

Virtue Ethics and Political Authority  
(forthcoming in the *Journal of Social Philosophy*)

Tristan J. Rogers

California State University, Sacramento

To ask why I am to submit to the power of the state, is to ask why I am to allow my life to be regulated by that complex of institutions without which I literally should not have a life to call my own, nor should be able to ask for a justification of what I am called on to do.

—T.H. Green, *Lectures on the Principles of Political Obligation*

It is often observed that the resurgence of virtue ethics in the latter half of the twentieth century reintroduced formerly neglected insights about the primacy of character into moral philosophy.<sup>1</sup> But despite some tentative attempts<sup>2</sup>, those insights have not yet arrived on the scene of political philosophy. Most glaringly, there has been little engagement by virtue ethicists on the foundational question of political philosophy, which is whether political states have a right to coerce citizens and whether citizens have a corresponding duty to obey the law: the problem of political authority.<sup>3</sup>

Perhaps one reason for this is that virtue ethics focuses on the virtues of *persons*, whereas recent political philosophy has been primarily concerned with the virtues of *institutions*, especially justice.<sup>4</sup> Aristotle, however, reminds us that “we acquire the virtues by first exercising them.”<sup>5</sup> And it is difficult to deny that this process must begin in an institutional context. Indeed, as Aristotle also notes, “[w]hat happens in cities bears this out [...] because legislators make the citizens good by habituating them.”<sup>6</sup> How, then, should a virtuous person act in an institutional context? Do political states have a right to coerce virtuous persons? And does a virtuous person have a moral obligation to obey the law?

In considering these questions, I propose that a virtuous person engages in two types of moral reasoning which are in tension: i) universal, and ii) institutional. Each is captured metaphorically in the following passage from the Stoic philosopher Seneca:

We should try to comprehend two commonwealths [*res publica*]: one great and truly common to all, by which gods and men are held together and in which we should not look for this or that out-of-the-way place but the boundaries of a city as measured by the course of the sun; and another in which we are included by accident of birth, which may be that of the Athenians or of the Carthaginians or any other city which does not reach out to include all men but only specific ones.<sup>7</sup>

Universal reasoning, represented by Seneca's first commonwealth, requires the virtuous person to be strictly impartial, and use human reason as a universal moral standard for virtuous agency. But institutional reasoning, represented by Seneca's second commonwealth, requires that the virtuous person first take a partial perspective, and consider things like political membership, family relations, and social role in performing virtuous actions. Such relations are summed up in F.H. Bradley's phrase "My Station and Its Duties," e.g. those of a citizen, father, employee, and so on.<sup>8</sup> The constraints of one's existing role are what matter for institutional moral reasoning. This is also the domain of political authority, since an existing, not yet fully virtuous person is typically a member of some political state. But how does institutional reasoning not come into potential conflict with universal reasoning? Might not political authority and virtue be incompatible?

This paper attempts to reconcile virtue and political authority. While there are many versions of virtue ethics, I adopt a eudaimonist virtue ethics approach which stands out for its political applications. Eudaimonism holds that ethics is fundamentally about leading a good life,

and that the purpose of politics, in some sense, is to make such a life possible. I will argue that political authority is a necessary precondition for the kind of moral agency virtue requires. The development and exercise of virtue requires an institutional context partially defined by political authority. There is no tension between political authority and the demands of virtue because the former is a precondition for the latter.

I begin (Section 1) by sketching the basic elements of eudaimonism. Section 2 lays the groundwork for the encounter with political philosophy by defining the core concepts of political authority and political obligation. I also reframe the classic problem of political authority in virtue ethical terms. Sections 3 and 4 argue for the main claim that political authority is a necessary precondition for virtuous agency. In Section 5, I respond to four critical questions raised by A. John Simmons for so-called necessity accounts of political authority. I close with a discussion of the advantages of a virtue ethics account of political authority and its provenance in the history of philosophy, a history that, I contend, contemporary political philosophers have unjustly neglected.

## **1. Eudaimonist Virtue Ethics**

Eudaimonism, as the name indicates, puts the idea of the good life, *eudaimonia*<sup>9</sup>, at the heart of ethics. Most eudaimonists also hold that *eudaimonia* requires the virtues, so eudaimonism is considered part of the family (if not a charter member) of virtue ethics.<sup>10</sup> The view begins with the familiar Aristotelian idea that ethics is fundamentally about action, not knowledge.<sup>11</sup> Moral thinking always takes place in the context of a person's actual life and how one might live better by developing and exercising the virtues. In this manner, eudaimonists recognize that by the time a mature person comes to think about morality (e.g. in a college-level ethics course), she already

has a life with a set of commitments, a character that has been at least partially formed, and a community in which she belongs. Starting from these materials, a person may undergo a process of moral development, where she reorients herself with respect to the life she has, revising some aspects, and rejecting others, thus forging her *character*. It is in this manner that the ancient eudaimonists analogized virtue as the development of a practical skill.<sup>12</sup>

If virtue is the skill of living, then the materials that virtue works with (and within) are the institutions, practices, and relationships that partly constitute and shape a person's life. A person acts virtuously in the role of a citizen, student, sibling, friend, and so on. In this way, eudaimonism recognizes the fact that we are *socially and culturally embedded*.<sup>13</sup> Each person lives in a particular society, at a particular time in history, enmeshed in a culture, all of which partially make up the moral soil from which virtuous action takes root. But this is not to countenance a passive ethical (or even cultural) relativism. The enterprise of living virtuously is both shaped by one's circumstances *and* formed by the choices each person makes within their circumstances.

Cicero, following the Stoic Panaetius, explains this process in terms of four personae or roles each person inhabits.<sup>14</sup> The first is the role a person shares with everyone in virtue of being a human being with the capacity for reason, that is, the capacity to shape one's circumstances. This is the capacity for universal moral reasoning represented by Seneca's first commonwealth (see Introduction). The second refers to a person's *natural* circumstances, their peculiar gifts, talents, psychological dispositions, and other natural contingencies. Someone with a natural aptitude for athletics, for instance, will develop virtues specific to those talents. Cicero's third persona consists in a person's *social* circumstances, the family and society into which one is born, and other social factors. Thus, some virtues might be relative to the peculiar political and

social structures for which they are suited. Lastly, there are roles a person takes on because of individual choices, such as what career to pursue or whom to marry: a person's *chosen* circumstances. Thus, there may be, for instance, virtues peculiar to married life that one takes on because of a choice to get married.

This process of moral development is guided by an Aristotelian conception of practical reasoning as requiring a "final end" (*telos*).<sup>15</sup> The idea of a final end sounds abstract and frequently invites misguided charges of an essentialist teleology.<sup>16</sup> But Aristotle, at least in his ethics, simply takes himself to be describing the ordinary way in which we conceive of our lives on reflection.<sup>17</sup> I wake up in the morning and make coffee. I spend the morning reading or writing, and play music in the afternoon. Then I eat dinner with my wife, and I get up and do it all over again (with some variation) the next day. The question is whether I do these things for a purpose, as part of a life I conceive for myself, or whether they are an unconnected stream of activities and thoughts flowing through my existence without a unified structure. Aristotle's idea is that I do each of these things "for the sake of" something else, and that if we follow the chain to its logical conclusion, we will eventually arrive at a final end, the thing that brings structural unity to practical reasoning.

Aristotle identifies the final end with *eudaimonia*. "There is pretty general agreement," Aristotle observes, "[the final end] is happiness [*eudaimonia*], say both ordinary and cultured people; and they identify happiness with living well or doing well."<sup>18</sup> *Eudaimonia* is the only thing that serves as the terminus of practical reasoning. It makes sense to ask why somebody might want to become President of the United States; it doesn't make sense to ask why somebody is interested in living a happy (or good) life. Thus, happiness, in the ancient eudaimonist sense, is both the idea of a life that is objectively good for the person living it and a

life that is experienced as good subjectively. *Eudaimonia* encompasses both the modern concept of happiness as a positive psychological state and the concept of well-being, a life that goes well for the person who lives it.<sup>19</sup>

Although Aristotle cites broad popular agreement that happiness is the final end of practical reasoning, he observes that people “disagree about substantive conceptions of happiness, the masses giving an account which differs from that of the philosophers.”<sup>20</sup> For instance, some say that happiness is the same as pleasure; others wealth; still others say it’s honor. In other words, there is agreement about happiness as a placeholder for the concept of *eudaimonia*, happiness as the final end, but disagreement about the content of what happiness consists in as the substance of *eudaimonia*. We should, therefore, distinguish between the *concept* of happiness as a good life from different *conceptions* of happiness that specify the content of happiness.<sup>21</sup>

A familiar objection to eudaimonism, which bears directly on the problem of political authority, is that it cannot account for the imperatival nature of modern ethics. For instance, Gerald Gaus, drawing on an influential distinction made by Henry Sidgwick<sup>22</sup>, writes that “[a]ncient ethics was teleological, a science of ends; it concerned what a person properly desires or what a proper, virtuous person *desires*, or finds attractive. In contrast, modern ethics concerns what we must do – what we are *required to do* even if we are not attracted by it.”<sup>23</sup> Gaus goes on to claim that “[s]een against this background, neo-Aristotelian virtue ethics is a rejection of modernity rather than a solution to its problems.”<sup>24</sup> Virtue, then, is allegedly irrelevant to the question of political authority. For if we have political obligations, they are independent of what virtue requires. After all, political obligations concern what we must do regardless of our desires.

But Gaus's sweeping dismissal of ancient ethics misses the mark.<sup>25</sup> While virtue ethics conceives of normativity in terms of the attractive power of the good, because the virtuous person performs virtuous actions, which she grasps as what *ought* to be done, the virtuous person *qua* normative ideal of the good is an imperative notion. We are compelled to emulate the example of the virtuous person *because* we are attracted by it, in the same way, for instance, that we are normatively compelled to praise those who are praiseworthy. Unlike some modern ethical theories, virtue ethics does not posit a fundamental division in practical reasoning between what a person ought to do ("the right") and what a person ought to desire ("the good"). On the contrary, the virtuous person does what is required by the virtues out of a desire for what is good. Moreover, since *eudaimonia* requires the virtues (*ex hypothesi*), and the virtues require that we choose actions that we ought to perform, even if we do not *initially* desire to perform them, by aiming at *eudaimonia*, one implicitly undertakes the challenge of doing what one ought to do, that is, doing the right thing. The virtuous person, therefore, if it can be said that he has political obligations, will be obligated to obey political authority as a requirement of virtue, for example, the individual virtues of justice or lawfulness.<sup>26</sup>

I have characterized eudaimonism in four ways. First, ethics is a matter of reflecting and acting upon one's life with the aim of making it better in the manner of a practical skill. Second, this process takes place within one's socially embedded circumstances. Third, practical reasoning requires the idea of a final end, and we identify the concept of a final end with the concept of *eudaimonia*. Finally, eudaimonism conceives of normativity in terms of the attractive power of the good, which implies a theory of right action to the extent that the virtuous person is characterized by the disposition to perform right actions as required by the virtues.

## 2. Political Authority and Political Obligation

I turn now to the concepts of political authority and political obligation.<sup>27</sup> Let's begin with political obligation. First, we should distinguish the merely *legal* obligation to obey existing laws from the *moral* obligation to obey the law as such. A moral obligation enjoins action regardless of one's narrowly self-interested desires, and (potentially) apart from what is required by existing law. The moral duty to obey the law is also political in two senses: a) it is owed to a political state that legislates, and b) it is owed in virtue of a person's status as a member of a political state.<sup>28</sup> The second feature also means that political obligation is owed by an individual to a *particular* political state.<sup>29</sup> Finally, political obligation is *content-neutral* in the sense that one's moral obligation does not wholly depend on the moral content of the law.<sup>30</sup> We can provisionally define political obligation, therefore, as a content-neutral, moral obligation, of a person to obey the laws of a particular political state.

Political authority is correlative of political obligation. Since obligations and duties are correlated with rights, if one has a political obligation, then the political state in which one is a member has a kind of authority; it has a right to rule. Sometimes the right to rule is put in terms of a moral *power*, meaning that the actions of a political authority can create, change, or abolish moral obligations, in the way, for instance, that the Income Tax Amendment of 1913 created a moral obligation to pay federal income taxes in the United States that hitherto did not exist.<sup>31</sup> This moral power reflects the sense in which "authority" derives from the Latin *auctor*: a political authority creates or *authors* the laws, which imposes moral duties on those within the authority's jurisdiction. And since a political authority coercively enforces the law, the right to rule amounts to the right to unilaterally coerce *all* members within its jurisdiction. In this sense, the right to rule is *general*. It is also *comprehensive* in the sense of ranging over a wide (though

not unlimited) array of activities. Lastly, the right to rule is *supreme* because it supersedes the authority of individuals and non-political institutions. Political authority, then, consists in the *general* right of a political state to rule over individuals, *comprehensively*, and as the *supreme* institutional authority.

The classic problem of political authority, which gained traction in the social contract tradition, was stated succinctly by Rousseau:

The problem is to find a form of association which will defend and protect with the whole common force the person and goods of each associate, and in which each, while uniting himself with all, may still obey himself alone, and remain as free as before.<sup>32</sup>

On Rousseau's formulation of the problem, the association of the political state claims authority over individuals, who are thought to be free and equal in the sense of being free to act according to their own reason, and equal in their capacity to claim authority over one another. The question thus arises: how can free and equal individuals submit to political authority, which necessarily places them in a position of unequal subordination?

Part of the difficulty of formulating the problem of political authority for virtue ethics is the conceptual distance of eudaimonism from the classical social contract theories. For instance, unlike Rousseau, who saw persons as morally tainted when participating in institutions, eudaimonism does not view the interests of persons as fundamentally at odds with the demands of institutions. Instead, as I've illustrated, the eudaimonist conception of the person is one of an individual who is socially, culturally, and we should add, *politically* embedded.

The conceptual distance between eudaimonism and much contemporary political philosophy has caused some critics to claim that the distinctly modern problem of political authority is foreign to the ancient ethical foundations of eudaimonism.<sup>33</sup> However, there is a way

to formulate the problem of political authority in virtue ethical terms, and it is crucial to understanding the role of institutional reasoning in virtue ethics. The classic problem of political authority, it may be said, identifies a tension between the moral authority of the social structure (i.e. the political state) and the moral authority of the free and equal individual, focusing on the justification of the coercive power of the political state. Underlying this tension are two values: i) political order, which political authority establishes and maintains with coercive force, and ii) moral agency, defined by the free and equal individual, whose freedom is threatened by the coercive power of the state.

Now, this same tension underlies eudaimonism, albeit stated differently. Eudaimonism locates moral agency in the capacity of individuals to freely develop and exercise virtue, and locates the responsibility for political order in the political element of a person's socially embedded circumstances, the political state. The former goes with universal moral reasoning, which must be freely exercised, while the latter coincides with institutional moral reasoning, which in a political context includes the threat of coercive force. So, we may ask, what is the relationship between the universal moral reasoning required by virtuous agency and the institutional moral reasoning posed by political authority? The problem of political authority for virtue ethics is to determine the proper relationship between virtue, which is a function of choice, and political authority, which is a coercive entity.

### **3. Authority in Moral Experience**

Before proposing a solution to this problem, I want to take a step back and examine the critical role of the idea of authority in moral experience. The claim that authority is integral to moral experience will lay the groundwork for my thesis that political authority is a necessary

precondition for virtuous agency. My argument brings together two insights of Elizabeth Anscombe: i) the importance to moral philosophy of “an adequate philosophy of psychology,” and ii) that the “[a]uthority [of the state] arises from the necessity of a task.”<sup>34</sup> Thus, I will proceed in two stages. First, I will formulate a kind of transcendental argument that attempts to show that the idea of authority is presupposed by our psychological experience as moral agents. Second, I will explain how the necessity of the task performed by political authority morally justifies political authority.

Moral experience is about action. We act for various purposes, and in our dealings with others, we exchange reasons, thus negotiating and adjusting our behavior to suit a dynamic social environment. Human beings are a social and cooperative species, or in Aristotle’s phrase “a political animal.” We plan careers, care for children, exchange goods, form queues, argue about politics, and so on. Unlike non-human animals who act based on instinct, human beings have at least the experience of free will and the felt need to hold others morally responsible. Hence, moral concepts like “right” and “wrong”, “honorable” and “dishonorable”, “authorized” and “unauthorized” are basic building blocks of moral experience. Such concepts give our reasons for action moral valence and divide the world up into a place of values, which is ultimately irreducible to facts. The world is a place where things can be better or worse, good or bad, just or unjust, licit and illicit, and so on. Not even a hardened moral skeptic can escape this fact, at least in practice.

Now, our experience of the world as a place for moral action is essentially that of agents who recognize claims of authority, whether made by private individuals, social practices, institutions, or a political state. This is a remarkable social fact. For instance, to have a relationship with a friend, one must view the other person as a self-generating source of moral

authority, or in Kantian terminology, as an end-in-themselves.<sup>35</sup> In the absence of this reciprocal relation, we may conclude, real friendship is impossible. Similarly, morally descriptive terms like “fraud,” “liar,” and “cheat” presuppose the authority of the social practices of promising, truth-telling, and honest dealing, practices which are critical to reliably making our way in the world.

Two more examples: the institution of money has authority vested in its status as legal tender and maintains this status insofar as we continue to imbue it with value by using it to facilitate economic exchange. And the authority of law distinguishes liberty from license, a distinction without which we could not distinguish ordered freedom from lawless chaos. In these cases (and others), the concept of authority is not something we get together and bestow on an external entity, as the fiction of the social contract suggests. Rather, authority is *internal* to moral practice. As David Hume argued, the very notion of consent presupposes a functioning social practice of promising that everyone recognizes as authoritative.<sup>36</sup> We cannot meaningfully act as moral agents without implicitly accepting psychological facts of this sort.

I have argued from the claim that moral experience has a certain quality (P) to the claim that authority is a necessary precondition (Q) for our experience as moral agents. Following the standard transcendental form of argument, which attempts to show that Q is true because it is a necessary precondition for a self-evident proposition P, I conclude that we are essentially moral agents who recognize and respond to authority claims. Put another way, the fact that we see ourselves as agents accountable to authority is constitutive of moral experience. Thus, to reject the idea of authority would be to reject an important quality of moral experience.

#### **4. The Moral Necessity of Political Authority**

Charles Taylor observes that transcendental arguments are difficult to assess because they deal with an “area we look through rather than at.”<sup>37</sup> What the argument of the previous section shows is not that political authority is morally justified, but only that the *idea* of authority is indispensable to moral experience. It is a descriptive rather than a normative claim. The second stage in the argument is to show how the role of authority in moral experience is related to the moral justification of political authority, taking a step down the treacherous path from *is* to an *ought*. My argument can be briefly stated thus:

- 1) We ought (morally) to develop the virtues.
- 2) Political authority is necessary for virtuous agency.
- 3) Therefore, political authority (in some form) is morally justified.

Before proceeding, two issues must be clarified with respect to the above senses of “moral ought” and “necessary.” First, as Julia Annas has noticed, there is a strong tendency in moral philosophy to treat “moral obligations” as coterminous with what you ought to do in a general sense.<sup>38</sup> But this need not be the case. As Annas explains, “[d]uties and obligations belong in specific contexts where you have a role, or a certain kind of relation to an institution, while there is a much broader field where some action just is what you ought to do, or is the right thing for you to do.”<sup>39</sup> In this latter sense, the virtues just are what we ought to pursue (as required by *eudaimonia*), not a specific moral obligation in the way, for instance, that political obligations depend on one’s membership in a political state. Second, the sense of “necessary” in Premise (2) is practical, not conceptual necessity. Here, I follow Anscombe again, who associates practical (or moral) necessity with an Aristotelian definition of “necessary”, where “Y is necessary” means “that without which some good will not be obtained or some evil averted.”<sup>40</sup> In this sense,

the claim that political authority is necessary for virtuous agency means that without political authority, it would not be possible to achieve the good, i.e. *eudaimonia*.

Since Premise (1) may be assumed for the sake of argument in my earlier account of eudaimonism, I will focus on defending Premise (2). In what sense is political authority necessary for the virtuous agency required by *eudaimonia*? Political authority is a feature of political states, but the political state is only one part of a larger whole, what neo-Aristotelians call a “political community” (*koinonia politikon*). A political community is composed of two parts: a) a government that holds political power, manifested in its political institutions (“the political state”), and b) a community that constitutes the social fabric of the society, manifested in its social institutions (“civil society”).<sup>41</sup> Now, as I have argued, we are socially and culturally embedded in both political and social institutions; they are where we develop the virtues by, as Aristotle puts it, “first exercising them.” For this reason, the institutions of a political community are inseparable from the development of virtuous agency. P.F. Strawson identifies institutions with what he calls “social morality”:

The fundamental idea [of social morality] is that of a socially sanctioned demand made on an individual in virtue merely of his membership of the society in question, or in virtue of a particular position which he occupies within it or a particular relation in which he stands to other members of it.<sup>42</sup>

Strawson’s insight is that social morality, as a set of institutional demands, is distinct from, and is a necessary condition for, the possibility of what he calls an “ethical ideal.” An ethical ideal is a conception of *eudaimonia* (in my terminology), consisting in beliefs about what is ultimately valuable in human life, what gives life purpose and meaning, and how a person should act in the world, including conceptions of the virtues. Importantly, the possibility of pursuing a conception

of *eudaimonia* depends on the existence of a social morality that stabilizes social cooperation by functioning as a set of institutions with (implicit) authority over its members (Strawson's "socially sanctioned demand"). In Aristotelian terms, social morality makes it possible to engage in practical reasoning for the sake of a final end. For without a stable system of social cooperation, we lack the opportunity to live virtuously because virtue is first developed in an institutional context. Practical reasoning is fundamentally social. Thus, as Aristotle argued, while the political state (*polis*) comes into existence for the sake of our material needs or life merely (*tou zen heneken*), social cooperation, which is perfected in the political community, "exists for the sake of living well [*ousa tou eu zen*]." <sup>43</sup>

Strawson's insight about social morality suggests a way to justify political authority of on virtue ethical grounds. Since social morality is a precondition for the possibility of virtuous agency, and because social morality depends on the authority of political institutions for its proper functioning, political authority is a necessary precondition for virtuous agency. In the absence of political authority, a society would lack the structure, predictability, and mutual expectations that make it possible to develop and exercise the virtues. And without social morality, we are thrown back into Hobbes's state of nature, an idea whose value resides not in its historical veracity, but in making vivid to the imagination the catastrophe of a breakdown in social cooperation. For we need to be able to trust one another, and institutions facilitate trust by coordinating actions in such a way that persons can rely on one another, so that if there is conflict, the appropriate institutional mechanisms exist to maintain social and political order. In this way, political authority is a way of "binding ourselves to the mast," a way of taking certain courses of action off the table, so that we can more efficiently cooperate for our individual and collective ends. <sup>44</sup>

An anarchist might object: “Why should the proper functioning of social morality be thought to require the coercive power of *political* institutions?” Answer: while the Stoics hypothesized a city of virtuous sages, where political disagreements vanish because of the concordant dictates of universal reason, the political life of *virtue-seeking* agents, who must engage in institutional reasoning with each other, will inevitably involve political disagreement. Such disagreement requires a hierarchy of institutions in which some, such as political institutions, have a monopoly on the legitimate use of coercion to mediate conflict and disputes. Hence, the authorized use of coercion, which partly defines *political* authority, is necessary to the proper functioning of social morality because political authority solves the coordination and cooperation problems that characterize social life, problems that the political state in its modern form has emerged to solve.<sup>45</sup> In this way, political institutions are what Daniel C. Russell calls “tools of preventative problem-solving.”<sup>46</sup> While one cannot refute the anarchist claim that, in principle, a plurality of competing authorities is *possible*, in practice the social life of human beings relies on a hierarchy of authority (which historically has taken different forms) that has emerged to mediate disputes at the lower levels of social organization.

This fact makes political authority *supreme* or sovereign (at least) among institutional authorities. Political authority is that which authors (cf. *auctor*) and secures the social conditions that make social cooperation, and thus virtuous agency, possible. Political authority is also *general* because social cooperation requires the subjection of all who occupy the same political community to the same rules. Finally, political authority is *comprehensive* (though not unlimited) in its scope of activities because there are potentially many kinds of activities that might upset the social order. The right to rule, then, is the right to maintain the conditions of social cooperation required for virtue agency by (if necessary) coercive means.

The problem of political authority, recall, was in effect to determine the proper relationship between political authority and the virtuous person. What is now evident is that political authority is a necessary precondition for the moral agency idealized in the virtuous person. Put another way, institutional moral reasoning is a precondition for universal moral reasoning. We first develop virtue within our socially embedded circumstances, which presupposes (and so justifies) the authority of the political state among the other institutions of social life. While there must be limits to the authority of the state (which I have not explored here), political authority is experienced as a kind of unwavering certainty in moral and political life. The moral necessity of political authority consists in making it possible for persons to exercise moral agency by developing the virtues. There is no tension between virtuous agency and political order because political order is a precondition for virtue.<sup>47</sup> Thus, political states have a right to coerce virtue-seeking (and even virtuous) persons, and properly virtuous persons will, in any case, obey the laws of a political state as a matter of (individual) justice.

## **5. Response to Simmons**

I turn now to some probing critical questions for so-called “necessity accounts” of political authority raised by A. John Simmons, who focuses specifically on Anscombe’s account.<sup>48</sup> This will prove beneficial first because Anscombe’s account has influenced my own, and second because Simmons focuses on the political obligation side of the problem of political authority, of which more remains to be explored. Simmons structures his discussion with a version of what he calls “The Argument”, which at its core, is very close to the argument I have made:

Premise 1: Government (political society, law) is necessary for human beings.

Premise 2: All persons have political obligations to perform the necessary tasks to which they are well suited, and support and obey those who perform necessary tasks.

Conclusion: Therefore all persons have political obligations to support and comply with stable existing governments and law when within their jurisdictions.<sup>49</sup>

What Simmons calls “necessity accounts” of The Argument focus primarily on Premise (1) and attempt to draw a connection between the necessity of government and the supposed direct implication that it confers political obligations on those who are subject to governments.

According to Simmons, the basic idea, defended by Anscombe in her “On the Source of the Authority of the State,” is that “certain kinds of needs [...] ground moral duties on suitable persons to perform the needed tasks and moral duties on others to permit and facilitate such performances.”<sup>50</sup> More specifically, as I’ve argued, the need for a stable system of social cooperation creates a necessary task for which the political state has emerged, and moreover, the necessity of the task requires obedience on the part of those subject to the state. This grounds the moral obligation to obey the law.

Interestingly, Anscombe compares political authority to parental authority, which plausibly arises as a consequence of the necessary task parents undertake in the rearing of children, for which children have a corresponding moral duty of obedience. Analogously, the task of government requires the general political obligation of citizens to obey the law. Anscombe’s account, however, is complicated by the fact that parents have a *preexisting* right to perform the task of childrearing, whereas, that governments have a right to rule is what a necessity account of political authority is supposed to prove. As Simmons acknowledges, Anscombe attempts to mitigate this concern by appealing to customary rights, which are

themselves necessary for performing the task of governments, and thus “that second need is what establishes the authority of existing states to require compliance with law.”<sup>51</sup>

Simmons’s principal complaint about Anscombe’s necessity account is that her necessity claim(s) do not amount to a *justification* for political authority such that political states can compel subjects to comply. This is because, for Simmons, the mere fact that something is a necessary task (e.g. maintaining political order) does not imply that a certain entity (e.g. the political state) is justified in carrying it out. Further, he expresses general skepticism, arguing that the intuitive force of the necessity claims Anscombe makes relies heavily on a background conventional morality within which the parental authority analogy is persuasive.<sup>52</sup>

Simmons goes on to raise four critical questions for necessity accounts, which naturally apply to the present account I have defended. First, Simmons asks, “[e]xactly what makes a task necessary?”<sup>53</sup> Quite rightly, he points out that “[t]asks are necessary only for or relative to some purpose, end, or desire.”<sup>54</sup> The moral necessity of task X to end Y assumes that Y is some end that we have reason to pursue, such that anyone who has end Y will also see the necessity of task X for securing Y. For example, the necessary task parents perform in the raising of children has as its end the well-being of children. But while Anscombe is less explicit, on my account, the purpose for which the tasks performed by a political authority are necessary is the possibility of pursuing *eudaimonia*, a purpose shared by everyone insofar as each person is capable of virtuous agency.<sup>55</sup> My eudaimonist version of the necessity argument, then, far from appealing to a mysteriously necessary task, specifies an ethically compelling end for which the authority of political states is necessary.

Second, Simmons asks, “[w]hat is required for the performance of a necessary task?”<sup>56</sup> Suppose we grant my claim that political authority is necessary for the task of securing

*eudaimonia*. If so, what do political states require in order to successfully perform this task?

Simmons raises three additional concerns here: i) why the task requires a moral duty to obey on the part of citizens of particular states, ii) whether the task really requires *universal* compliance, and iii) why states should perform functions apparently unrelated to the task of securing political order (e.g. National Parks).<sup>57</sup>

Taking Simmons's last concern first, the argument that political states have political authority does not by itself justify a specific set of functions for political states to perform beyond perhaps what is minimally required by the very idea of a state. On this matter, Simmons is simply asking too much of necessity accounts, which are intended to justify political authority, not every function undertaken by actual political states. With respect to Simmons's second concern, while it is true that in practice the stability of a political state does not require anything close to universal compliance, the *presumption* of compliance (implied by a prima facie political obligation to obey the law) is what prevents small instances of non-compliance from metastasizing in a way that would inevitably destabilize any actual political state, which depends on a general deference to obey the law. Thus, even if less than full compliance is necessary to secure political order, this does not show that the recognition of a general prima facie obligation to obey the law is *not* necessary. Finally, Simmons's first concern: why should the task performed by political states require a moral duty to obey on the part of citizens of particular states? In fact, on the necessity account I have defended, the moral duty to obey a particular state does not derive directly from the fact that political authority is a necessary task of political states. Instead, the moral duty to obey derived indirectly; it is a role obligation that derives from one's membership in a political state (of which more anon), which itself has authority in virtue of performing a necessary task.

Simmons's third question asks, "[o]n precisely *whom* does necessity confer authority?"<sup>58</sup> For instance, what makes the current federal administration of the United States of America a suitable authority for performing what are admittedly necessary tasks? Of what relevance is the political status quo to the moral evaluation of *who* wields authority? Simmons gives some tentative credence to Anscombe's proposal to default to what are customary rights, which in some sense are themselves necessary for the stable establishment of political authority because they determine mutual expectations. But nevertheless, Simmons denies that "the customary distribution of authority is somehow necessary or even beyond moral criticism."<sup>59</sup> In this matter, I must agree with Simmons, but there is no "view from nowhere" from which we can morally justify the political authority of existing states. The distribution of the authority of existing states is largely an artifact of history and custom, which by long habituation have settled moral expectations. But if one adopts the socially embedded perspective, then we have a strong (though defeasible) presumption in favor of existing political states as having a prima facie claim to political authority, since they provide the necessary social context within which persons develop and exercise virtue. Thus, the customary *distribution* of authority might be subject to moral criticism, but the very notion that political authority belongs to (at least) some states cannot be.

The socially embedded perspective is also relevant to Simmons's fourth (and final) question, which is "on precisely whom does necessity impose duties?"<sup>60</sup> For example, Simmons wonders whether there might not be some "unusual valuers," who dissent from the claim that political authority is necessary, or so-called "self-providers," who would like to perform the task of securing social order themselves without the aid of a coercive political state.<sup>61</sup> Why, Simmons queries, can't these persons claim a special exemption from the general moral duty to obey the law? After all, they did not sign up for the service the state provides. The answer is that Hobbes

was wrong that there can be “no obligation on any man which arises not from some act of his own.”<sup>62</sup> Admittedly, some obligations are like this, namely, those of a contractual, voluntary nature. But there are also what Michael Hardimon calls “role obligations,” some of which— one’s political obligations—derive from membership in an institution like a political state, but which for the most part do not require consent.<sup>63</sup>

Simmons observes, and I think rightly, that “necessity theories look more like the first stage of an account of our duty to obey the law than a complete account.”<sup>64</sup> As my last response suggests, my eudaimonist virtue ethics account appears naturally suited to combining a necessity argument for political authority with what are called membership/associative theories of political obligation.<sup>65</sup> Simmons himself criticizes membership theories for collapsing under pressure into one of the other theories of political obligation.<sup>66</sup> But given the recent prevalence of hybrid or pluralist theories<sup>67</sup>, I see this as a strength rather than a weakness, especially as the membership account is not an *ad hoc* addition to the necessity argument, but a necessary corollary, given the socially embedded nature of virtue.

One may object, nevertheless, that there remains the task of morally justifying the political authority of existing political states (e.g., China), a task I have not undertaken here. Although they are sometimes used interchangeably, I would distinguish political authority, as I have used it in this article, from political *legitimacy*, which is an additional moral property that obtains when a) citizens have political obligations, b) a political state has a right to rule, and c) *a particular state is morally justified in ruling*.<sup>68</sup> Political authority, as I have used it, refers to the authority of states as a *type* of institution, while political legitimacy refers to *tokens* of the institution-type, political state. While political authority refers to the moral justification of political states as a type, political legitimacy refers to the moral justification of a particular, historically realized,

state, a token of the type. Political authority, then, is necessary for political legitimacy, but not sufficient.

## 5. Conclusion

I have argued that eudaimonist virtue ethics makes a meaningful contribution to the foundational problem of political philosophy, the problem of political authority. In closing, it is worth reflecting on what has been gained from the discussion. We have seen that the virtues cannot be understood apart from an understanding of the institutional context in which we develop virtue. Virtue ethicists have contributed much in the way of understanding virtue, developing conceptions of particular virtues, and showing the relationship between virtue and right action. But for the most part, virtue ethicists have paid less attention to the institutions within which we develop and exercise virtue, especially in a political context. But by connecting virtue to political authority, virtue ethics offers an underlying account of moral psychology that is often absent from discussions of political authority. Authority, as I have argued, is a partially psychological notion. Authority, in some sense, must be seen to be legitimate in order to be legitimate. So, if the reasons we have for living virtuously are also reasons for recognizing political authority, this gives us an account of political authority grounded in moral experience and practical reason, rather than abstract theoretical considerations that have little bearing on how we morally engage with authority in the real world.

It is fitting that the eudaimonist account of political authority resembles Socrates' seminal treatment of political obligation in Plato's *Crito*.<sup>69</sup> Socrates, recall, argues that he should not escape from prison and retreat to exile because it would be unjust to neglect his political obligation as a *member* of the Athenian political community, which made his life in pursuit of

virtue possible. Socrates goes on to make four sub-arguments that anticipate four major developments in the theory of political obligation. First, he points out that having spent his whole life in Athens, this could be taken as evidence that he has *consented* to obey the laws. Second, Socrates suggests that there is something impious (or *ungracious*) about refusing to recognize the significance of his formative years in Athens, years that, in part, made him the person he is. Third, Socrates queries whether retreating to exile would be a way of abandoning his fellow citizens, people whom he owes a duty of *fairness* insofar as they all share in the benefits of political membership. Finally, Socrates gives *consequentialist* reasons for connecting the stability of the city to the willingness of individuals to subordinate their individual judgment to the authority of the laws.

The intuitions behind Socrates' four arguments form the basis of contemporary theories of political obligation ranging from social contract theories, gratitude theories, fairness theories, and consequentialist theories. However, while his early influence on social contract theory from *Crito* is usually noted, Socrates' implicit commitment to eudaimonism (amply demonstrated in the other Platonic dialogues) is often left out of his specific arguments for political obligation. A eudaimonist account of political authority, meanwhile, unifies the underlying intuitions behind Socrates' arguments. Political authority is not *grounded* in a contract (per the social contract theorists), but there remains a sense in which our acquiescence to political authority is an indication that we do not regard it as too burdensome to shrug off. The benefits of living under political authority also seem to generate appropriate feelings of gratitude, especially because some political communities grant benefits that are very great indeed, both in comparison to other existing polities and in absolute historical terms. Gratitude also requires that one take on the *responsibility* of sustaining the institutions that make such benefits possible, hence so-called

“fairness theories” of political obligation. Lastly, there is a strong consequentialist justification for political obligation to the extent that political institutions are efficient mechanisms for the facilitation of social cooperation, indeed, mechanisms that make *eudaimonia* possible.

Michael Huemer, who defends philosophical anarchism, a view that denies the moral legitimacy of political obligation, claims consequently that “political authority is a moral illusion.”<sup>70</sup> Meanwhile, John Horton, who defends a membership account of political obligation, argues that philosophical anarchists are mistaken in thinking “that *political* life is left more or less unchanged by dispensing with some conception of political obligation. [...] Unless it can be shown that we can continue to talk intelligibly and credibly of *our* government or *our* state, then a radical rethinking of our political relations is an unavoidable consequence.”<sup>71</sup> The situation is much worse, in fact. Without some conception of political obligation, we can scarcely make sense of our *moral* lives. For those lives are necessarily bound up with the authority of the political state in which we are members.

*Thank you to the following philosophers for helpful comments and discussion of earlier versions of this article: Julia Annas, Jennifer Baker, Chris Freiman, Pablo Gilabert, Michael Huemer, Mark LeBar, Fred Miller Jr., Katharina Nieswandt, Gregory Robson, Daniel C. Russell, David Schmidtz, Chad Van Schoelandt, Charlotte Thomas, Don Tontiplaphol, and Bjorn Wastvedt. I am also grateful to two anonymous referees for the Journal of Social Philosophy for their helpful comments.*

## Notes

---

<sup>1</sup> This is generally acknowledged to have begun with Elizabeth Anscombe's now classic paper "Modern Moral Philosophy," republished in *Ethics, Religion, and Politics* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1981).

<sup>2</sup> See e.g. Rosalind Hursthouse, "After Hume's Justice," *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, Vol. 91 (1991): 229-245; Michael Slote, "Virtue Ethics and Democratic Values," *Journal of Social Philosophy* 24 (1993): 5-37; Onora O'Neill, *Toward Justice and Virtue* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Julia Annas, "My Station and Its Duties: Ideals and the Social Embeddedness of Virtue," *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* (June 2002): 109-123; Mark LeBar, "Virtue and Politics," in *Cambridge Companion to Virtue Ethics*, ed. Daniel C. Russell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 265-289; David Schmidtz and John Thrasher, "The Virtues of Justice," in *Virtues and Their Vices*, eds. Kevin Timpe and and Craig A. Boyd (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 59-74.

<sup>3</sup> This lacuna is identified by Daniel C. Russell in "Virtue Ethics and Political Philosophy," in *The Routledge Companion to Social and Political Philosophy*, ed. Gerald Gaus and Fred D'Agostino (London: Routledge, 2013), 364-374.

<sup>4</sup> This has been especially so since John Rawls proclaimed that "Justice is the first virtue of social institutions." See Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, rev ed. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999 [1971]), 3.

<sup>5</sup> Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. Roger Crisp (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 1103a (translation slightly modified).

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 1103b.

<sup>7</sup> Seneca, *On Leisure*, trans. Timothy Chandler, *Colloquy* 23 (2012), 218.

<sup>8</sup> F.H. Bradley, *Ethical Studies* (London: Oxford University Press, 1876), Ch. 5. Bradley's phrase also forms the title of Annas (2002) op. cit.

<sup>9</sup> *Eudaimonia* is usually translated in English as "happiness" or "human flourishing," neither of which fully captures the ancient Greek concept. Thus, I mostly use the term untranslated.

<sup>10</sup> The ancient outliers are the hedonist Epicureans and Cyrenaics. For a recent defense of the idea that well-being requires the virtues see Neera K. Badhwar, *Well-Being: Happiness in a Worthwhile Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

<sup>11</sup> Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1095a.

<sup>12</sup> Julia Annas, *Intelligent Virtue* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), Ch. 3.

<sup>13</sup> John Davis, "The Conception of the Socially Embedded Individual," in *The Elgar Companion to Social Economics*, ed. John B. Davis and Wilfred Dolfsma (Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar, 2008), 92-105.

<sup>14</sup> Cicero, *On Duties*, trans. Walter Miller, *Loeb Classical Library* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997), Book One, Sections 107-117.

<sup>15</sup> Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Bk. 1.

<sup>16</sup> For a general defense that this charge is misguided see Ronald Beiner, *What's the Matter with Liberalism?* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 45-48.

<sup>17</sup> Julia Annas, *The Morality of Happiness* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 27-34

<sup>18</sup> Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1095a18.

<sup>19</sup> For more recent philosophical work exploring the nature of happiness and well-being see James Griffin, *Well-Being: Its Meaning, Measurement, and Moral Importance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984); L. W. Sumner, *Welfare, Happiness, and Ethics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996); Dan Haybron, *The Pursuit of Unhappiness* (Oxford: Oxford University

---

Press, 2008); Fred Feldman, *What Is This Thing Called Happiness?* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); Daniel C. Russell, *Happiness for Humans* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

<sup>20</sup> Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1095a.

<sup>21</sup> The distinction here is the same one that Rawls makes between the concept of justice and different *conceptions* of justice. See Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, 5.

<sup>22</sup> Henry Sidgwick, *The Methods of Ethics*, 7<sup>th</sup> ed. (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing, 1981 [1874]), Bk. 1, Ch. 9.

<sup>23</sup> Gerald Gaus, *The Order of Public Reason* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 7 (emphasis added).

<sup>24</sup> Gaus, *The Order of Public Reason*, 8.

<sup>25</sup> I follow here Julia Annas, “Why Virtue Ethics Does Not Have a Problem with Right Action,” in *Oxford Studies in Normative Ethics*, Vol. 4, ed. Mark Timmons (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 13-33.

<sup>26</sup> I explore the nature of the individual virtue of justice and its relation to institutional justice in Tristan J. Rogers, “Justice as Lawfulness,” *Journal of the American Philosophical Association*, Vol. 4, Issue 2 (Summer 2018): 262-278.

<sup>27</sup> This section roughly follows Michael Huemer’s perspicacious analysis in Huemer, *The Problem of Political Authority: An Examination of the Right to Coerce and the Duty to Obey* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), Ch. 1.

<sup>28</sup> I set aside, for the purposes of this paper, the problem of non-citizen resident obligations.

<sup>29</sup> Following A. John Simmons’s influential analysis, this is known as “the particularity requirement.”

<sup>30</sup> Content-neutrality need not be absolute. There can be limits to political obligation. But the *reasons* why one is obligated should not derive primarily from the content of the law, since one might have a moral obligation to do what the law requires even if there was no law, and hence no *political* obligation.

<sup>31</sup> The idea of a “moral power” comes from Wesley Hohfeld’s influential analysis in Hohfeld, *Fundamental Legal Conceptions* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1919).

<sup>32</sup> Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract* (Penguin Classics, 1968), 159.

<sup>33</sup> Charles Larmore, *The Morals of Modernity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), Ch. 1. But see also Andre Rosler, *Political Authority and Obligation in Aristotle* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005).

<sup>34</sup> Elizabeth Anscombe, “Modern Moral Philosophy,” 26, and “On the Source of the Authority of the State,” 134. Republished in Anscombe, *Ethics, Religion, and Politics* op. cit.

<sup>35</sup> Drawing on T.M. Scanlon and Stephen Darwall, Mark LeBar argues that eudaimonists can incorporate something like the Kantian idea of respect for persons. See LeBar, “Virtue Ethics and Deontic Constraints,” *Ethics*, 119 (2009): 642-71.

<sup>36</sup> David Hume, “Of the Original Contract,” in *Essays: Moral, Political, and Literary* (Indianapolis, IN: Liberty Fund, 1987), 465-487.

<sup>37</sup> Charles Taylor, “The Validity of Transcendental Arguments,” *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, Vol. 79 (1978-79), 164.

<sup>38</sup> Julia Annas, “Virtue and Duty: Negotiating Between Different Ethical Traditions,” *Journal of Value Inquiry*, Vol. 49 (2015), 605-618.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 614.

- 
- <sup>40</sup> Anscombe, “On the Source of the Authority of the State,” 139. Anscombe attributes the idea to Aristotle. See Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, Bk. 5, 1015a.
- <sup>41</sup> These are two parts of G.W.F. Hegel’s three-part division between state, civil society, and family. See Hegel, *The Philosophy of Right*, Section Three.
- <sup>42</sup> P.F. Strawson, “Social Morality and the Individual Ideal,” *Journal of the Royal Institute of Philosophy*, Vol. 36, No. 136 (January 1961): 6-7.
- <sup>43</sup> Aristotle, *Politics*, trans. C.D. Reeve (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 1998), 1252b29.
- <sup>44</sup> The Homeric metaphor, sometimes called a “Ulysses Contract,” is used by Michael C. Munger and Kevin M. Munger in *Choosing in Groups: Analytic Politics Revisited* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).
- <sup>45</sup> Jean Hampton, *Political Philosophy* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1998), 77.
- <sup>46</sup> Daniel C. Russell, “What Virtue Ethics Can Learn from Utilitarianism,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Utilitarianism*, eds. Eggleston and Miller (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 268.
- <sup>47</sup> I believe this was T.H. Green’s insight expressed in the epigraph to this article.
- <sup>48</sup> Christopher Heath Wellman and A. John Simmons, *Is There a Duty to Obey the Law?* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 127-142.
- <sup>49</sup> Wellman and Simmons, *Is There a Duty to Obey the Law?*, 122-4.
- <sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 128.
- <sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 130.
- <sup>52</sup> Setting aside Plato’s provocative proposal in the *Republic*, Simmons’s skepticism about conventional morality seems unwarranted and, I might add, absurd, going so far as to ask: “Why should *biological* parents (or other blood relatives) be thought to be the ones on whom the authority to perform the task of childrearing principally falls?” 136-7 (emphasis added).
- <sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, 132.
- <sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>55</sup> Anscombe’s “On the Source of the Authority of the State” should be read in conjunction with Hursthouse’s underappreciated article “After Hume’s Justice” (op. cit.), which clearly identifies *eudaimonia* as the proper function (or task) of a well-functioning political society.
- <sup>56</sup> Wellman and Simmons, *Is There a Duty to Obey the Law?*, 135.
- <sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 135-6.
- <sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 136 (emphasis added).
- <sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 138.
- <sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 140.
- <sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>62</sup> Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Ch. 21, para. 10.
- <sup>63</sup> Michael O. Hardimon, “Role Obligations,” *The Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. 91, No. 7 (July 1994), 333-363.
- <sup>64</sup> Wellman and Simmons, *Is There a Duty to Obey the Law?*, 141.
- <sup>65</sup> The membership theory of political obligation is defended by Ronald Dworkin in *Law’s Empire* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1986), 206; John Horton in *Political Obligation*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010); and more recently by Samuel Scheffler in “Membership and Political Obligation,” *Journal of Political Philosophy*, Vol. 26, No. 1 (2018): 3-23.
- <sup>66</sup> Wellman and Simmons, *Is There a Duty to Obey the Law?*, 111-5.

---

<sup>67</sup> Dagger, Richard and Lefkowitz, David, "Political Obligation", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2014 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2014/entries/political-obligation/>, Sec. 5.

<sup>68</sup> Simmons himself draws this distinction in *Justification and Legitimacy: Essays on Rights and Obligations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 125.

<sup>69</sup> Plato, *Crito*, in *Complete Works*, ed. John M. Cooper (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 1997), 37-48.

<sup>70</sup> Huemer, *The Problem of Political Authority*, 11.

<sup>71</sup> John Horton, *Political Obligation*, 133 (first emphasis added, otherwise original).