⁹¹ CEDAW A.5

priority norms. The MOQ does not insist on the elevation of a lower intellectual value (like long division) over a high social value (Solidarity). There is a multitude of instances when high social and intellectual values do not conflict and can exist harmoniously. It is a general, not an absolute maxim that, all other things being equal, when a value from a lower level conflicts with a value from a superior level, we should prioritize the latter.⁹² But when a social value (the resultant order from Egyptian repression of alternative opinions in the media) threatens the freedom of the intellectual level (freedom of speech) the latter becomes a high-priority norm. MOQ's human rights have their priority status because the stability of the intellectual level depends upon them.

3.2 Definition of the social level

Since human rights occur when there is conflict between social and intellectual values, it is worthwhile to further develop the upper bounds of the social level, to better understand where the intellectual level begins. Customs such as handshaking, ballroom dancing, and saying 'bless you' after a sneeze, are on the social level.⁹³ Language is often used on the social level, but not exclusively; 'there is no such thing as a just war' is an intellectual statement.⁹⁴ "Social quality measurements of quality...are such things as conformity to social custom, popularity, ego satisfaction, and 'reputation.'"⁹⁵ Societies exist entirely on the social level.⁹⁶ Cultures were initially defined the same way, but in his last writing on the subject Pirsig denotes that cultures are a combination of social and intellectual values.⁹⁷

Politics is mostly social.⁹⁸ The states that are expected to uphold human rights and the supranational institutions that endeavor to hold them accountable both operate mainly on the

⁹² McWatt 2011 p118

⁹³ Pirsig 2003b

⁹⁴ personal communication, McWatt 2017b

⁹⁵ Pirsig, as quoted by McWatt 2005 p31

⁹⁶ Pirsig 1992 p179 ; Pirsig 1992 p202 ; Pirsig 1992 p306 ; Pirsig 1992 p357

⁹⁷ Pirsig 1992 p121; Pirsig 1992 p203 ; Pirsig 2003a p142

⁹⁸ Pirsig 2003a p474

social level. When the state compels solely on the basis of its authority, it is also on the social level.

All the laws of history, all the arguments, all the Constitutions and the Bills of Rights and Declarations of Independence are nothing more than instructions to the military and police. If the military and police can't or don't follow these instructions properly they might as well have never been written.⁹⁹

The above quote lends support to the notion that law is primarily the manifestation of morality on the social level, that it is the main tool the social level employs to maintain the upper hand against biological excesses such as crime and drugs. However, a later evolution in Pirsig's writing denotes that this designation is not exclusive. "Intellectual patterns control social ones through law and the democratic process."¹⁰⁰ Law can operate on the intellectual level, and I think the principle of equality embedded in the American Declaration of Independence is a prime example of this; employing the axiom on later work entails a revision of Pirsig's penultimate quote. The extent to which a law operates on the intellectual level will have to be assessed individually to see if it exhibits the high level of deduction that befits an idea on the intellectual level.¹⁰¹

3.3 'Definition' of the intellectual level

The Intellectual level cannot be defined with complete precision because of the peculiarities of examining it.

In *Lila*, I [Robert Pirsig] never defined the intellectual level of the MOQ, since everyone who is up to reading *Lila* already knows what "intellectual" means. For purposes of MOQ precision, let's say that the intellectual level is

⁹⁹ Pirsig 1992 p355-6

¹⁰⁰ Pirsig 2004 as quoted in McWatt 2011 p262

¹⁰¹ When incorporate concepts by postulation, such as amendments 13-15 of the US Constitution that went a long way to eliminating racial discrimination in the American South, then they reside on the intellectual level.

the same as mind. It is the collection and manipulation of symbols, created in the brain, that stand for patterns of experience.¹⁰²

In other words, there is a requisite level of abstract thinking in order to understand what this level, that consists of abstract thinking, is about. Pirsig leaves this ‘definition’ more or less intact. But it creates problems within this inquiry. If the floor of the intellectual level is simply language, then it becomes difficult to distinguish between the social and intellectual levels (my subsequent examples of sports, arts, etc. could now be considered part of the intellectual level). Moreover, it means that several species of monkeys and cetaceans apply, and in consequence ‘human rights’ must lose the human descriptor. This is all possible, and certainly some benefits might derive from it. I have chosen instead narrower bounds for the intellectual level. This is because I think a more focused intellectual level, that better addresses the objection that the social and intellectual levels are insufficiently discrete, will yield better results. McWatt narrows the intellectual level by employing an idea of F.S.C. Northrop.¹⁰³ Northrop differentiates a concept by intuition from a concept by postulation:

(a) A concept by intuition is one, which denotes, and whose complete meaning is given in immediately apprehended experience. ‘Intuition’ in this context means ‘immediately perceived’ not instinctively known or felt. A headache or ‘blue’ (in the context of the sensed colour) are concepts by intuition.¹⁰⁴

(b) ‘A concept by postulation is one the meaning of which (in whole or part) is designated by the postulates of the deductive theory in which it occurs.’ It is a concept not given by immediate experience but through deduction. Sub-atomic particles or ‘blue’ (in the context of a particular wavelength in electromagnetic radiation) are concepts by postulation.

¹⁰² Pirsig 2003a p64

¹⁰³ McWatt 2011 p154

¹⁰⁴ Northrop 1947 p195

So, while we cannot ever completely know the boundaries of the Intellectual level, the concept by postulation gives us something efficacious to build upon. It is easy enough to understand that while we cannot observe sub-atomic particles directly, this concept by postulation had a concrete (and fatal) effect on hundreds of thousands of lives with the development and detonation of two atomic bombs at the end of World War 2. Or the concept of zero, even though it is fundamental to the computers and smartphones that are a part of daily life.

It's therefore apparent that concepts by intuition refer to phenomenal properties (including imagined objects) that are immediately apprehended (such as colour and pain) while concepts by postulation refer to theoretically postulated entities (such as 'mind', 'subjects', 'objects', 'atoms' and 'brains') which are never immediately apprehended. Concepts by intuition refer to conceptualised elements of immediate experience and are beyond doubt while concepts by postulation refer to anything that transcends immediately given phenomena[.]¹⁰⁵

“[A] concept by postulation refers to entities and relations known only through formal or scientific investigation.”¹⁰⁶ McWatt elaborates that justice, fairness, and dignity reside on the intellectual level as well.¹⁰⁷ The important takeaway here is that a concept by postulation cannot be immediately experienced (that is, without the use of scientific instruments). Scientists cannot immediately observe how a black hole affects (mathematical) time around it. But through their instruments and experiments they can deduce that the black hole slows time around it. This is the province of the intellectual level. This overlay onto MOQ is not perfect: while we may not know what it is like to experience equality in its purest form, we all know what it is like to be treated fairly versus not. But in general I think this concept sharpens the MOQ more than it confuses.

¹⁰⁵ McWatt 2011 p154-5

¹⁰⁶ McWatt 2011 p225

¹⁰⁷ personal communication, McWatt 2017a

These concepts by postulation also help illustrate the delineated boundaries between the social and intellectual static patterns of value and why they operate on different levels with different rules for each. High quality values on the social level, such as cooperation and social protocol, cannot by themselves produce the theory of evolution. That requires intellect (granted, social elements probably play some part in supporting the researcher and promulgating the new theory). The attributes of high quality on the intellectual level are “logic, fittingness to empirical data, economy of statement, and what is sometimes called ‘elegance’ by mathematicians.”¹⁰⁸

[T]he justice system is a good example of the difference between the social and intellectual levels in practice. Habeas corpus, for example, was a huge step forward for intellectual quality, away from the authority of a particular person or group [such as a medieval king] to detain someone and pass judgement as they pleased, towards the fair trial where arguments for and against their detention, conviction and punishment must be heard and assessed before judgement is passed and sentences given and then as justified by inference from precedents. The jury is there to assess the intellectual quality of the opposing arguments [ideally dispassionately and without 'social bias'] and the judge will guide them on the application of the rules of rationality to determine the validity of the arguments.¹⁰⁹ [brackets McWatt’s]

3.3.1 Objection: Are the social and intellectual levels really discrete?

This objection can be phrased along these lines: intellectual concepts are so intertwined with the notion of a society that there are only a few things that can be thought of as discretely social, like sports. In response, I maintain that concepts by postulation are not things that can be directly sensed, so a quark is be a concept by postulation but an imagined dragon is not. It is perhaps easiest to answer this objection in the negative, by listing some elements of the social level that have very little to no intellectual value (meant in my technical sense): high school jocks and

¹⁰⁸ Pirsig, as quoted by McWatt 2005 p31

¹⁰⁹ Turner 2017

cheerleaders jockeying for popularity; sports in general; most of the arts; the accumulation of goods (an offshoot of celebrity); and most of politics.

A political revolution often exists on the intellectual level; often enough its aftermath does not. The easiest example is equality as the guiding light of the American and French Revolutions of the late 18th century. The Cuban Revolution is an instructive way to see the split: the impetus for the revolution was Dynamic, a spontaneous event spurred by the desire for an intellectual value, freedom, over the extant social value. But the repression in the ensuing decades, and the failure to fulfill the human rights promised, took place on the social level.¹¹⁰ The a decisive change from the intellectual level controlling the social to vice versa led to a commensurate drop in quality. A coup d'état or revolt exists solely on the social level.¹¹¹ It seems strange to understand how politics straddles two levels. Then again, the human exists on the inorganic, biological, social, and intellectual levels without debilitating confusion. Also bear in mind that the levels are continually evolving. In the century that the intellectual level has dominated, it should be self-evident that its influence would be felt on all of the lower levels.¹¹² It is harder to see the distinction now because social groupings such as the state, church, and family have all been affected by science, mathematics, and maybe even philosophy. Yet in the time of Galileo the distinction was very clear: the Church and therefore society maintained geocentrism on the basis of the former's authority. Intellectuals were tortured and/or killed. The issues of adultery, homosexuality, and murder were dealt with primarily through social custom. It was significantly easier to see the distinction between the social and intellectual level, but it still exists today.

I will concede that Pirsig's distinction, that a society only exists on the social level whereas a culture can exist on both social and intellectual levels, probably confuses more than helps. While it is useful to separate a communal unit that is only on the social level from a communal unit that is active on both the social and intellectual level (because it is possible that

¹¹⁰ Connor

¹¹¹ Connor

¹¹² Pirsig posits the ascendance of the intellectual level occurred in the 1920s. cf Glover p87

some societies today are still dominated by the social level),¹¹³ it does not follow that the former only happens to a society and the latter only happens to a culture.

IV A MOQ account of Dignity and Human Rights

To craft a MOQ-based human rights account I will first resolve ‘the boundary problem.’ I will sift through a few options before settling on communal practice as the best way to ground human rights. I will redefine Dignity in a MOQ context. At that point I will use the concept of risk aversion to extend the basis of human rights to every member of that culture. By the same concept I will extend it again, to any culture that is in contact with an intellectually active culture.

I will now change my method: to proceed I must employ a little more exegesis of Pirsig’s material but largely I will extrapolate from his and McWatt’s ideas. Therefore what follows are my own thoughts and arguments unless I cite explicitly. As I proceed with my account I will now assess things in terms of their quality even though there has been a separate discussion on the metaphysical aspects of Quality. Some may hold that it is poor form to mix the commonsense and specialized sense of the word in this metaphysics. I maintain that keeping the two terms linked is essential. Pirsig describes the essence of our universe as quality precisely because it is an everyday term; the good life is in daily life, not somewhere else.¹¹⁴

We return to the three broad questions that determine the contours of a human rights philosophy, the answers to which will constitute this chapter: 1. What are human rights? 2. What is the *boundary* of who/what is entitled to human rights? 3. Are human rights *absolute* priorities, which always take precedence over anything that might conflict with them?

To answer the first question I derive¹¹⁵ the following MOQ definition of human rights: a human right is a protection of that which is necessary to maintain the independence of the intellectual level from the social level. This can include an action, a status (e.g. journalist) and even a thought, so long as it is to safeguard the intellectual level’s independence. I emphasize

¹¹³ personal communication, Skutvik 2017

¹¹⁴ Pirsig 1975

¹¹⁵ from *inter alia* Pirsig’s HR quote p28

that I have written independence of the intellect and not dominance because of *inter alia* the two limits I set out in 3.1.5. I am of the view that this wording means that individual infractions of e.g. free speech constitute a human rights violation. Each individual violation of these elite intellectual values might not threaten the independence of the intellectual level on its own, but when the violations are systemic they certainly would. I hope the wording conveys my intention that an individual violation, though it does not threaten the independence of the intellectual level on its own, nevertheless it undermines a pillar of the intellectual level, the importance of which means such a violation cannot be allowed.

Using this definition gives additional clarity as to the inherent need for the sample human rights that Pirsig listed. Freedom of speech is essential to the promulgation of ideas. If scientists were not able to report their findings, or philosophers unable to propose innovative new theories because they upset social custom, the intellectual level would suffer. The rights of trial by jury and habeas corpus are necessary to maintain the logic-based justice system, which I have highlighted as a clear divider between the social and intellectual levels. Even the right to travel, which may seem a little oddly placed at first, proves its necessity: the free circulation of ideas, and exposing people to new ideas and theories, is a requirement for the health of the intellectual level, lest it stagnate and die.

Why human rights? When intellectual quality is subordinated to serve low social values, havoc can result (e.g. the Holocaust). These human rights are the essential static latch to prevent the systematic degradation of this most evolved level. Viewing the alternative (a considerable risk of losing a significant number of scientific and technological advances of the past century), it should be fairly self-evident that it is of higher quality if these rights are observed than if they are not. ‘But what of China?’ a detractor could ask. To that I reply that China’s incredible technological growth was dependent on the extant, stable international system that by and large respects human rights and copyrights.¹¹⁶ Should China upend that order for something that closer resembles the law of the jungle, it is likely that there will be a backslide of the intellectual level. While answering the boundary question I will find additional evidence that these human rights have worth, in that a critical mass of people in some cultures demand them.

¹¹⁶ The Economist

4.1 The Boundary Problem

The sub-question ‘how do human rights apply across space?’ also needs to be answered as part of the boundary problem. I only have the space to give an incomplete answer to this question and the question of absolutes, likewise I will not explore the conventional sub-question of how human rights apply across time. When examining how intellectual freedom can be protected from social depredation, it is important to hone in on what qualifies a human for such protection. Candidates from previous human rights philosophies include *inter alia* A) practice B) capacity C) Dignity as status. The criterion affects whether human rights are determined on the group or individual level. At the onset my selection of an intellectual level defined by concepts by postulation quickly disqualifies animals.

Let us assess practice first, i.e. the active manifestation of the intellectual level. This could be determined either on an individual or a collective basis. Surely it can be witnessed on an individual level, whether it is someone using or creating a definition, or someone using algebra. Protection of the intellectual level could be fashioned around the individual. Yet the intellectual level does not operate in a vacuum. “Each of these levels offers freedom from the constraints of the level below it, but each is also dependent on the levels below it for its existence.”¹¹⁷ “Our intellectual description of nature is always culturally derived.”¹¹⁸

(It seems necessary to me, in line with the evolutionary hierarchy of the MOQ, that these intellectual structures have to be "moored" at some point to social level patterns to avoid an infinite circularity of inference...

Rationality also depends on society in the sense that without the customs and institutions of learning embedded in society, and the language supported by these institutions, there would be no basis for rationality, just as without homo sapiens there would be no society and without carbon....etc. The point here is to refute the idea that the capacity for rationality is a "faculty" which

¹¹⁷ Hettinger 2003 p180

¹¹⁸ Pirsig 1992 p179

just evolved in the brain of all humans by showing that rationality is a cultural pattern which is understood by looking at history rather than biology).¹¹⁹

Rationality should be assessed with full awareness of its societal roots, that is, on the collective level. Since the protection needs to come against the social level it makes more sense to grant these protections on an equally wide field as the social level exists in. This is a nice start, but recall that the levels are so different that one cannot be judged on the basis of another's rules. Furthermore, Pirsig has defined society as solely existing on the social level, so I must shift my vocabulary and discuss culture instead, which has the potential to exist on both the social and intellectual level.

Assuming that these human rights are of high value, and applying the MOQ's general moral precept that wider applicability is better in general, it follows that the exercise of human rights by a significant number of members of a culture means a higher level of intellectual quality. Since it is doubtful that each and every member of a culture is active on the intellectual level, it remains to determine a 'critical mass' in which human rights protections must be recognized. This scenario has intrinsic value in the free exchange of ideas that can benefit society and the technological advances from the attendant scientific inquiry. Moreover, human rights are a value that is recognized by these people who want to maintain their intellectual quality; in the aforementioned revolutions, they were willing to upend society for the sake of these intellectual values.¹²⁰ To them, these human rights were worth dying for.

Communal recognition of human rights is the best choice because it would cover the individuals who are unquestionably exercising their human rights, as well as borderline cases and other individuals that may not be active on the intellectual level but play a vital role in maintaining the social and biological needs of these participants. Using the principle of risk aversion, a communal account is superior than an account assigning HR to the individual because there is less risk of an intellectual having their human rights denied in the former

¹¹⁹ Turner 2017

¹²⁰ In Cuba's case, to achieve and entrench them.

account versus the latter. Combined, these make a sufficient argument for why human rights should be recognized on a collective rather than individual basis.

The next step is to answer the question, ‘when can a culture be said to actively manifest the intellectual level?’ In order to discern what constitutes a manifestation of the intellectual level in a culture, it is useful to consider the distinction between ‘intellect’ and ‘intellectual.’

Another subtler confusion exists between the word, ‘intellect,’ that can mean thought about anything and the word, ‘intellectual,’ where abstract thought itself is of primary importance. Thus, though it may be assumed that the Egyptians who preceded the Greeks had intellect, it can be doubted that theirs was an intellectual culture.¹²¹

The distinction comes from appraising the intellect *from* the social level. Viewed from the social level the term becomes that of ‘an intellectual,’ a social title. This social signaling is useful for our purposes in ascertaining the ‘critical mass’ of manifestations of the intellectual level in a given culture. Such signaling indicates that, begrudgingly or not, a culture has acknowledged the existence of a new social role. Some cultures go further to value and elevate those members thinking on the intellectual level. Cultures that explicitly name individuals as ‘intellectuals’ provide the clearest distinction. Even in those cultures that do not recognize intellectuals explicitly there can be an equivalent though implicit respect. In this case, how then to determine which cultures are practicing on the intellectual level? I am sure a better test can be found, but an initial threshold can be if a culture’s universities prioritize their academics (intellectual) over their sports (social).¹²² It is these intellectual cultures that signal the general establishment of the intellectual level and where human rights unequivocally apply.

Now I will assess the feasibility of using capacity in the account. Because the intellect evolved from the social level, there was a time in human history where human rights did not apply. A case can be made that they had the capacity to operate on the intellectual level. Indeed,

¹²¹ Pirsig 2003b

¹²² Pirsig 1992 p294-5

a strong case can be made for the ancient Egyptians and the great precision with which they built their pyramids (Pirsig does not claim to know for certain, but he posits that the intellectual level began in the West after that time, with the first systematic philosophy written by the ancient Greeks, and the Upanishadic period in India in the East¹²³). The criteria settled on by Griffin are capacity as well as practice. But from the onset this seems problematic for the intellectual level. In the first case because of the wide swathe of humans that Griffin has to exclude in order to follow his theorem to its conclusion, which strikes me as low quality. Employing risk aversion means my communal assignation of human rights avoids this (more on this later). He measures practice on the individual level but for protection of the intellectual level to be robust it necessitates that the intellectual level is active. Determining human rights on the basis of capacity may work for this account, but it seems that communal practice is already a better option.¹²⁴

The last option I will briefly consider is Waldron's notion of Dignity as status. From the onset it is clear that such a conception parks Dignity squarely within the social level. Limitations result. Social level values are actively fighting against intellectual values (the backlash against vaccinations, the so-called Islamic State). The high respect that Waldron envisages, when transmuted to social esteem, does not necessarily translate to protecting essential intellectual values, especially should those values threaten an antagonistic state. It is not likely that Dignity as a social value would be able to be used to defend human rights that exist on the intellectual level. Laws, however, straddle both levels. Intellectually driven laws will be able to defend human rights.¹²⁵ I have selected the criterion of communal practice to resolve the boundary problem. I posited that there is a critical mass at which point a culture undoubtedly supports these essential intellectual values, our human rights. This threshold is somewhat nebulous and I must develop it further. Regarding this problematic definition of Dignity, I must either jettison it and form a MOQ human rights account without it, or develop a different definition of Dignity.

¹²³ Pirsig 2003b

¹²⁴ I will assess the intellectual argument based on logical consistency, breadth, and economy of explanation. cf Pirsig 1992 p345

¹²⁵ Recall that laws are a mediating device for intellect to restrain the social level cf p34

Since there is an added benefit to developing a human rights account based on Dignity that can easily slot into and reinforce the international human rights legal regime, I shall explore the latter option first.

4.1.2 Dignity as value within the Metaphysics of Quality

In this section I will propose a MOQ-centric definition to Dignity and begin to set it in context. Recall that the MOQ's general moral code plus McWatt's addendum is "given a choice of two courses to follow and all other things being equal, that choice which is more Dynamic, that is, at a higher level of evolution, [and has a wider application] is more moral."¹²⁶

Dignity is defined as "the state or quality of being worthy of honor or respect."¹²⁷ 'Quality of' gives away that we are discussing a value, an auspicious sign for this value-based metaphysics. That they deserve honor or respect indicates something of quality, and high quality at that. Using the MOQ's general moral code, it is most likely that dignity is meant as a value held at the highest (static) level: the intellectual.¹²⁸

Assuming that Dignity is a value held on the intellectual level, it is in a similar league as justice and the sense of fairness that constitute democracy. The premise of a trial by jury is that the accused is judged based on rational principles of guilt and innocence, using deductive inference to piece facts together and show a motive or lack thereof. It provides for a check to groupthink and clan loyalty by insisting that any juror can refuse a guilty verdict if they have a *reasonable* doubt. This idea is important, that a juror is compelled specifically to leave behind high quality social values (reputation, conformity to social custom) in order to render a judgment based on high quality intellectual values instead. Instead of deferring to power, the four judges of a domestic court in Argentina valued justice and fairness more, overcoming their social level

¹²⁶ Pirsig 1992 p183

¹²⁷ Apple 'dignity'

¹²⁸ McWatt concurs with this assessment: personal correspondence McWatt 2017a

compulsions to convict their former dictator for crimes against humanity.¹²⁹ I argue that this constitutes dignity, when one assesses another human on the basis of rational principles and not clan loyalties, and that the respect inherent in dignity follows from this assessment.

The MOQ reconceives the notion of Dignity and so I redefine it thus: Dignity is the valuation (prioritization) of the intellectual level over the social level when the two conflict.

I will take Nazi Germany as my first (admittedly easy) example. The Nazis had a program to eradicate Jews and several types of disabled people. Was it intellectual? The MOQ's classification system engenders the enhanced insight that no, every concept in their program stemmed from experience (their imagined Jewish conspiracy was still based on concepts of Jews, money, etc. from experience). Accompanied by their patent lack of fairness or justice and one can see that the Nazis were not active on the intellectual level.¹³⁰ Their prioritization of the social over the intellectual level (the opposite of Dignity) was blatantly apparent: book burnings, a cult of personality around Hitler (valuing reputation over an intellectual value) and the cheering support a plurality of people gave Hitler as he degraded the intellectual good of democracy into a ruthless dictatorship. They actively worked to retard truth, one of the highest intellectual values. This was the polar opposite of Dignity.

Medicine showed great Dignity when doctors prioritized their new empirical data (that leprosy was only contagious with fluid contact) over the social stigma against lepers and developed the first effective treatment to bring them out of their exile. The rallying cry of the 2011 Egyptian revolution was "freedom, bread, dignity."¹³¹ The revolution encompassed everyday men and women who prioritized two intellectual values explicitly, and were willing to risk the social quiescence in order to achieve them. Two of the moral exemplars that Pirsig lists are Lincoln and Gandhi.¹³² They were clearly advancing intellectual quality over social quality:

¹²⁹ "Argentine Court Convicts Former Dictator for Conspiracy in Operation Condor"

¹³⁰ Pirsig concurs: Pirsig 1992 p417

¹³¹ El Shahed 2015

¹³² Pirsig 1992 p456

Lincoln by removing the indignity of slavery, and Gandhi by advancing democracy non-violently.¹³³ They were acting with dignity. Dignity as value¹³⁴ might fit within the value-centered metaphysics that is the MOQ.

4.1.3 The locus of human rights in the MOQ

I can now use the concept of Dignity to tease out a firmer sense of what ‘critical mass’ of intellectuals warrant human rights in this initial phase. Permit me to designate a culture that is acting with Dignity (using my new definition) as a ‘Dignified culture.’ The threshold for a Dignified culture is the same as the aforementioned two nested tests ascertaining if a culture values the intellectual. The notion of Dignity adds additional clarity to the second test, because prioritizing academics versus sports is a perfect demonstration of Dignity. Pirsig agrees and uses the intellectual value of equality as a fulcrum to the same effect.¹³⁵ The intellectual activities of a Dignified culture must prevail over social values when the two conflict. This also applies to a demographic in which some members are not active on the intellectual level at all: the mentally disabled.

Both Nickel and Griffin hold the view that the mentally disabled members of a Dignified culture should not have the right to vote.¹³⁶ I disagree, and think those in a Dignified culture should have that right. If some of them do not exercise that right and vote, there is little harm done. Some harm may come about should the disabled person commits an error while voting. But if those people for whom it is uncertain if they are able to vote are excluded from human rights, it is quite likely that at least one person in that group will in fact have the capacity and then be denied the right to use it.¹³⁷ In accordance with McWatt’s addendum to the MOQ’s

¹³³ Human life is precious in the MOQ, because *inter alia* humans operate at the intellectual level. Solving a problem nonviolently is better than the alternative because of less loss of life, but the MOQ is not strictly pacifist. cf. Pirsig 1993 p184-5

¹³⁴ as opposed to Dignity as principle or status.

¹³⁵ Pirsig 2003a p579

¹³⁶ Nickel p37, Griffin p92

¹³⁷ personal communication, Skarstad 2017

general moral code, it is of higher quality if human rights apply too widely, rather than not widely enough with resultant human rights violations.

But what of the people who prioritize the intellectual but are not part of a Dignified culture? Because very few cultures exist in isolation from the rest of the world in this day and age, there is a probable risk that persons acting with Dignity exist in unDignified cultures and that their human rights could be violated. In addition, there are members of cultures that do not prioritize the intellectual level who are themselves working on the intellectual level, and could one day prove to be the catalyst to change their culture into a Dignified one.

Risk aversion applies in equal measure here. On the one hand is the risk that there are Dignified persons in cultures that do not prioritize the intellectual level (probable to high) as well as the risk of them suffering a human rights violation as things stand (high). On the other hand is the risk of affected persons that do not access the intellectual level abusing or committing fraud with their newfound human rights. Because widespread exercise of these human rights is critical to the continued health of the intellectual level, it is a more severe risk if human rights violations occur in the former case. Therefore, human rights must also apply to all members of cultures that have contact with a Dignified culture. It is beyond the capacity of this thesis to sufficiently answer the questions regarding if human rights have always existed, and if they apply to cultures that do not have contact with a Dignified culture.

Now to the other overarching question, that of the absolutism of human rights or lack thereof. The MOQ recasts this question to show that it is asking about two levels, and thus two answers are required. When the human right in question is in conflict with a social norm, the human right is absolute. Systemic violations of the right to free speech, for example, pose an existential threat to the intellectual level. However, in a case where two human rights conflict, they are not absolute. Besides the general moral code quoted in section 4.1.2, Pirsig was less helpful than he could have been in distinguishing what has higher quality within a particular

level.¹³⁸ There is some potential to adjudicate between different rights here but it needs further development.

V Evaluation of my human rights account

My research question is: *Is a Pirsigian account of human rights worth taking seriously?* I will evaluate my MOQ account of human rights (hereafter MOQHRA for ease of reference) using the three criteria I laid out in my methodology: 1. Why do I opt not to resolve the boundary problem with capacity? 2. Does my human rights account give a recognizable definition of human rights? 3. Does it contribute to the cross-cultural application of human rights?

5.1 Why not capacity?

Griffin would likely object that my rationale for choosing practice, instead of capacity and practice as the criteria for my human rights account was insufficient. I do not accept that a concept that exists in a relationship can emerge before the attendant parts that it is in relationship with. I would only concede the argument if Griffin was willing to concede that the law of gravity existed before everything else, before the objects that it manipulates. The law of gravity as the source of all things, just waiting for Newton to recognize it. Such a prospect is absurd.¹³⁹

It is nearly as absurd to postulate that human rights emerged alongside the first humans, an ethereal right to a trial by jury before the first humans had any concept of collective punishment. A concept is defined by its relationship, and human rights did not exist until there was an intellectual level that needed protection from the social level, in most cases the state. Even were I to accept capacity as the criterion, the intellectual level begins on a communal basis, which again goes against Griffin's atomized normative agency thesis. We agree that practice is an important determinant, but I diverge with my assertion that practice is a sufficient criterion without capacity, which enables the recognition of HR on a communal basis, satisfying McWatt's addendum to the general moral code that wider applicability is generally a good thing.

¹³⁸ McWatt 2011 p120

¹³⁹ Pirsig 2006 p42-3

5.2 Does my human rights account give a recognizable definition of human rights?

Nickel's definition of human rights is pragmatic, perhaps even reactive rather than prescriptive. Therefore it is a safe standard of reference with which to compare MOQHRA. Regarding the sub-clause of point 5, that HR are unrestricted by political boundaries. Nickel and MOQHRA are in agreement on point 5. It takes an existential threat to the state (and by extension the intellectual level) to justify the suspension of free speech. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights also states as much.¹⁴⁰ The other notion of point 5, HR as an international and neutral rubric, I will explore further in the next section. On point 2 MOQHRA as it currently stands is in agreement that human rights apply to all considered. That said, further analysis needs to be done to ascertain if it applies to the small percentage of the population that lives in remote areas and do not have regular contact with Dignified cultures. There is mixed agreement with point 4. MOQHRA agrees that HR are not contingent on government recognition because HR are on a more evolved level than the state and, if all other things are considered equal, are inherently more valuable for that reason. However, since law is one of the most significant ways that the intellectual level mediates the social level, any human rights law that is not recognized by the offending state is likely to prove ineffective. Drawing selectively from James, MOQHRA evaluates a law that is effective higher than a law that does not correct a HR violation.

I think the greatest concurrence is on HR as high priority norms, point 3. Nickel says they are qualifiedly absolute; my account agrees. He says they necessitate strong justification; my initial definition meets this, that a violation of these elite intellectual values will (eventually) threaten the independence of the intellectual level. Nickel bases his justification largely on dignity from the UDHR. MOQHRA integrates the deep respect of dignity and adds additional meaning by redefining it within the context of the MOQ. Unfortunately a critical look at my definition incorporating Dignity shows that it is not a high priority norm. This is because of the wider amount of instances in which it prioritizes the intellectual, when the independence of the intellectual level is not threatened.

¹⁴⁰ ICCPR a19

Using Dignity in MOQHRA has weaknesses. There are times when the common usage of ‘undignified’ can simply be an expression of a violation on the social level. If a Master’s student is writing over 5 pages of his thesis in a day and needs to dash out in his pajamas to buy a quick lunch in order to keep up his productive momentum, those seeing him in public might think him undignified. But because this action is in service to the intellectual level and the ideas he is putting on paper, it is justified for him to do so. Thus Dignity would have to be divested from dignity to some extent to be a workable term.

Adopting this criterion moves the threshold for what makes a human right considerably. My initial definition of human rights limited them to high-stakes conflicts between the social and intellectual, in which the latter’s independence is on the line. Dignity here defined justifies the intellectual level winning *every* conflict with the social level as moral. This violates the delineation that the intellectual level must not threaten the fundamental stability of the levels below it. This initial definition suggests some promise for incorporating Dignity, especially since it will be an easy conduit for the MOQ to reinforce the extant HR regime, but it requires further work in order to be viable.

5.3 Does MOQHRA contribute to the cross-cultural application of human rights?

There is considerable potential to bridge Western and Eastern thought within my human rights account. Indeed, the strong linkages between MOQHRA and Zen Buddhism, Hinduism, and Taoism are likely its greatest strength, and could make it a more universal human rights account than the ones that have come before it. Unfortunately to make a full comparison and do these various Eastern philosophies justice would require an entire thesis on its own. I will make a few brief highlights: the Hindu notion of *tat tvam asi* (‘thou art that’) figures prominently in Pirsig’s thinking and has synergy with my communal assignation of human rights; a Zen master gave Pirsig the surprising compliment that he was already familiar with everything in ZAMM though it is written from a Western approach.¹⁴¹ This bridging of East and West is well worthy of further research.

¹⁴¹ cf Pirsig 2006 p177 and Pirsig as quoted in McWatt 2011 p216

The moral force that accompanies a universal account is easy to write off in Cartesian metaphysics because it is a ‘value judgment’: something that only exists subjectively and cannot be conclusively agreed upon. But the MOQ as value-centered metaphysics can transform and redeem this notion. Good is a noun. It is possible to have a reality in which subjects and objects do not occur (and as far as can be known, it is the reality in which amoebas and infants inhabit). It is of higher quality (*inter alia* a higher freedom) to construct our reality with subjects and objects. Our reality is derived from this quality decision; subjects and objects are derived from Quality.

With this metaphysics in hand, morality permeates everything. It takes admittedly drastically different forms whether we are talking about a good chair or a good theorem, but the fact that we can use a common term for both is already an indication of commonality. That human rights are a moral issue is readily apparent. The MOQ does away with the notion of a ‘mere’ value judgment and asserts instead that morality is rationally ordered, and that human rights are the essential static latch to ensure the continued dominance of a higher evolved level over a lesser. Thus for China or Zimbabwe’s leaders to deny the validity of MOQHRA’s human rights is tantamount to stating that rationality is optional. The MOQ might provide an objective basis for humans from every nation and every philosophy to discuss and weigh morality. It is worth taking MOQHRA seriously because it has the potential to advance human rights to where their universal status is universally recognized.¹⁴²

VI Conclusion

The honest pursuit of a simple question can have surprising results. Pirsig pursues the question of ‘what is Quality?’ to effect a Copernican revolution where Quality is the source of subjects and objects, not the other way around. He moves from this mysticism to a cosmological evolutionary metaphysics, where all life is in a migration to an undefined sense of betterness known as Dynamic Quality.¹⁴³ This cosmological evolution is based in and then expands upon

¹⁴² for the charge that HR are still relative, cf Sweeney

¹⁴³ Pirsig 1992 p160

Darwin et al's theory, from the inorganic to the biological to the social to the intellectual levels. The intellectual level can be clearly separated from the social level because only the former uses highly abstract thinking that involves concepts that are not readily sensed.

In Chapter Four I formulated a MOQ-based account of human rights. Opting for 'practice' as the best criterion for grounding human rights, I determine that human rights should be recognized on a communal basis. The litmus test I borrow from Pirsig to determine active practice on the intellectual level for a culture is the use of the social title of 'the intellectual.' This prioritization of the intellectual over social level I term Dignity. Applying equality and risk aversion results in human rights applying to all members of that Dignified culture, and any culture that is in contact with a Dignified one.

In Chapter Five I evaluated my research question: *Is a Pirsigian account of human rights worth taking seriously?* MOQHRA is worth taking seriously for the high potential it exhibits for cross-cultural applications of human rights and the panoply of benefits that offers.

[T]hough it may be argued that a metaphysics that incorporates a central term that isn't defined (i.e., Dynamic Quality) isn't a real metaphysics, it can also be argued that the strength of the MOQ is its ability to incorporate the indeterminate divine within a coherent and logical paradigm.¹⁴⁴

Pirsig agrees, and shows that it only requires a few logical steps to bridge DQ and science's 'unmeasured phenomenal object,' specifically referencing Bohr's Complementarity.¹⁴⁵ Another deficiency is that the harmony of the ascending morality of the four levels may not be immediately apparent to those who view the subject/object distinction as an absolute truth. Yet it is likely that the MOQ will be more adaptable to change over centuries than other HR accounts.

My human rights account (MOQHRA) also has many strengths. It is likely that huge segments of the global population (Advaita Hinduism, Zen, Taoism) harmonize with the MOQ.

¹⁴⁴ McWatt 2005 p260-1

¹⁴⁵ Pirsig 1995 p17

More freedom, yet with limits, shows that the universe is getting better. This allows a rational ordering of morality in a way that was not possible when it is conflated to mean both social-biological and intellectual-social conflicts (when it is actually two different moralities). Taking the fairly safe assumption that rationality is the guiding principle of assessing intellectual value worldwide,¹⁴⁶ the MOQ and by extension MOQHRA can make a claim to be a universal account, because its morality is rationally ordered. This would in turn disprove the cultural relativist charges of non-Western cultures and allow for substantial human rights collaboration, with human rights gaining considerably more moral force.

There are rich opportunities for further research. To my knowledge this is the first thesis to inquire into this particular topic. I would recommend follow-up study of the following: to ascertain a firm sense of which rights currently recognized by international law are supported or devalued by the MOQ. Similar research should be done to see if and what human rights the MOQ enables that have not currently been recognized. Quite a lot of research can be done investigating the confluences and differences between the MOQ and Asian philosophies, including Islamic tradition. Similarly, this study should be extended to those few tribal societies that are not interacting with Dignified cultures to make a truly global assessment of MOQHRA. An inquiry into how MOQHRA affects the current human rights enforcement system would be useful, though it will be limited, since Pirsig notes that social programs must start from quality foundations to have their desired effect, which is not always the case.¹⁴⁷

This is not the first thesis to academically evaluate the MOQ and should not be the last. A philosophy that purports to reconcile evolution and Intelligent Design is worth a serious look for that reason alone, to put the classroom culture wars to rest. More so, the potential to harmonize Eastern and Western thought, which could substantially boost human rights in today's

¹⁴⁶ since for those few tribal societies that are not active on the intellectual level this clearly would not apply.

¹⁴⁷ Pirsig 2006 p381

negative climate, is something that is worth serious consideration. As I have endeavored to show, its conclusions may not necessarily be untrue.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁸ McWatt 2011 p2

Bibliography

- , International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Adopted and opened for signature, ratification and accession by General Assembly resolution 2200A (XXI) of 16 December 1966).
- , The Texts of the White Yajurveda
- Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- , *cosmological* (Apple Inc. 2005-15)
- , 'dignity' (*Apple Inc.*, 2005-15) accessed 20/11/17
- , 'Kurt Gödel' (*Stanford University*, 2007) <<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/goedel/#IncThe>> accessed
- , *FORTRAN* (The Free Dictionary 2011)
- , A Point of View: Happiness and Disability (BBC 2014)
- , 'Taoism' (*Religion Facts*, 2016) <www.religionfacts.com/taoism> accessed 18/11/17
- , 'Zen' (2016) <www.religionfacts.com/zen> accessed 18/11/17
- , 'Best-Sellers Initially Rejected' (*Lit Rejections*, 2017) <<http://www.litrejections.com/best-sellers-initially-rejected/>> accessed 10/11/17
- , 'China Profile' (*Freedom House*, 2017) <<https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2017/china>> accessed 29/11/17
- , *metaphysics* (Oxford University Press 2017)
- , 'On Human Rights' (*Amazon*, 2017) <https://www.amazon.com/Human-Rights-James-Griffin/dp/0199573107/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1511990814&sr=8-1&keywords=on+human+rights> accessed 29/11/17
- , 'Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance: an Inquiry Into Values' (*Amazon*, 2017) <https://www.amazon.com/Zen-Art-Motorcycle-Maintenance-Inquiry/dp/0060839872/ref=mt_paperback?_encoding=UTF8&me=>> accessed 29/11/17
- Adams, Tim, 'Zen and the Art of Robert Pirsig' *The Guardian* (19 Nov 2006) <<https://www.theguardian.com/theobserver/2006/nov/19/features.review87>>
- Baum, Andrew; et al, Cambridge handbook of psychology, health and medicine (Cambridge University Press 1997)
- Beitz, Charles R., 'Human Dignity in the Theory of Human Rights: Nothing But a Phrase?' (2013) 41 *Philosophy & Public Affairs* 259
- Berg, Magnus, 'A classicist's road to the Metaphysics of Quality' (*MOQ.org*, <<http://moq.org/forum/magnus/magnus.html>> accessed 20/11/17
- Bershidsky, Leonid, 'Putin's Russia rejects western cvilisation' *Gulf News* <<http://gulfnews.com/opinion/thinkers/putin-s-russia-rejects-western-civilisation-1.1316239>> accessed 29/11/17
- Blyth, Dougal, 'The Ever-Moving Soul in Plato's "Phaedrus"' (1997) 118 *The American Journal of Philology* 185
- "Quark (subatomic particle)" 2017)
- Broersen, Andre, 'An Open Letter by Andre Broersen to Sam Harris' (2011) <<http://robertpirsig.org/andre1.html>> accessed 27/3/2017
- Brooks, Michael, '20 new Ideas in Science' *New Statesman* (16/08/2010) Observations <<https://www.newstatesman.com/ideas/2010/08/life-universe-graphene>>

Bucholz, Chris, '5 Math Lessons You Don't Really Need in the Real World' (*Cracked*, 2014) <<http://www.cracked.com/blog/5-math-lessons-you-dont-really-need-in-real-world/>> accessed 20/11/17

Buddies, Science, 'Steps of the Scientific Method' (2002-2017) <<https://www.sciencebuddies.org/science-fair-projects/science-fair/steps-of-the-scientific-method>> accessed 09/11/17

Burge, Kathleen, 'Girl in famous Vietnam photo talks about forgiveness' *Boston Globe* (14/02/2013) <<https://www.bostonglobe.com/metro/regionals/west/2013/02/14/kim-phuc-girl-famous-vietnam-photo-talks-about-forgiveness/BrLEcMnoycAj90gHbCJPBJ/story.html>>

Connor, Andrew, 'Zen and the Art of Revolution' (*MOQ.org*, <<http://moq.org/forum/AndrewConnor/andrewconnor1.html>> accessed 20/11/17

Darwin, Charles, *The Origin of Species* (1985 paperback edn, Penguin 1859)

de Chardin, Pierre Teilhard, *The Phenomenon of Man* (1959)

Di Santo, R.L. & Steele, T.J., Guidebook to Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance (William Morrow & Co. 1990)

Duckworth, Douglas, 'Tibetan Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna' *A Companion to Buddhist Philosophy* (A Companion to Buddhist Philosophy, John Wiley & Sons, Ltd 2013)

El Shahed, Salma, 'Freedom, bread, dignity: Has Egypt answered Jan. 25 demands?' *Al Arabiya* (25.1.2015) <<http://english.alarabiya.net/en/perspective/features/2015/01/25/Freedom-bread-dignity-Has-Egypt-answered-Jan-25-demands-.html>> accessed 25.4.2016

Ford, Allison, 'The Truth About Your Body's Cell Regeneration' More <<http://www.more.com/lifestyle/exercise-health/truth-about-your-bodys-cell-regeneration>>

Glover, Dan (compiled by), *Lila's Child: An Inquiry into Quality* (1stBooks 2003)

Griffin, J., *On Human Rights* (2010)

Gurney, O; and Kramer, Samuel, 'Two fragments of Sumerian laws' (1965) *Assyriological Studies* p13

Hintz, Eric, 'Going Solo: Reconsidering The Role Of The Lone Inventor' (*Forbes*, 2012) <<https://www.forbes.com/sites/ciocentral/2012/06/07/going-solo-reconsidering-the-role-of-the-lone-inventor/#1409048f17f5>> accessed 25/11/17

James, William, *Essays in Radical Empiricism* (Longman Green & Co. 1912)

Langworth, Richard, "'Democracy is the worst form of government...'" (2009) <<https://richardlangworth.com/worst-form-of-government>> accessed 19/11/17

McManus, Alan, *Alchemy at the Chalkface: Pirsig, Pedagogy and the Metaphysics of Quality* (CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform 2015)

McWatt, Anthony, *An Introduction to Robert Pirsig's Metaphysics of Quality* (Anthony McWatt 2005)

McWatt, Anthony, *A Critical Analysis of Robert Pirsig's Metaphysics of Quality* (University of Liverpool 2011)

McWatt, Anthony, *Re: The MOQ, its intellectual level*, Brian Clough (& Wittgenstein) (2017)

McWatt, Anthony, *Re: the 'boundaries' of Intellect* (2017a)

McWatt, Anthony, *Re: The MOQ, its intellectual level*, Brian Clough (& Wittgenstein) (2017b)

Advaita Vedanta

Miller, J.J., Fletcher, K., Kabat-Zinn, J., 'Three-year follow-up and clinical implications of a mindfulness meditation-based stress reduction intervention in the treatment of anxiety disorders' (1995) 17 *General Hospital Psychiatry* 192

Misra, Bijoy, 'Book Review: Indra's Net - Defending Hinduism's Philosophical Unity' (*Lokvani*, 2014) <http://www.lokvani.com/lokvani/article.php?article_id=9741> accessed 18/11/17

Morton, Adam, *Philosophy in Practice* (Blackwell 1996)

Muehlhauser, Luke, *Ancient Indian Philosophy: a Painless Introduction* (2017)

Nickel, John, *Making Sense of Human Rights* (Wiley-Blackwell 2007)

Nietzsche, Friedrich, *Schopenhauer as Educator* (Gateway Books 1874)

Northrop, F.S.C., *The Logic of the Sciences & the Humanities* (Macmillan 1947)

Ohara, Kim, 'Re: Buddh. Demographics 28% Theravada, 70% Mahyana & 2% Vajra' (*Dhamma Wheel*, 2009) <<https://dhammadwheel.com/viewtopic.php?t=19901>> accessed 18/11/17

Parkes, Graham (*The Oxford Companion to Philosophy*, Oxford University 2005)

Pirsig, Robert M., *Lila: an Inquiry into Morals* (Bantam 1992)

Pirsig, Robert M., 'Metaphysics of Quality: a New Paradigm for Values and Healing' (Association of Humanistic Psychology)

Pirsig, Robert M., 'Subject, Object, Data and Values' (Einstein meets Margritte)

Pirsig, Robert M., *Subject, Object, Data and Values* (Einstein meets Margritte, 1995)

Pirsig, Robert M., 'Letter to Bodvar Skutvik' (2000) <<http://moq.org/forum/Pirsig/letter2.html>> accessed 26/11/17

Pirsig, Robert M., 'Annotations' in Dan Glover (ed) *Lila's Child: An Inquiry into Quality* (Lila's Child: An Inquiry into Quality, 1stBooks 2003)

Pirsig, Robert M., Letter to Paul Turner (MOQ.org 2003)

Pirsig, Robert M., *Zen and the art of motorcycle maintenance : an inquiry into values* (HarperTorch 2006)

Putnam, Hilary, *Reason, Truth & History* (Cambridge University Press 1981)

Raz, Joseph, *The Morality of Freedom* (Oxford University Press 1986)

Raz, Joseph, *Ethics in the Public Domain* (Oxford University Press 1994)

Renselle, Doug, 'Famous MOQites' (2000) <http://www.quantonics.com/Famous_MoQites.html> accessed 13/2/2017

Rivest, R; Shamir, A; Adleman, L, A Method for Obtaining Digital Signatures and Public-Key Cryptosystems (1978)

Ryle, Gilbert, *The Concept of Mind*, vol 1990 paperback reprint (Penguin 1949)

Sen, Amartya, *Development as freedom* (Oxford University Press 1999)

Skutvik, Bodvar, part of your paper (2017)

Sweeney, James, 'Margins of appreciation: cultural relativity and the European Court of Human Rights in the post-Cold War era' (2005) 54 *International and Comparative Law Quarterly* 459

Thompson, Derek, 'Forget Edison: This is How History's Greatest Inventions Happened' (*The Atlantic*, 2012) <<https://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2012/06/forget-edison-this-is-how-historys-greatest-inventions-really-happened/258525/>> accessed 25/11/17

Turner, Paul, Re: The MOQ, SOL & Northrop (2017)

Viafora, D.P., Mathieson, S.G., & Unsworth, S.J., 'Teaching mindfulness to middle school students and homeless youth in school classrooms' (2015) 24 *Journal of Child and Family Studies* 1179/91

Waldron, Jeremy and Dan-Cohen Meir, *Dignity, rank, and rights* (Oxford University Press 2012)

Wamsley, Laurel, 'Zen And The Art of Motorcycle Maintenance' Author Robert M. Pirsig Dies At 88' *National Public Radio* (24/04/2017) <https://www.npr.org/sections/thetwo-way/2017/04/24/525443040/-zen-and-the-art-of-motorcycle-maintenance-author-robert-m-pirsig-dies-at-88?utm_source=twitter.com&utm_campaign=npr&utm_medium=social&utm_term=nprnews>

Warder, A.K., *Indian Buddhism* (Motilal Banarsidass Publishers 2000)

Wayman, Frank, 'Incidence of Militarized Disputes Between Liberal States, 1816-1992' (annual meeting)

Wilber, K. et al, *A Brief History of Everything*, vol 2001 Second edition (Shambhala Publications 1999)

iii. Appendix: published email sources (emphasis mine)

Matthew Lafontaine <matthew.lafontaine@gmail.com>

Feb 12

to Anthony

Hi Anthony,

Thank you very much for this, especially the introduction to Bodvar! We live on opposite ends of the country but I look forward to communicating with him electronically.

I don't know if the current iteration of MOQ Discuss is still considered the Lila Squad, but I've heard Horse's name several times regardless so I'll try reaching out to him.

I promise not to make a habit of questions like this and to do the work and read your work, but as I'm sketching out my broad plan for the thesis I was wondering: does your work deal with how MOQ assesses what has higher quality vis a vis other static manifestations of quality within a particular level? Specifically, I'm dealing with the question of when human rights, legalistically expressed, conflict with each other and some balancing needs to take place. I know from Pirsig's annotations that MOQ has a notion of evil, or perhaps severe lack of Quality.

So is the way to tell if an idea has more Quality than another if it's more generally applicable and closer to Dynamic Quality?

I think this topic is interesting and worthwhile but I fear I may not have enough material/interpretive faculty to do it justice. I was thinking instead to focus on the traditional notion of Dignity as the philosophical foundation for human rights, and demonstrate how MOQ provides a more compelling manifestation of the notion of Dignity, as the Intellectual Quality that humans possess that needs to safeguard itself against undermining by social quality.

Many thanks!

Anthony <anthonymcwatt@hotmail.com>

Feb 21

to Bodvar, Nick, Antonio, me

Matthew,

No worries about the introduction to Bodvar. He was a great help to me in the 'early days' of my own PhD work. Also apologies for omitting the "La" from your surname!

Otherwise, yes, you're basically correct to say that "an idea has more Quality than another if it's more generally applicable and closer to Dynamic Quality". However, unlike SOM based binary moral systems, there are four static "good vs evil" moral systems in the MOQ (the inorganic static patterns over chaos, the biological static patterns over the inorganic, the social patterns over the biological and the intellectual patterns over the social) and also a Dynamic 'code of Art' - where they are no previous set intellectual or social rules to guide us - the unknown creative force that has beauty & simplicity as it's prime guide - a la Da Vinci when he's just starting a new canvas or Gandhi when he's talking about his favourite Christian hymn, 'Lead Kindly Light':

"Lead Kindly Light"

Lead, kindly Light, amidst the grey and gloom
The night is long and I am far from home
Here in the dark, I do not ask to see
The path ahead-one step enough for me
Lead on, lead on, kindly Light.

I was not ever willing to be led
I could have stayed, but I ran instead
In spite of fear, I followed my pride
My eyes could see, but my heart was blind
Lead on, lead on, kindly Light.

And in the night, when i was afraid
Your feet beside my own on the way
Each stumbling step where other men have trod
Shortens the road leading home to my God

Lead on, lead on,
My God, My God,
Lead on, lead on, kindly Light.

Name of Composer: John Bacchus Dykes
Writer of Lyrics: John Henry Newman

LILA, Pirsig's second book, puts this all in far more detail (I think in chapters 9 and/or 11 & 12)

The issue of 'dignity' from the MOQ perspective is one I need to think about much more so I'll get back to you about it later. It's a good point to raise.

Happy reading!

Anthony