Anarchism, Virtue Ethics and the Question of Essentialism

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In this thesis I examine anarchism and virtue ethics and their relationship with each other through the virtue ethics of Alasdair MacIntyre and virtue ethically informed practical anarchism of Benjamin Franks. MacIntyre's now classic book of *After Virtue* where he presents his influential revival of Aristotelian virtue ethics serves as a route for Franks' effort to explicitly combine the political theory of anarchism with virtue ethics. MacIntyre's theory puts emphasis on practices as the most salient feature of virtue ethics in contrast to other characteristics of Aristotle's virtue ethics and his overall philosophical theory, such as justification of slavery and systematic subordination of women, which are redolent of his metaphysical biology. Defining virtue ethics as practice-oriented and stressing the consistency between means and ends, i.e. prefiguration, of actions enables MacIntyre to offer virtue ethics as a suitable alternative to alleged moral confusion brought by Enlightenment inspired moral philosophies of utilitarianism and deontology. For Franks practice-oriented virtue ethics has considerable amount of resemblance with anarchism's ethical commitment to prefiguration both historically, exemplified by anarchists' disagreement with Marxists during the First International over the use of state apparatus during revolutionary struggle, and contemporarily, as in the anarchist-influenced Occupy Movement. Based on MacIntyre and Franks' theories I come to identify the question of essentialism, i.e. what is the essence of our existence, as difficult for both of them and in

more generally for the philosophical traditions of anarchism and virtue ethics. I argue for the implementation of materialism to remedy inadequacies found both in MacIntyre's later era Thomism, and Franks' theoretical weakness for proper justification to the reason why one ought to accept and adopt anarchist position. I also come to claim that materialism, as in drawing focus on the material constitution of our being and environment, offers invaluable resources beyond anarchism and virtue ethics to the general discourse of political and moral philosophy.

Key words: anarchism, virtue ethics, essentialism, materialism, socialism, moral philosophy, political philosophy

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1. Introduction

In this thesis I will inquiry the relation between virtue ethics and anarchism, and particularly, what one should think about essentialism and its place in the context of these doctrines, and by extension more generally about essentialist claims concerning the nature of human condition. Impetus for such a work comes, firstly, from the interest and affinity I have for anarchism and other closely associated socialist movements and philosophies, and secondly, from the intriguing questions of what kind of (meta-)ethical alignment should such of a libertarian socialist philosophy have and why. While inquiring into these questions I have found myself wandering into philosophical terrains which one could regard to be quite far off from my starting point of anarchism and virtue ethics, or social and moral philosophy in general, into the ontological question of essence. In the text below I wish I have done enough to justify my wide approach as necessary in order to answer such questions, at least tentatively, in a satisfactorily manner. Next, I shall briefly define the key terms: anarchism, virtue ethics and essentialism. Then, I outline the order in which I present my argument before I move on to actual chapters of this work.

Anarchism is a political ideology which maintains that human communities should be organised to be classless, moneyless and stateless entities, and the means by which that aim would be brought about should already embody that desired outcome. Therefore anarchism does have same goals as communism, but disagreement has risen, historically and theoretically, from the methods being employed to achieve the common goal (Franks 2010, 145) since communism has put emphasis on the gaining the control of the state apparatus through elections in the representative democracy, or seizing the control of the state apparatus in a revolution, which also has been endorsed by anarchists, but whereas anarchists would seize the state apparatus only to dissolve it, communists would use the state apparatus to their ends by ruling as a 'dictatorship of the proletariat' until state will 'wither away'.

This is the crux of the disagreement between anarchists and Marxists to put it in simplified terms. Anarchism, particularly nowadays, is characterised by opposing all hierarchies, whether they be political, economic, cultural etc. with an acknowledgement that nature of such an endeavour is 'ongoing process of contesting and reducing oppression rather than the utopian ideal of destroying oppressive structures and relations once and for all' (Jun 2010, 59). In this work I concentrate on Benjamin Franks' conception of anarchism which is in continuity with the working-class origins of the anarchistic movement while incorporating some key elements of later influences, such as post-structuralism. Franks' view represents for the most parts the majority of anarchistic community, both academic and activist. By this I mainly mean that anarchism is still regarded widely as a working-class, anti-capitalistic movement contrary to some claims of anarchism to be regarded as something of an ultra-capitalism or anarcho-capitalism[1]. In this work I will not address the debate whether anarchism and capitalism are compatible. Anarchism is understood in this work, as mentioned earlier, with respect to its historical roots as a movement of the working-class with explicit commitment to opposing all hierarchies whatever they are.

Virtue ethics is one of the three classical moral theories of philosophy alongside Kantian, or deontological ethics, and consequentalist, usually presented in its utilitarian form, ethics. Virtue ethics, which originates from Ancient Greece and its most celebrated philosophers Socrates, Plato and Aristotle, presents a view of life in which living well or virtuously is to live according to one's teleological goal which is dictated based on person's metaphysical biology, to use MacIntyre's term (see e.g. 2007/2014, xi). Virtues are dispositions which are practised so that one can lead a good life and apply those learned life skills, which virtues are, in their everyday lives. In this work I use Alasdair MacIntre's virtue ethical theory mainly because it provides the foundation for Benjamin Franks' conception of anarchistic virtue ethics.

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[1] Franks (2012, 210, 224) uses the term 'propertarianism' while referring to such ideological constellations, like anarcho-capitalism, which values property as the primary or one of the primary features, thus distinguishing it from anarchism as understood here as a part of the socialist tradition.

Essentialism is a view about human essence that humans indeed have essence, and which characteristically determines our direction and aim in life. This is closely linked to the aforementioned thinkers of Ancient Greece and via their influence also to Christianity, amongst other strands of thought. I shall discuss essentialism in the context of MacIntyre's virtue ethics, and essentialism in the form of materialism is a central part of my argument in the later chapters of this work.

I begin my argument by presenting overview of MacIntyre's virtue ethics, which is in later chapters more fully articulated in discussion with Franks' theory and my own theoretical position. After presentation of MacIntyre's key concepts, I move on to Franks' theory of anarchism and its relation to MacIntyre. Then, I discern the problematic issue for both MacIntyre and Franks, also by extension to virtue ethics and anarchism in general, that of essentialism, and formulate my proposed amendment to Franks' theory aiming to resolve issue arising in it in relation to his stance on essentialism. In later stages of this work I address some possible points of criticism which can be brought against my position and what kind of further inquiry should be undertaken in the future concerning the connection between anarchism, materialism and virtue ethics.

2. Overview of MacIntyre's Virtue Ethics

Ever since the publication of *After Virtue* in 1981, Alasdair MacIntyre (1929-) has been one of the leading moral philosophers of the latter part of 20th century and the early 21st century. In *After Virtue* (1981/2014) MacIntyre vehemently criticised modern moral philosophy and the Enlightenment which produced it. In place of the failing modern moral philosophy MacIntyre suggested going back the virtue ethics of ancient Greece, especially Aristotle (384-322 BCE), and medieval Catholic doctrine of Thomism as developed by Thomas of Aquinas (1225-1274). In this chapter I will present the MacIntyre's virtue ethical account before his conversion to Thomism around the turn of 1990s, since

it is the most relevant part of his thought for Benjamin Franks' anarchistic virtue ethics. I will, also, address in later stages of this work his subsequent Thomism.

After Virtue (1981/2014) is in many respects critique of Enlightenment moral philosophies, deontology and utilitarianism, and their failed quest to bring rational grounding for morality, as shown by the extensive discussion devoted to them in the early chapters (see esp. chap. 2-6) while setting up for his later claims for vindicating Aristotelian virtue ethics. MacIntyre castigates Enlightenment moralities and their modern applications, such as the most fashionable ethical stand of his own student days, emotivism, of their habit of using earlier ethical concepts such as virtue in ways which have distorted them and cause confusion when they are widely used in moral debates with conflicting and contradictory ways. Furthermore, this fervent search for rational fundamental moral principles has, according to MacIntyre, displaced virtue ethics from its place as moral theory which gave sufficient rational grounds for action and intellectual tools for moral evaluation in ethical inquiry. MacIntyre stresses the social embeddedness of life against atomic individuals of liberal conceptions of social life derived from Enlightenment. While overall MacIntyre's thinking has changed significantly and he has endorsed variety of philosophies ranging from Marxism to Thomism, he has retained certain elements throughout his career. Perhaps the most enduring is his aversion to liberalism, the ideology whose roots one can trace back to the Reformation in the 16th century of Christianity and Enlightenment of 18th century and the subsequent emerging of modern-day capitalism made possible by the Industrial Revolution in the turn of the 19th century. One can see that during that beginning of liberalism's formulation his later-era favoured position of Thomism and its close companion of Catholicism began wane on its influence, philosophically and politically. In any case, MacIntyre's project has its impetus very much on the disappointment created by liberal moral philosophies, as well as vacuous moral content of his once endorsed Marxism during the Soviet-era, evidenced by the preface to the first edition of *After Virtue* (1981/2014, xviii-xx) leading him to seek an alternative understanding of morality from an earlier era of Ancient Greece.

MacIntyre (1981/2014) argues following Aristotle that in order to lead a good life, i.e. to flourish as a human being, one must act virtuously, according to virtues. Virtues are dispositions to act and are something which can and should be learnt. Although virtues are possessed individually, they are inherently social, since humans learn about virtues from other people and in practise virtues are displayed in everyday social relationships and interactions with others, even if some virtues might have requirements exclusively or almost exclusively towards oneself, such as self-discipline, or have both private and public side, for example being honest to yourself and others. MacIntyre bases his practice-oriented virtue ethics on Aristotle's ideas of *praksis* and *poieis* while describing two modes of acting (*Nicomachean Ethics*, VI chap. 2-5). Aristotle's (Ibid., I chap. 5) insistence that happiness, eudaimonia, cannot be reduced to wealth, honour or pleasure imply for MacIntyre (1981/2014, 174) that virtues enable, indeed are necessary for, successful undertaking of practices which constitute the ultimate goal of *eudaimonia*, even if Aristotle does not himself make such of a connection of means and ends internal relationship to each other, MacIntyre (Ibid., 214-215) claims that such of a connection is relevant to understand what Aristotle meant, and this is something which Aquinas already acknowledged, which also is simultaneously concretely achieved through virtuously practices as well as in abstract teleological aim of divine bliss, although such supernatural state has a very different meaning for Aristotle then it has for Aquinas. Acknowledging that Aristotle did not formulate a detailed account of practices, MacIntyre nevertheless claims that such of an account is possible to devise based on his theoretical discussion of *praksis* and *poieis*, as well from his examples of such an activity like playing the flute.

John Horton and Susan Mendus discern three key concepts which underlie MacIntyre's theory: narrative, practices and tradition (Horton & Mendus 1994, 8). For MacIntyre human life is socially and narratively constructed and not as modernists, of which MacIntyre takes Jean-Paul Sartre, or to be more precise the protagonists of his literary works, to be a prime example, who make constantly

decisions, according to MacIntyre, in disjointed manner without references to their personal history or social context in which they make such decisions (MacIntyre 1981/2014, 248-249). Narratively constructed lives are, because of their social embeddedness, at least partially roles which already exist prior to individual and demand individual to perform certain roles in certain situations, for example a child in early stage of one's life or a parent in later stage of life. This is contrary to the modernist outlook in which, MacIntyre claims, individual constantly re-establishes oneself as chooser and decider what one wants to do without regard for the social context in which one lives. (Horton & Mendus 1994, 8-9.)

Secondly, MacIntyre understands morality as a practice-based activity in which moral goods which one achieve by acting virtuously are internal to the practice. MacIntyre definition of practice is following:

"By a 'practice' I am going to mean any coherent and complex form of socially established cooperative human activity through which goods internal to that form of activity are realized in the course of trying to achieve those standards of excellence which are appropriate to, and partially definitive of, that form of activity, with the result that human powers to achieve excellence, and human conceptions of the ends and goods involved, are systematically extended." (MacIntyre 1981/2014, 218)

As examples of what MacIntyre considers to be practices he names activities ranging from chess and farming to biology and building a community (Ibid., 218-219). These practices are evaluated by the standards internal to the successful performing of the practice and practice itself informs of such criteria whether one is practising it virtuously or not, for example in the case of chess it is the rules of the game of chess which constitute whether one is playing well. Evaluation criteria differs from one practice to another but one always needs various virtues to perform different practices successfully. Means and ends are in close connection with each other, and they both must embody virtues which are dispositions to act in such a way that moral goods and excellence can be achieved

in various practices, which constitute successful co-operation and human flourishing. MacIntyre, following Aristotle, stresses the social context of practices for their successful performance as a virtuous activity, hence virtues and virtuous practices must be the norm and taught in the city-state, or *polis*, for the effective realisation of individual members of the community to be and act virtuously. (Horton & Mendus 1994, 10-11; MacIntyre 1981, chap. 14.)

Thirdly, tradition as a precondition for rational discourse and argumentation about moral concepts is one of recurring themes in MacIntyre's work since *After Virtue*. By tradition and the resources which it gives through the background in which one is socialised, rational moral deliberation and action is altogether possible. MacIntyre claims that tradition as he understands it is not in any way inherently conservative or static. Tradition is the background upon which dynamic discussion about the concept of good must be built. To counter the argument that from this moral relativism is bound to come accepted, since each tradition is solely understood by standpoint of their own tradition, MacIntyre has argued that traditions do in time of crisis, and every tradition faces adversity, find resources in other traditions to help development in their own tradition or perish altogether, because of other tradition's superior resources to their own moral tradition. (Horton & Mendus 1994, 11-12.)

3. Franks' Anarchistic Virtue Ethics

Benjamin Franks presents an interesting, and somewhat surprising, reading and interpretation of MacIntyre's virtue ethics. Based on his extensive research of anarchism's theory and practice, both historically and contemporarily, Franks claims already in his work *Rebel Alliances* (2006) that anarchism, or at least social or class-struggle anarchism, is compatible with virtue ethics. However, only in is his subsequent articles, he has pursued explicitly the connection between anarchism and reformulated virtue ethical theory of Alasdair MacIntyre. Franks takes his cues to anarchistic virtue ethics from MacIntyre's early virtue ethical works, mainly *After Virtue* (1981/2014), which stresses

the practices as the core feature of virtue ethics, whereas later virtue ethical works of MacIntyre has shifted towards more traditional understanding of virtue ethics as placing crucial importance to human nature and essentialism, which is problematic for Franks, who is vehemently anti-essentialist. This causes a tension which can potentially make Franks' effort to combine his brand of anarchism and MacIntyre's virtue ethical theory suspicious, if not downright impossible.

In his article *Anarchism and the Virtues* (2010) Franks claims that what he calls practical, or prefigurative, anarchism is a form of anarchism which is most consistent with both the historical theory and practice of anarchists, as well as contemporary measures of anarchist activists. According to Franks, two main principles of practical anarchism which distinguishes it from other strands of anarchism are prefiguration and context-dependence of actions. Franks views these to be found also in Alasdair MacIntyre's version of virtue ethics making the two theories analogous with each other. (Franks 2010, 135-136.)

Prefigurative principle can be summarised by definition that means must embody the desired ends. Classic example of the anarchists' commitment to prefigurative principle is the dispute between anarchists and Marxists during the First International (1864-1876, anarchists were effectively expelled in the Hague Congress of 1872) where anarchists argued that states should be abolished at the same time as capitalism and not use the state as means to stateless society. Since practical anarchism emphasises consistency between means and ends, it does come closer to virtue ethics than deontological or utilitarian conception of ethics which have traditionally been associated with anarchism in the academic discourses. Unlike deontology and utilitarianism, which evaluate the rightness of actions in accordance to universal moral law (deontology) or goodness of the consequences of actions (utilitarianism), practical anarchism shares with virtue ethics the internal evaluation of actions since the point of reference about rightness of actions do not assume external authority, such as moral law or overall happiness, from the actions themselves. Practical anarchism

is, according to Franks, here close to MacIntyrean (e.g. MacIntyre 1981/2014, 222-223) version of virtue ethics which underlines need of social practices, or actions, to be in harmony with means and ends, and also that for this link to be sustained it is important to realise the inherently social nature of practices and virtues. (Franks 2010, 142-146.)

Another distinct feature of practical anarchism, which is closely linked to the prefiguration, is the context-dependence of actions. By this it is meant that struggles against hierarchies take different measures in different times and places. This also embodies the common anarchist, historical and contemporary, belief that there is no single, universal source of hierarchies; in contrast for example Leninists' regard for capitalism as the source of all oppression, and by abolishing capitalism all other forms of hierarchies would be abolished by the downfall of capitalism. In practical anarchism these different forms of struggles are nevertheless linked to each other by the virtuous practises exercised in the struggles, and for example indiscriminate violence is prohibited by the prefigurative principle. Agency of individuals engaged in these struggles also must diverge from the positions which privilege party or other form of vanguard of change. Therefore, individuals take themselves in cooperation with others the responsibility for the struggles they engage. Here Franks finds common ground with MacIntyre in that for both of them virtuous practises are different depending on their context, but that those practises nevertheless embody the desired ends. MacIntyre's insistence on tradition as an only possible way of understanding the world and its ethical debates is usually considered to be conservative in its approach, but according to Franks this does not need to have conservative conclusions since what this does affirm is the historical nature of humans and their context-dependence. This does not mean, as it does not for MacIntyre himself, that traditions would be fixed and unchangeable, instead they evolve through internal debate and conflict with other traditions. Also, traditions themselves might have anti-hierarchical elements. (Franks 2010, 146-150.)

There are two characteristics in MacIntyre's version of virtue ethics which present a problem for Franks' project to place practical anarchism as a virtue ethic akin to MacIntyre's. Franks' identify these as the legalistic and the teleological challenge.

By legalistic challenge Franks means virtue ethical presupposition of centralised and institutionalised state apparatus to enforce the basic law which guarantee that virtuous practises can be exercised within state. This is explicit in Aristotelian conception of the city-state, but also prevalent in MacIntyre's version of virtue ethics by his arguing for commitment to obey certain fundamental rules which are enforced by the state so that virtuous activity can take place in society. Franks, on the contrary, contends that commitment to common and shared rules does not entail state apparatus as then one is guilty of a common error in mistaking state for society[2]. Franks makes the point that actually it is even more consistent with MacIntyre that virtues can flourish better in society without centralised and institutionalised state since MacIntyre criticises liberal individualism which was brought by Enlightenment in the 18th century, because instrumentalist bureaucracy began to ascend and to take hold on individuals' lives through ever-expanding state in the guise of seemingly neutral arbiter between different conceptions of good life. (Franks 2010, 151-153.) It could be argued then that the legalistic challenge can be overcome rather easily once one understands that group of people, such as society, can create rules everyone ought to obey without the existence of state apparatus. It is the second challenge, the teleological challenge, identified by Franks which prove to be more problematic for the relationship between practical anarchism and virtue ethics.

For Franks the teleological challenge is basically about essentialism which he identifies, and rightly so, to be central characteristic of virtue ethics. This is evident in Aristotle since he views nature hierarchically, for example slaves are slaves by their very essence so slavery is accepted as natural

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[2] Similarly, William Godwin (1756-1836), often claimed as a precursor to anarchism, responded to prominent conservative thinker Edmund Burke (1729-1797), when the latter lamented the French Revolution of 1789 and wished to restore sovereignty of the monarch in the state. Coincidentally, this is also noticed by MacIntyre in his *A Short History of Ethics* (1966/1998, 229-230).

phenomenon as well as women's subordinated position in relation to men. This hierarchical understanding of the world is also reflected in the idea of justice according to desert which is configured by moral actors' metaphysical biology. (Franks 2010, 154.) This has troubled Aristotelian philosophers in modern times, including MacIntyre (see e.g. 2014, 189), since Aristotle's ethics are embedded in his overall system of metaphysical biology. For anarchism, and particularly for practical anarchism, essentialism in its original Aristotelian form is clearly problematic since it does presuppose explicitly social hierarchies. Also, more modest essentialist views such as benign essentialism which regards humans to be naturally good; which is often, usually questionably, attributed to certain anarchists, for example to Pjotr Kropotkin; are troublesome since they limit humane possibilities to action and tend to privilege those individuals who are aware of humans' perceived real nature, thus, creating epistemological hierarchies. (Franks 2010, 154-155.)

Franks claims to have resolved this contradiction between virtue ethics and practical anarchism through MacIntyrean methods since MacIntyre in his account of virtue ethics does distinguish multiple forms of goals of life, *telos*, in different branches of virtue ethics, it makes sense for Franks see the multiplicity of goals of life as destroying the assumption of single, predetermined and fixed *telos* in life. These goals vary depending on the historical conditions and intersect with each other without unifying under one overarching privileged position. (Franks 2010, 155-156.) Franks' solution does bring certain reconciliation between practical anarchism and virtue ethics, but I would argue that its explicit rejection of essentialism of any kind does take away or at least significantly reduce the active agency of the subjects, which it tries so very hard to affirm in order to retain the autonomy of oppressed people and groups to challenge and change the prevailing hierarchies.

4. Further Arguments for Combining Anarchism with MacIntyrean Virtue Ethics

MacIntyre in *Dependent Rational Animals* (1990, e.g. 130) and, also in his earlier writings which gives reasons to see his account of virtue ethics having certain affinity with materialism and radical socialism is his constant, even if infrequent, references to Marx. According to Niko Noponen (2011), Marx's influence plays a crucial role also in MacIntyre's explicitly virtue ethical works beginning with the publication of *After Virtue* (1981). I believe MacIntyre's Marxist roots and concerns which are evident also in his later virtue ethical works, even if playing a supporting role to Aristotelian and Thomist perspectives, should be taken into an account better than it has been when assessing MacIntyre and his theory. Example of this kind of negligence is to be found in grouping MacIntyre together with communitarians against liberals as it generally was the case in the 1990's, for example by Michael Walzer (Noponen 2011, 34). As Kelvin Knight (1998b, 290) claims the roots of placing MacIntyre as a communitarian have more to do with coincidental timing than shared philosophical project, since communitarians, according to Knight, opt 'to strengthen rather than reject the institutions imposing order under capitalism' (Ibid., 291; see also MacIntyre 1997/1998a, esp. 243-246). There are commentators of MacIntyre who have seen the continuity of MacIntyre's intellectual development from Marx to Aristotle and Aquinas, and how these thinkers are linked to each other, both in general and in MacIntyre's body of work (Noponen 2011, 33-34; see also Stocker (1976) placing Aristotle and Marx on the same side against "schizophrenic" moral theories of Kantianism and utilitarianism).

To use Marx as a gateway to bridge anarchism and virtue ethics might raise questions, if anarchism and Marxism are thought as intractable rivals with each other as the case has been occasionally both within and outside traditions discussed. However, to take such a hostile view of relations between anarchism and Marxism undermine the long theoretical and practical mutual co-operation and affinity

shared by them with each other. As anarchist theorists, for example Franks (e.g. 2012) and Ruth Kinna (2011), have shown both in the formulative years of working-class movement and today's struggles, such as Occupy movement, these movements have been developing together resistance to oppressive institutions and practices. On the Marxist side certain strands of Marxist thinking, such as autonomist Marxism, were close to anarchism and aside from practical co-operation, certain eminent Marxist intellectuals of the late 20th century and early 21st century, such as Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, have recognised anarchism more fully as part of socialist canon, for example inclusion of anarcho-syndicalist Georges Sorel in Laclau and Mouffe's *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* (1985/2014). To emphasise the close proximity between anarchism and Marxism historically, theoretically and practically is not meant to obscure the differences between them, since there are differences amplified by historical events, especially Bolshevik state socialist takeover of Russian Revolutions of 1917 and subsequent similar state socialist revolutions of other countries such as China and Cuba (Franks 2012), yet they have much more common than what divides them, and ultimately their goal is same, that of classless, moneyless and stateless world. As the non-aligned revolutionary socialist activist Guy Aldred (1886-1963) put it: 'Marx DEFINED the social revolution, whilst Bakunin EXPRESSED it' (quoted in Kinna 2011, 109)[3].

In addition to his affinity to Marx, there are other strands in MacIntyre's body of work that facilitate the connection to be made between MacIntyre's thinking with anarchism. As a corollary to one of his most consistent features of thought, critique of liberalism, has been his critical approach to the modern nation-state. For example, in *Dependant Rational Animals* (1999), he sees an Aristotelian-Thomistic virtue ethical community impossible to flourish in the context of modern nation-state, or at least only providing certain preliminary resources to create and maintain flourishing community of virtuously acting individuals. Although MacIntyre cannot vision societies without some kind of state apparatus,

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[3] Although this kind of conception of dual roles of Marx and Bakunin, and therefore Marxism and anarchism, was usual amongst the working-class people at that time, this does not do fully justice either to Marxists passion for the cause and conversely to anarchists' intellectual contributions. It does, nevertheless, succinctly capture the deep connection between them as the main forces of the working-class movement. (Kinna 2011; Franks 2012.)

albeit very different from the one which is the norm of the day, his harsh criticism of nation-states does indicate that anarchistic rejection of state apparatus, which does not mean rejection of communities, is not that far from MacIntyre's thinking on the issue. Sign of this can be founded on John Haldane's description of MacIntyre as a kind of an 'Augustinian anarchist' (1995, 737).

Another important example of MacIntyre's lack of confidence in the modern liberal capitalistic nation-states is found in his reply to essays presented in the book dedicated to critical scrutiny of his oeuvre, *After MacIntyre* (1994). In the concluding chapter MacIntyre answers briefly to all essays presented in the book and while answering to Andrew Mason and Stephen Mulhall who defended liberalism in their respective essays, he claims that traditions might have to include some inconsistencies between beliefs and attitudes, because prevailing established traditions backed by authoritative institutions may be suspicious of alternative traditions (1994, 291). Also, in other writings MacIntyre (e.g. 1997/1998a) shows disdain for modern liberal nation-states and the need of small virtuous practice-oriented communities, usual examples employed by MacIntyre are Benedict monasteries (e.g. 1981/2014, 295) and fishing communities or historically English hand-loom weavers in the turn of the 19th century, MacIntyre cites the classic account of historian E.P Thompson (e.g. ibid. 1994/1998, 231-234), to survive until liberal order reaches its seemingly inevitable end. It is interesting to see similarities with such remarks of MacIntyre and anarchistic practices, which have been called in both positive and negative light, part of lifestyle-anarchism, such as squatting and self-sustaining and -governing communities, which one could characterise as anarchistic equivalents to monasteries, where virtuous practices can be exercised outside of liberal moral and political order. Of course, there are questions how plausible option it is to isolate communities from the wider world and is it particularly conducive, or in fact counter-productive, in the effort of promotion and implementation of anarchistic ideals in the world as a whole. Nevertheless, what MacIntyre has said regarding the need to be protective of one's virtuous communities and practices is analogous and consistent with what Franks (2010, 146-48) claims pertaining to practical anarchistic communities

and their flexibility and autonomy to employ various forms of tactics, and the level of openness of activity, depending on the context of the circumstances they find themselves in.

5. (Post-)Anarchisms and (Meta-)Ethics

Franks claims in several different writings, for example in *Rebel Alliances* (2006) and *Postanarchism and Meta-Ethics* (2008), how virtue ethics in general is more compatible, and espoused usually implicitly in most versions of social, or class struggle, anarchism making differentiation not just between anarchisms which disagree on (meta-)ethical conceptions but also between social, or class struggle, anarchisms and individualist liberal, or lifestyle anarchisms. Closer look on these differences on (meta-)ethical issues within anarchism identified and problematised by Franks and others gives one a deeper understanding on why Franks sees essentialism as an unavoidable harming feature for anarchism, yet not making him fully embrace post-anarchism either.

While framing the discussion on anarchism and moral philosophy Franks (2008, 135-137) has characterised and rightly criticised academic, especially analytical, philosophy's understanding of anarchism as simply the avoidance of coercion based on deontological, quasi-Kantian grounds exemplified by Robert Paul Wolff[4] and Robert Nozick, which Franks labels as right-libertarians.

Franks (2008) offers his MacIntyrean influenced virtue ethics as a kind of third way between moral universalism of the classical anarchism and moral subjectivism of the post-anarchism. Franks tries to take best of the meta-ethical branches, universalism and subjectivism, combining them under the banner of virtue ethics. He makes the claim to be supportive of his project but does not focus enough

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[4] To group Wolff together with Nozick as a right-libertarian, as Franks has a habit of doing, is not a fair assessment of Wolff, since although he is a Kantian and approaches the question of legitimacy of the state from a Kantian viewpoint and primary from the purely theoretical standpoint, claiming him to be a right-winger is hardly plausible. Evidence to counter such a claim is already found in his major anarchistic work from a Kantian perspective *In Defence of Anarchism* (1970).

on post-anarchism's, as exemplified by the prominent post-anarchist Saul Newman, inherent ontological failings due to its moral subjectivism. As Swann (2010a, see below chap. 5.2.) has shown post-anarchism which takes its cues from Max Stirner, of which Newman is a model example, are also guilty of essentialism, albeit different kind of essentialism which they accuse classical anarchism of. This is a point which Franks does not recognise in Newman's subjectivism. His major complaint of such a subjectivism is that it cannot offer convincing platform of standards of evaluation for anarchistic, anti-hierarchical ethics. Same also goes for moral universalism although from a different viewpoint. There shall be a detailed discussion on Franks' agreement and divergence with Newman below on this thesis in relation to my proposed amendment on Franks' theory (see chap. 7.2.).

While Franks' accepts largely the post-anarchistic criticism of classical anarchism about essentialism, even if he does point out in various places that classical anarchist writings are not so simplistically based on essentialist claims as post-anarchists tend to claim (e.g. 2007, 133-136), his another significant criticism of post-anarchism, alongside the (meta-)ethical claim of its relativism brought about by its moral subjectivism, is its lack, or altogether rejection, of attention to economic matters. Franks' contributes this at least partially to schism developed between anarchism and Marxism, when with the latter economic side of things come to be solely associated, usually in very reductionist fashion, and to the general trend of post-modernism, which influenced greatly certain strands of anarchism, so-called life-style anarchisms, with its focus on individuals, instead of group identities such as class. (Ibid., 136-138.)

5.1. Swann's Critique of Feasibility of Franks' Practical Anarchism

Thomas Swann presents a valuable critique of Franks' vehemently anti-essentialist anarchism in his article *Can Franks' Practical Anarchism Avoid Moral Relativism?* (2010b). There he claims that Franks does not succeed in his attempt to answer adequately to the threat of moral relativism, which

Franks identifies as a threat and as something which he is able to overcome. However, Swann makes a persuasive argument against Franks' alleged solution to counter relativism and makes an analogy to MacIntyre and his change of opinion in the matter of essentialism. Next, I will discuss in more detail Swann's critique found in the aforementioned article and in another one of his essays, *Are Postanarchists Right to Call Classical Anarchisms 'Humananist'?* (2010a) which deals more generally about the relationship between anarchism and essentialism.

Swann's (2010b, 213) conclusion is that Franks's theory of practical anarchism does actually restrict moral agency instead of its assumed consequence of enhancing it. This is because, Swann claims, relativism to which Franks' conception of anarchism is bound to fall if it does not subscribe to some kind of moral universalism, not unlike what MacIntyre has done in his virtue ethically committed writing subsequent of *After Virtue*. Reason why Swann sees Franks succumbing to relativism is in Franks' insistence on safeguarding thought and action from essentialist presumptions, which he considers to be inherently restricting and creating hierarchies, and on the other hand he maintains that in order to avoid falling into relativism, which he rightly understands as potentially undermining element to his project of providing a sound virtue ethical theory for anarchism, there needs to be internally coherent and consistent guidelines according to which moral deliberation can be conducted. But as Swann points out such grassroots level guidelines are difficult to ground without forming and accepting some sort of higher principles guiding lower level activity. Failure to give sufficient attention to this evokes relativism. Swann illustrates his point of incapability of Franks' account to give reasonable standard to evaluate between rivalling course of action within anarchist virtue ethical tradition with example involving anarchist group split over an issue whether they should as a group support anti-racist or animal rights group. Swann argues that using Franks' theory there is no way to answer to this question rationally since there are no essential features of anarchism, according to Franks, and therefore no standard to evaluate between those arguments which course of action to take.

Consequence of this is the Franks' practical anarchism's unintended impracticalness caused by relativism.

Swann offers two possible solutions to the risk of relativism diagnosed by him in Franks' theory of practical anarchism. First, he suggests re-articulation of moral universalism to regard universalism as something whose content would be non-hierarchical and liberated moral agency. Therefore, universalism would not be seen as having a hierarchical and morally limiting content which Franks alongside post-anarchists see as an inherent part of any universalism. (Swann 2010b, 211).

Second possible solution which Swann offers to save Franks' theory from relativism could be characterised as Wittgensteinian, since community which would share same principles and values with commitment to abide to such explicitly declared norms would, using Wittgenstein's term, create a 'language game'. For the members of the community, which in this case would constitute of anarchists, those commonly created and held norms would constitute an objective moral realm i.e. moral universalism. (Swann 2010b, 212.)

Swann's attempts to salvage Franks' theory from relativism are technically valid, but leave one still puzzling with the question *why* one should endorse anarchist virtue ethics. This is also identified by Swann (2010a, 240-241) in his remark that Franks offers an ethical account 'how to behave as anarchists', without giving justification for accepting anarchism. Particularly the second of Swann's proposed solutions, the one which I referred as Wittgensteinian solution, serves to the end of offering ethical guidelines to those already within the sphere of anarchism endangering anarchism to become, and this is what it has become to certain extent[5], isolationist and parochial approach without having

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[5] This so-called lifestyle anarchism has received considerable criticism, especially from Murray Bookchin and other so-called class-struggle anarchists, for being purely self-interested and passive in the face of truly revolutionary activity. Some of that criticism is certainly valid, but it must be remembered that "lifestyle anarchists" do rather often live according to values which exemplify the world where such anarchistic values would be the norm. So at least from the anarchistic virtue ethics viewpoint lifestyle anarchism could be described as bundle of an anarchistic practices, if not in the classical sense of anarchistic revolutionary activity.

an interest to take part in wider struggles for emancipation from oppressive practices. The other option of Swann, that of tweaking, what is the scope and the meaning of universalism, offers a better alternative to solving the problem of relativism, and also answering to the fundamental question of *why* virtue ethical anarchism ought to be gain support as an ethic of betterment of our world. In the next chapter I present my own proposed amendment, which can be seen as an extension of Swann's re-articulation of universalism, based on materialism.

Elsewhere, Swann (2010a) has argued that anarchisms of all kinds have certain essentialist claims in them. For example, post-anarchists fierce opposition to classical anarchism's perceived essentialism does conceal the fact that despite post-anarchists' portrayal of Max Stirner (see e.g. Newman 2011, 322) as a classical anarchist whose thinking does not succumb to essentialism, and presenting Stirner both as a precursor and a role model for contemporary post-anarchism, Stirner valued free will and self-consciousness very highly and as necessary property of human activity, in other words as constituent features of essential human nature. (2010a, 239). Furthermore, both Franks and Simon Choat have offered similar criticism towards post-anarchism's overtly positive view of Stirner. While Franks critiques Stirner and his post-anarchistic admirers from an anarchistic-virtue ethical perspective targeting especially Stirner's subjectivism, he reiterates also Marx and Engels' classic critique of Stirner and other Young Hegelians being guilty of idealism. Choat (see below for elaboration of his view), a Marxist, likewise cites Marx and Engel in his criticism of post-anarchism.

More radically for post-anarchists, and for some anarchists who have been greatly influenced by post-anarchists, yet want to identify simply anarchists such as Franks, Swann's argument implies that rejection of essentialism altogether means rejection of such concepts as rationality, self-consciousness, free will and teleology, which Swann (2010a, 228-229) assess, based on writings of Daniel Dennett, Harry Frankfurt and Kate Soper, that display of one or more those concepts, or conditions, is sufficient for personhood, as being essentialist or humanistic, which is the sub-category of essentialism mainly

used in Swann's article. This is problematic not only for anarchism but for critical thinking overall, if these everyday concepts would be thrown away, not just to criticise their content, but also as obsolescent, and even worse as restricting human's activity. Swann does not find any of the proposed anarchistic line of thought, whether classical or post, avoiding essentialism, including Stirner and his post-anarchistic disciples, indeed Stiner seems to embrace idealist notions such as seemingly uncontained self-creation and self-consciousness perhaps more fully than any other classical anarchist. Swann does signal out Bakunin as a possible candidate for an anarchist thinker who avoids the post-anarchist's dreaded label of essentialist, but it comes as seeing Bakunin as a Hegelian who understands 'Properties that are displayed by moral actors are not properties of that entity but are manifested properties of the universal Spirit (in Hegel) or Nature (in Bakunin) that develops through the dialectical progression of history' (ibid., 238), who differentiates himself from Hegel only in rejection of latter's idealism with naturalism. Nevertheless, Bakunin's anti-essentialism which, if he is interpreted in such strictly Hegelian fashion since it is not the only way to understand Bakunin's theory, even if it is certainly a plausible one, comes to reject, according to Swann, conditions characterised as humanistic: rationality, self-consciousness, free will and teleology. One or more of these conditions, if not all, are certainly highly valued by both Bakunin and post-anarchists. It is important to stress here the fact that Swann (ibid., 240-241) does not reject post-anarchism or its insights into anarchist theory, but aims, and succeeds, to show inconsistencies and fallacies in their ontological thinking and relationship to classical anarchists. For myself Swann's criticism leads a way to different kind of approach to the question of essentialism in anarchism, and more generally, not to view it as inherently restricting, but fundamentally enabling.

5.2. Choat's Marxist criticism of (Post-)Anarchism

Simon Choat's article *Politics, power and the state: the Marxist response to postanarchism* (2013) offers a critique of post-anarchism by claiming the same theoretical shortcomings are still present

within post-anarchism which we were already noted deficiencies in classical anarchism by Marxist critics. Therefore, the counter-arguments can be largely recycled. Furthermore, Choat castigates post-anarchists for appropriation of post-structuralism and eminent thinkers from a loosely defined group of post-structuralists, e.g. Michel Foucault and Gilles Deleuze, as anarchist thinkers, even if their political commitment was very much to the Marxist cause and their intellectual endeavour indebted, among many other influences, to Marx.

Choat laments post-anarchists oblivion to the fact that post-anarchism's critique towards classical anarchism was already presented by Marxism in the 19th century. Choat identifies four points of criticism towards classical anarchism presented by post-anarchism which all have been critiqued before by Marxists: 'it focuses too much on state; it offers an inadequate theory of power; it relies too heavily on humanist ontology; and it misunderstands the nature of politics.' (Choat 2013, 333).

What is especially relevant to note here about Choat's assessment of post-anarchism is his remark that post-anarchism's one of constitutive element, according to Choat, is its rather biased view of Marxism as economically reductionist and inherently authoritarian theory, not unlikely the views presented by classical anarchists against Marxism in the 19th century. As Choat observes post-anarchists understanding of Marxism is largely negative and reiterates the familiar criticism provided by classical anarchism and such oppositional and prejudiced stance has gone largely unnoticed. Choat does highlight Benjamin Franks as a sole thinker who has criticised post-anarchists presentation of Marx and Marxism as well as more general rejection of class in the context of post-anarchism (Choat 2013, 346 ref. 31).

6. Proposed Amendment for Franks' Virtue Ethical Anarchism

Here I will present proposed amendment to virtue ethical anarchism which builds upon theories of Franks and MacIntyre. In certain ways it is an attempt to synthesis their theories, although it can be argued that Franks already tried to synthesis anarchism and virtue ethics explicitly philosophically, as he claims based on historical evidence the two theories in question have already been combined practically. Yet I find Franks account unsatisfactory in one important issue, namely essentialism and it's categorical denying of it. However, MacIntyre's later embrace of Thomist essentialism is not, I argue, convincing solution to the inadequacy which I identify in Franks. Through engaging with Franks' anti-essentialism and MacIntyre's Thomist essentialism I develop in this chapter an alternative approach which I name simply as materialism. Materialism which I here present and defend is designed on one hand, as an essentialism to overcome Franks' foundational void and on other hand, to espouse essentialism which does not need to rely on such indefensible ontological and theological assumptions as MacIntyre's Thomism.

6.1. Argument for Materialism

What is seen as problematic for both MacIntyre and Franks is essentialism, albeit for different reasons. For MacIntyre of *After Virtue* virtue ethics' emphasis of essentialism which is deemed necessary to inform person's pursuit of happiness, *eudaimonia*, as the goal, *telos*, of life, is secondary to the practice of activities, in which virtuous action is displayed and produce in themselves the moral, and also non-moral, goods. MacIntyre's later conversion to Thomism is partly because of his unsatisfactorily account of Aristotelianism without adequately clear and strong view of essentialism. Accordingly, to his changed allegiance from Aristotle to Aquinas, eudaimonia has been superseded by supreme good provided by God in theistic universe, which is, according MacIntyre, only one to

make intelligent the goal-oriented activity (1992, 152). To summarise this kind Thomistic thinking which MacIntyre has come to endorse, teleology entails theology. Therefore Thomism, according to later MacIntyre, does provide a suitable essentialism, which he has by then come to see as a undisputable feature of virtue ethics. (MacIntyre 2007/2014, ix-xvii.)

Franks, on the other hand, rejects any notion of essentialism because of supposed hierarchism, which he sees as being an inherent feature of essentialism. Essentialism as a hierarchy is therefore to be rejected, because it is incompatible with anarchism's non-hierarchical position. Franks' understanding of anarchism as a virtue ethic is well-argued, but it faces problems when giving grounds for accepting and acting according to anarchistic virtue ethic. As essentialism in virtue ethics, and elsewhere, has much to do with giving reason(s) to act in a certain way, rejecting it outright as incompatible and harmful to just and equalitarian social order, which anarchism aims to be, makes the justification and appeal of the anarchistic cause a difficult task.

Next, I will make a twofold argument: one for essentialism and the other for materialism. Although I am more interested to argue for materialism than essentialism it is impossible, I claim, to be a materialist without also accepting essentialism since essentialism is a higher concept under which materialism is subsumed by essentialism as a certain form of it. Therefore, to make claims for materialism is also simultaneously to endorse essentialism. Essentialism is understandably concept which many have rejected, especially in post-modern times which we supposedly now live. Various strands of such thinking have influenced socialist thinking of all spheres. Testament to this are post-Marxism and post-anarchism which are theoretical positions which have infused together with Marxism and anarchism post-structuralist theory of such thinkers as Michel Foucault, Gilles Deleuze and Jean-Francois Lyotard alongside many other influences. In post-Marxism one prominent cause for the need to reformulate Marxism explicitly as a non-essentialist theory has been the failure of the proletariat's rise to become a truly revolutionary force, leading to examine critically the notion of

revolutionary vanguard (see e.g. Laclau & Mouffe 1985/2001). Post-anarchism main feature has been its critique of classical anarchism's perceived humanist view of human beings as naturally benevolent or in other terms as fundamentally good. For both, one of the main points of criticism of classical or orthodox versions of their parent theories has been their excessive or reductionist view of various struggles to economic matters, also in anarchism to anti-statism.

Argument in favour of essentialism in general and for materialism as the form of essentialism to be accepted and forming the basis of human (and non-human) existence and activity is based on actual proceedings of life, of what is. This is a crucial and always implicitly recognised state of affairs in life generally considered. I only want to bring this fact of life explicitly to the centre of the argument of human existence and actions in the spheres of social and ethical philosophy. Negligence of materiality of beings and the world which we inhabit has, and has had, extremely ill effects upon the practical matters and theory as well. Putting the common sensical notion of materialism as the first principle of life and its all activities, I am following the footsteps of the most distinguished thinkers and activists of the 19th century's radical socialists. This is precisely what, amongst others, Marx & Engels argued for in *German Ideology* (1845-46/1978) and Bakunin in *God and the State* (1882/2016).

My justification of materialism as the essentialist first principle of life is rather common sense -type of argument, but it is also something which we cannot nor wish to disagree with based on the everyday experiences we have in satisfying our material basic needs and other non-immediate needs which would not be possible without satisfying basic needs first. To put it crudely, there would not be any activity, philosophising or anything else, if we did not eat, drink, sleep etc. Essentialism as understood in the form I am espousing it here differs markedly from essentialism which is usually associated with virtue ethics, and also to other theories where essentialism is regarded as a significant component such as second-wave feminism, in that it does not seek to claim anything further, for example certain assumed gender-specific qualities, than this fact of materiality of our existence. What I mean by this

is that there is no fixed *telos* for humans. This is contrary to the traditional forms of virtue ethics, whether found in ancient Greece or in medieval Catholicism, in which there was an idea of a fixed aim, *telos*, of life which on the one hand guides one towards certain existence and behaviour, and on the other hand placed restrictions to hinder one's quest to reach that preordained aim. Whereas the traditional kind of understanding of essentialism as having a particular aim, *telos*, for one's life have normative precepts and rather arbitrary restrictions, such as for women and slaves in ancient Greece simply because of their supposed essence, essentialism which I espouse and articulate here is perhaps best to understood as metaethical, perhaps even ontological, rather than normatively ethical concept. This means that our and more generally our living environment's, of which we are part of, material constitution forms a background to all that there exists, and this must be acknowledged and given a due place in ethical and political thinking and action. This kind of universalist essentialism does not preclude alternative conceptions of the good, contrary to the views of, for example, post-anarchists (see, for example, Swann 2010b, 200), since materialism, i.e. acknowledging and giving a due place for our materially constituted existence in matters involving our and our environment's wellbeing and flourishing, enables any kind of conception of the good to come into being at all.

Given that I conceive materialism to be kind of a necessary but not a sufficient condition[6] and thus giving to my theory both a solid materialist foundation and following from that foundation variety of forms are enabled to manifest themselves in the social sphere. I am inclined to view my conception of materialism to have certain affinity with other socialist thinkers' ideas, such as Laclau & Mouffe's notion of socialist dimension (1985/2014, 162, 176) and Jacques Rancière's equality (2003/2006, 52) as all of them serves as a presupposition and a field in which struggles for emancipation come intelligible and meaningful. It must be stressed, though, that I have developed materialism more as

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[6] Franks (2010, 139-140) has argued rather convincingly that these formulations archetypical for analytical philosophy do not make justice for complex and ever-evolving philosophical theories such as anarchism, offering a more nuanced approach to localise political philosophies core and peripheral features which are subject to temporal and spatial changes based on the work of Michael Freeden. My usage of necessary and sufficient conditions ought to be understood here more as a shorthand and tentative than rigid and ahistorical ideological constructions of analytical philosophy.

an ontological principle than Laclau & Mouffe and Rancière have with their respective concepts, but what draws me to make connection to them instead of explicitly ontological claims like that of Heideggerian Dasein, is their inherent political orientation directed towards various spheres of social reality. Furthermore, linking politics and ontology more closely together is, I believe, consistent with MacIntyre's overall approach of making philosophy relevant again in people's lives and communities in the spirit of Ancient Greece's city-states.

Moreover, materialism also gives a standard against to which evaluate practices whether of individuals or communities. As has been shown above in this paper, this has been one of the most difficult parts of both MacIntyre and Franks' theories to establish clearly without succumbing to relativism. For an argument that materialism can provide such an account, it needs to be emphasised that from this does not follow determinism[7], since this standard is not exhaustive. It only gives preliminary tools of evaluation by pointing out the necessary features, i.e. material, but each practice must be evaluated in the context of their own circumstances. Understanding and accepting that such an account of evaluation is and cannot be anything else but preliminary is not, however, be taken as a sign of weakness for the theory. Quite the opposite is true, since this kind of approach avoids the difficult questions of moral absolutism in regards of knowing and justifying absolutist principles in the complex and ever-evolving world, and on the other hand offers an alternative for relativism by grounding moral philosophical deliberation and evaluation on undisputable facts, which are at the same time lived and shared experiences throughout our environment, without the assumption of fixed and narrow answers. Making the claim that facts play a pivotal role in moral philosophy does in itself fall one to the prey of classical mistake of assuming *ought* from *is*. As MacIntyre (1959/1971; see

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[7] Materialism is not as such either necessarily in contradiction with deterministically ordered models of universe even if it is in contradiction with deterministically theistic theories, like various forms of Christianity, since materialism is structurally devoid of theism. This does not mean that materialism and theism could not co-exist at least theoretically since such possibility has been presented in the form of Hobbesian mechanical materialism for example, but it is hard to imagine theism work in such a union more than superfluous superstructure without any true effect, or vice versa things in material realm only being shallow remains of perfected idealistic forms akin to Platonism. Question of materialism and deterministic explanation excluding (conventional) theism is another question and beyond the scope or relevance for this work.

also 1988, chap. XV-XVI) has shown David Hume, to whom this view is subscribed to and subsequently cited as an opponent of such naturalistic fallacies, never claimed this much and indeed based very much of his own moral and political outlook on the actual English way of things and stressed greatly the value and importance of customs as a stabilising force in the society. Lesson to be the learned from Hume and his later impact is that *is* does play a role in the forming of *ought* and making a strong case for belittling the influence of *is* on the *ought* serves only to blur the interplay between practice and theory, between *is* and *ought*. Therefore, the question is not whether *ought* from *is*, but what kind of *is* should inform *ought*.

MacIntyre addressed the issue of essentialism and matters closely relating to it, such as first principle(s) and ought-is-dichotomy discussed above in relation to Hume, eventually by turning to Thomistic metaphysics affiliating therefore theology with moral progress claiming that they go hand in hand. In his later works it is ubiquitous assumption, but it is also explicitly stated as in an article *Plain Persons and Moral Philosophy* (1992), where he writes that 'The moral progress of the plain person is always the beginnings of pilgrim's progress' (ibid., 152). While one could see such statements more of an allegorical in their nature than actually arguing for inherent and necessary connection between theology and morality, MacIntyre (1990, 124-125) has stressed elsewhere that the strength of which makes Thomism the best tradition to respond issues concerning moral inquiry, is its dialectical birth by Thomas of Aquinas synthesising two rival philosophical traditions, Aristotelianism and Augustinism, competing for the hegemony inside Medieval Roman Catholic Church. MacIntyre contends that Thomism's inherently dialectical nature makes it best suited for further moral progress because it itself was conceived by dialectical play of forces creating superior synthesis in relation to its starting premises. Despite all of Thomism's openness to accept new ideas, MacIntyre is not willing, neither as Aquinas was, to question sacred principles of their system of

thought, namely God and the Scriptures.[8] Religion aside, this comes as problem for philosophy when such disputable belief is taken for granted as a guarantee of moral enquiry, as in the case of Aquinas and MacIntyre. This makes one more convinced to accept MacIntyre's above quotation more as a normative than mere allegorical statement. Although historically widespread assumption, and certainly in Aquinas' time, that there cannot be morality without God or religion, and in the modern times such notion is often associated with Russian novelist Fyodor Dostoevsky, modern anthropology and other similar sciences have discredited such of a notion, or at least logical connection between them where one, morality, could not exist without the other, God or religion. In modern era's philosophy subscribing to such a view explicitly and strongly, as MacIntyre seems to do, at least in certain foundational level, makes his Thomistic theory difficult to accept, at least wholly. On the other hand, going against his own time has been somewhat typical for MacIntyre, and for him embracing Thomism seems to fit to the that mould.

It is noteworthy that in *A Short History of Ethics* (1966/1998) MacIntyre, who at that time was not an Aristotelian or Thomist, presents criticism of Aristotle and Aquinas which I find compelling to accept in large parts still, even if MacIntyre has had a change of mind since, especially regarding Aquinas. MacIntyre's treatment of Aristotle is rather sympathetic, yet he offers a far stronger criticism towards Aristotle's hierarchical and discriminating account of well-ordered virtue ethical society than in his later avowedly virtue ethical writings. Partly reason for this is down to the fact that *A Short History of Ethics* is rather ambitious book encompassing the historical development of western moral philosophy without argument for any specific tradition of moral philosophy, apart from emphasising that ethical thinking does not happen in a vacuum but is historical in its nature (Ibid., chap. 1). Mainly, however, it is about MacIntyre's subsequent conviction and commitment to virtue ethic that has seen him, since *After Virtue* (1981/2014), engaged in positive theory building of his own, which was

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[8] Janet Coleman (1994, 81-82) has questioned MacIntyre's presentation of Aristotle and Aquinas as particularly dynamic thinkers, instead offered a view of them, perhaps more aligned to the conventional standpoint, that their philosophy is ahistorical and rely on universal, timeless essences against which practices are measured to. Depicting their theories instead as historically bound MacIntyre is not, according to Coleman, actually a Thomist.

largely absent in his earlier career, forcing him to develop virtue ethical theory further to address Aristotle's, and in general Ancient Greece's virtue ethical thought's, elitist foundations which effectively make philosophy and happiness only truly accessible to 'a small leisured minority'' (MacIntyre 1966/1998, 83). For MacIntyre, one of the ways to keep Aristotle's virtue ethic's most valid parts relevant and rejuvenate virtue ethics is to emphasise practices, which has enabled for example Franks to mesh MacIntyrean virtue ethic with anarchism (see chap. 3 above), instead of rigid essentialism according to metaphysical biology. Another means for MacIntyre has been his radical reversal of opinion on Aquinas, as well as Christianity overall. Whereas in *A Short History of Ethics* MacIntyre (1966/1998, chap. 9) presents Aquinas and medieval Catholic thought overall as influential but philosophically susceptible as its it grounds itself on non-philosophical sources such as Scripture, leading MacIntyre to largely overlook (Catholic) Christianity significance in moral philosophy's canon. Contrast between his earlier and later positions are clearly remarked by MacIntyre in his preface to second edition of *A Short history of Ethics* where he lambasts himself for treating Aquinas and other Catholic thinkers as insufficiently philosophical and finds in hindsight much to be desired in his analysis of Catholicism (1997/1998b, ix-xi), While his reversal on Aquinas is understandable in the light of his later writings and positions, I incline to argue that MacIntyre himself has provided a good argument in his earlier work to question his later stance on whether Aquinas, or more generally strongly religion bound theories, can provide foundations for a sustainable and feasible moral philosophy. This is not to deny theologies, especially Catholicism which has long tradition of rational theology aimed at providing a sound base and justification for belief, would be void of all moral content. However, by closer inspection it does come apparent that such theories rest unwarrantedly on a matter of preference and belief ultimately making them liable to moral subjectivism. This is something which is observed by young MacIntyre but which he later made attempts to overcome through his efforts to 'modernise' Aristotelian virtue ethical theory mainly by emphasising Aquinas' role in its development while simultaneously belittling, but not hiding, Thomism's strong belief based foundation while lauding its moral philosophical credentials. I find myself agreeing with young

MacIntyre on this matter while lamenting older MacIntyre's conclusion to land on epistemologically shaky grounds of theology as an answer to an otherwise acute observation for the need of essentialism.

Albeit I find MacIntyre's Thomistic solution to the problem of essentialism unsatisfactory, he does make valid point of having coherent ontological grounding to moral philosophy. So, with some cautiousness, I could claim my materialism take such a position equivalent of what MacIntyre has in his theory for theologically ordered universe. Materialism does certainly differ in various parts from Thomistic ontology, most obviously being methodologically atheistic or irreligious. It also differs in its greater plausibility to ground one's actions and beliefs, moral or other, than Thomism in that we have good enough reasons to believe certain kind of ontology to be true if it can give us satisfactory (secular) explanations to certain questions. MacIntyre takes these questions to be answered in Thomistic theological ontology to be best one has found so far (1990), but MacIntyre seems to be taking theory's internal coherence as a sign of its truthfulness. Thomistic theory and MacIntyre's own updated version of it might be internally coherent, but same can be said from many other theories as well, and even if it could be accepted that MacIntyre's theory is more coherent than other competing theories which he has criticised for inconsistencies found in them, it does not follow from this that his Thomistic theory triumphs. Only condition under which such conclusion can be made with any degree of confidence is *belief*, and nothing suggests we ought to belief more in theological explanations, of any kind, than materialistic constitution of reality and explanations and framework which it gives us to act, morally and otherwise, in the world. Lifeworld, or certain *Dasein*, of theologically ordered universe of later MacIntyre's Thomism has its teleology towards God and what such deity has in mind for humans when they have fully realised their potential and become virtuous according to a certain fixed ahistorical *telos*, that of Catholic Christianity in the context of Thomism. MacIntyre (e.g. 1990 & 1999) seems to maintain, nevertheless, that his earlier practice-oriented virtue ethics, based on which Franks develops his anarchistic virtue ethics, does hold its validity, since essentialism which he readily come to embrace later concerns more general level of ontology than

moral philosophical practical matters, which are only intelligent when more foundational ontological principles, in his theory, those of Thomism, are accepted, but does not directly determine outcomes of moral deliberation.

One could argue that issue between materialism and Thomism, or more generally between open-ended and closed ontologies, is case of preference, and only criteria one can truly have is the coherence of such theories. Coincidentally, that kind of submission to relativism is the most abhorrent conclusion for both MacIntyre and Franks, yet both seem to edge towards it. While Franks' position is easier to show implicitly acceding to relativism (see Swann 2010b; also above chap. 5.1.), MacIntyre case is more complicated largely because of his decades long polishing of his theory which is far more ambitious in its scope to accommodate subjects ranging from ontology to ethics and politics to moral psychology, which is not surprising considering he sees himself as a successor to Aristotle and Aquinas. Comparing to Franks, who concentrates largely on moral and political philosophical aspects, MacIntyre's more encompassing intellectual project and greater variation of allegiances throughout of that endeavour, makes it harder to precisely categorise MacIntyre and his positions. However, what is relevant to the case in hand, MacIntyre could be summarised as having an elaborate and internally coherent system supposedly safeguarding against relativism, but in order to this be convincing theologically ordered universe serves as a necessary backstop for it be efficient, and such is in the last instance matter of belief, leading to relativism akin to MacIntyre's much derided existentialism (e.g. 1981/2014) as one's philosophical outlook is ultimately a matter of choice (1988, chap. XX), even if he stresses the intellectual dialectical debate and coming to accept the strongest argument, one is, as he openly admits (1990), always a partial participant in those debates. It would seem strange that such commitment would not play role of slanting one's view towards pre-determined desired results, no matter how strongly one would strive to objectivity despite acknowledged preference. MacIntyre is certainly right in emphasising that we never can be objective in a way common fallacy stemming from natural sciences has made us believe. This does not mean

that one could not deliberate matters in a comprehensive and analytic manner but neglecting to recognise one's deeply held views does not help reaching desired, yet ultimately utopian dream of objectivity. Quite the contrary applies and by acknowledging one's biases one is closer to objectivity, as close as one can realistically expect to achieve. Same applies for MacIntyre, who does not seem to be able to reconcile his Thomism and the religious-philosophical implications it carries with his earlier, still very much endorsed, commitment to practices at the centre of virtue ethics. Claiming that, such practises need a wider framework to be intelligent and have meaning, provided by Thomistic universe, MacIntyre takes a leap, which assumes too much, without providing answer to why one must go to such conclusion in order to make practices and life, which is constituted by those practices, meaningful, especially when such conclusion rests on, in the last instance, belief.

Noponen (2011, 34) raises the important issue about MacIntyre when he asks can MacIntyre's theory, while one can argue it to be internally coherent, be empirical supported? The burden of proof about validity of MacIntyre's theory to clinging on the empirical evidence's support is also recognised by Knight (1998a, 10-11) and by MacIntyre (see e.g. 1981/2014, 27) himself when he stresses the importance of recognising the sociological theory accompanying every moral-political philosophy. Noponen's interpretation of MacIntyre puts into the centre of his theory the phenomenon of alienation from practises emphasising Aristotelian-Marxist reading of MacIntyre neglecting his later Thomism and theoretical implications brought with it to his overall project. While Noponen's reading of MacIntyre as an Aristotelian-Marxist thinker does support Franks', and subsequently my, take on MacIntyre as a virtue ethical ally in proving explicit commitment to virtue ethics to be harnessed for the anarchist, or more broadly speaking libertarian socialist, cause, it does not problematise enough consequences brought to MacIntyre's theory by its commitment to Thomism.

Noponen (2011) does not mention what possible implications MacIntyre's later turn to Thomism has for his theory. For example, his (ibid., 51-52) argument that evolutionary explanation model for

morality and moral realism's emergence throughout the civilisations, which he (ibid., 60, ref. 15) claims not be in contradiction with MacIntyre. However, Noponen does not take into consideration how MacIntyre with his later committed Thomism would react with such of an interpretation. Also, as Noponen (2011, 44, 59 ref. 7) notes that MacIntyre's Aristotelian ethics stresses the practices as the most primary feature of Aristotle's theory overcoming the criticism presented for example by Charles R. Pidge that Aristotelianism's functionalist conception of humanity would bind Aristotelianism to biological assumptions regarding human nature, which do not hold in the light of scientific, naturalist view of humanity. Even if Aristotelianism can be recovered by prioritising arguably the most relevant feature of Aristotle's theory, those of practices, MacIntyre's later Thomism and metaphysical-theological implications associated with it might reverse this, since MacIntyre (1992/1998, 152) has endorsed the view of the need to have theological framework to make practices intelligible. Such of view would indicate replacing erroneous Aristotelian metaphysical-biological essentialism with Thomist metaphysical-theological essentialism, which is equally susceptible to be rejected by modern scientific-naturalist outlook.

Instead by focusing Aristotelian-Marxist side of MacIntyre and arguing (Noponen 2011, 50; MacIntyre 1994/1998) that MacIntyre's project involves some kind of a task of completing Marx's unfinished philosophical work underlined in *Theses on Feuerbach* (1845), Noponen's interpretation assumes both that MacIntyre sees Marx as essentialist thinker, which most certainly is the case, and more controversially that young Marx's theory has implicit essentialist view of human nature[9]. Concerning the question of what kind of essentialist Marx was, or would have been, I would, tentatively, argue essentialist of historical and materialist kind articulating for a view of essentialism which would overcome reification into ahistorical essence or forms akin to Platonic forms. This kind of view is supported by Marx and Engels' theory of materialist conception of history, or historical

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[9] What is the relation between young and mature Marx in general and particularly relevant here concerning essentialism is another question which is not discussed here further (for that discussion see e.g. Moisio 2011), but what is, nevertheless, worth mentioning here is that MacIntyre supports the continuation theory between young and mature Marx in the dispute regarding the Marx's intellectual development (MacIntyre 1994/1998, 224; also, Noponen 2011, 36)

materialism (see e.g. their 1845-1846/1998; also, Marx 1844/2007 and 1845/1998), and also by Bakunin (see e.g. 1882/2016), all three, and many other socialist materialists of the 19th century, where in one way or another disciples of Ludwig Feuerbach and recognised widely his work, especially *The Essence of Christianity* (1841/1989).

Emphasising connection between ontology and ethics is commendable, but more modest ontology is better suited to serve such need. That would be materialist in its essence following the example set by Feuerbach and his followers in various strands of socialism. Therefore, offering a way to connect materialist essentialism with revolutionary socialist thought and particularly in this thesis with anarchism.

6.2. Mutually Completing Characters of Virtue Ethics and Materialism

MacIntyre's later career book *Dependant Rational Animals* (1999) gives, I believe, an account which points to directions which make combining virtue ethics and materialism, and to lesser degree radical socialism, including anarchism, with them more plausible than it might first appear. In *Dependant Rational Animals* (1999) MacIntyre deals primarily with the question of vulnerability of animals[10] , both human and non-human. This is shown by arguments and examples in which, first and foremost, their physical existence is threatened, therefore risking their development in other areas of life which are built upon the physical existence, namely the body, and its well-being. This is materialism as it is universally understood and accepted, even if usually not consciously recognised. So MacIntyre's starting point here is (human) animals' material well-being and from this he goes on to his more familiar argument about the importance of virtues and social context in which they are practised for the flourishing of both individuals and their immediate communities and finally of the species overall.

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[10] MacIntyre does spend considerably part of the book to emphasise that all animals have shared vulnerability and thus pointing to the fact that animals have more common with each other than it is generally recognised. Although that part of MacIntyre's argument is interesting, it is out of the scope of this work to examine what implications it would have, for example how humans should treat non-human animals.

For my argument about the need to explicitly recognise the interlocked nature of virtue ethics and materialism, MacIntyre's discussion of material vulnerability in relation to virtues and human flourishing is a sign of affinity between our projects and their theoretical closeness with each other. MacIntyre too, as am I, is regretful about the negligence of bodily experience in moral philosophy, exemplified by his brief reference to Maurice Merleau-Ponty and his remark that we are our bodies (MacIntyre 1999, 6). Moreover, MacIntyre while using Aristotle's ideas as the starting point of an account which he calls 'virtues of acknowledged dependence' (ibid., 8) since MacIntyre sees him as the philosopher who has taken into consideration human animality most seriously, offering the best road to think about vulnerability and dependence in relation to moral philosophy, he also criticises Aristotle as being one of the oldest originators of obscuring our bodily being and its relevance to philosophy. This is down to Aristotle's ideal citizen, the magnanimous man (see *Nicomachean Ethics*, IV chap. 3), and the masculine virtues[11] closely associated with it, which presents exaltation of self-sufficiency and not allowing to show signs of weakness (MacIntyre 1999, 7). So, even if Aristotle might have acknowledged more fully than anyone else during his own time or a long time afterwards how human beings are material, bodily creatures, this clearly did not affected to his political and ethical thinking to include the need for dependence and co-operation, at least not on equal terms between people, with model of virtuousness being the magnanimous man, who must demand superiority on the basis of his supposed moral greatness.

Closely linked to MacIntyre's remarks on vulnerability are the references he makes to Marx in *Dependant Rational Animals,* which are worthwhile to mention also in the context of virtue ethics and materialism. While it is not uncommon for MacIntyre to cite Marx also in his later explicitly virtue ethical works, and usually in a rather sympathetic tone, making such positive reference to Marx, a materialist, in a work which addresses living beings shared vulnerability, especially bodily i.e.

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[11] One can see here a precedent of what one would call contemporarily as 'toxic masculinity'. More generally it is interesting how virtues have been gendered into masculine and feminine virtues and what kind of effect such a division still has in virtue ethical discourse.

material vulnerability, is noteworthy for the purposes to emphasise connection between (MacIntyrean) virtue ethics and materialism. MacIntyre (1999, chap. 11) refers to Marx in the context of discussing political and social structures of communities where virtues of acknowledged dependence would flourish. MacIntyre begins his inquiry with a reference to Marx's famous maxim of 'From each according to her or his ability, to each, so far as is possible, according to her or his needs' (quoted in MacIntyre 1999, 130), remarking that even if achieving maxim's goal could not be possible, to take it as a guideline and apply it, even imperfectly, is needed in order to build a society where wellbeing and flourishment of all is the focus and vulnerability of its members is the norm, not a special exception to the rule of ever active and vibrant individuals. MacIntyre not only comes to reject capitalism as economic system of such a desired society which he theorises about (ibid., 145) but also modern nation-states (ibid., 131-133), which gives added weight not only to the connection with MacIntyre's virtue ethics and materialism but also with anarchism. It is worth mentioning that this does not mean that MacIntyre is an anarchist or even a Marxist, since he has identified himself most clearly as an Aristotelian-Thomist (e.g. 1990; 1999), but given his positions on various economic and political questions as well as his past background as a Marxist, there is considerable common ground between virtue ethics which MacIntyre has developed and endorsed and various strands of materialist based socialisms. Another related question would be what really is MacIntyre political position considering his various seemingly contradicting views and affiliations. That is extremely interesting question, yet one which is not of great relevance to this thesis. Given all the shared affinity that can be discerned to exist between (MacIntyre's) virtue ethics and materialism, nevertheless, MacIntyre does not describe his theory as materialistic, thereby treating material constitution of life merely as a shared, presupposed fact of life, but as such of a fact which cannot be excluded if moral and political philosophy is to be taken seriously.

7. Points of Criticism

In this section I will address in more detail certain parts of my work which are in varying degrees in conflict with intentions of thinkers, mostly MacIntyre and Franks, of whom I have drawn material for my own theory to the conclusion diverging from their respective conclusions. Of course, it is commonplace that philosophers borrow premises from others who can hold widely differing views, but since I have wanted to show that one can link Franks and MacIntyre's, or to put it more generally anarchism and virtue ethics, views together with the addition of materialism in one coherent theory, it is relevant to ask is this kind kinship between anarchism, virtue ethics and materialism possible and what kind of problems can raise, and have already risen, out of such combination of theories. Some of these already existing and possible issues I will identify and try to give answers and assurances that despite certain internal tensions that combination of virtue ethical anarchism with materialism as an essentialism is a plausible addition to the philosophical discourse.

7.1. Suitability of Virtue Ethics for Anarchism

Virtue ethics and anarchism cause understandably certain amount of doubt when paired together as Franks or I have done here following his footsteps. Initially they seem to be strange bedfellows from obvious reasons as one is ethical theory which has hierarchically structured class society strongly embedded to itself ever since the theories of Plato and Aristotle and another is a political theory which most radically calls for non-hierarchical relations in all spheres of life. But as Franks, and also MacIntyre particularly in his early works following his aretaic turn, mainly *After Virtue* (1981/2014), have argued what is also a crucial part of virtue ethics, and for them the most defining part of it, is its understanding of practices and how they constitute building of both flourishing persons and communities and how their flourishing is intimately connected to each other. Also, earlier mentioned history of anarchism and its relation to Marxism in the early days of working-class movement does

support the case of affinity between anarchism and virtue ethics. But it would be a great simplification to assert that virtue ethics would be exclusively compatible with anarchism within the broad banner of socialism, or that all anarchists have been and only can be virtue ethicists. Same goes for other socialists, as not e.g. all Marxists are consequentalists, let alone Leninist brand of consequentalists. For example, Sergei Nechayev's (1847-1882), who has been often seen as emblematic figure of anarchism's indifference to ethics and for anarchists supposed mindless appetite for destruction, 'any means necessary' consequentalism is closer to Leninism than main currents of the anarchism of his era which adhered to prefigurative principle, at least implicitly (Jun 2010, 58-59, Franks 2006, 98). Therefore, the most natural objection to combine virtue ethics and anarchism comes from within anarchism and more broadly from the larger sphere of socialist thinking. To give an adequate answer to the question of why virtue ethics over other ethical traditions to give revolutionary socialist philosophy and movements their needed moral foundations[12], is beyond the scope of this thesis but it is important to remark that within anarchism there is a significant moral philosophical debate and variance regarding which ethical theory is best suited for anarchism (see e.g. Franks 2006). Here for the reasons of convenience and limited space, I assume based on, mainly, the work of Franks that virtue ethical position is not only possible but the most suitable for the anarchist cause.

7.2. Compatibility of Materialism as an Essentialism with Anarchism

Perhaps the most consistent feature of all post-anarchism is its anti-essentialism. Many post-anarchists have argued that essentialism is inherently restricting and hierarchical notion of classical anarchism which is to be discarded from anarchism so that anarchism can be a viable political philosophy for our ages (see e.g. Newman 2011). I have already addressed this issue by using Swann's

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[12] This has been also a under debate within socialism and some have outright rejected the need for moral philosophy in the revolutionary thinking and action considering such activity to be a part of bourgeois superstructure which is claimed to follow deterministically from economic base. Therefore, it is suggested, such deliberation is rather useless, and even counter-revolutionary. This kind of view has been prevalent particularly in orthodox, soviet style Marxism, but also certain strands of anarchism can be argued to have been guilty of such a crudely deterministic view.

close readings of inherent essentialisms founded also in the fervently outspoken anti-essentialists, especially Saul Newman. Even if such contradictions are found in many anti-essentialist post-anarchists, that does not erase the importance of their argument underlying the demands for anti-essentialism. What is more relevant for my case of materialistic essentialist anarchism, is Franks' insistence on the one hand rejecting essentialism and on the other firmly claiming not be a post-anarchist while appreciating the emergence of post-anarchism and its proponents questioning the foundations of anarchistic thought. Franks (2008) has argued against universalist moral philosophical versions of anarchism with the help from the criticism provided by post-anarchists. These include universalist naturalist position that does come in certain aspects, particularly in ontological claims, quite close to my formulation of materialism thus serving as a fine counter-argument for me to examine. Two other universalist modes of thinking identified by Franks are Kantian rationalism and intuitionism, of which the latter is largely dismissed because of its well-established difficulties and, also because it has not been influential in the anarchist moral philosophy. Kantian rationalism is the other universalist (meta-)ethical approach alongside naturalism which are taken to closer scrutiny by Franks.

Next, I will construct a counterargument for my above formulated claim of the need for essentialism in the form materialism to ground Benjamin Franks' practical anarchism with solid meta-ethical and ontological foundation by constructing such a counter-argument based on Franks' writings where he has discussed meta-ethical claims of anarchism. I will mainly use Franks' article *Postanarchism and Meta-Ethics* (2008) because it deals with moral universalism and subjectivism, and the reasons why Franks comes to reject them gives one a good grasp of why Franks would, therefore, most likely reject any appeals to essentialism no matter what it would constitute of.

Franks (2008) presents through critically engaging with both classical anarchism and post-anarchism's meta-ethical presuppositions his own position which, Franks claims, is a synthesis of

classical anarchism's moral universalism and post-anarchism's moral subjectivism by taking the best features of them both while avoiding the possible perils included in such ethical positions. Firstly, Franks uses post-anarchistic criticism of classical anarchism's meta-ethical positions to reject moral universalism, whether in realist or naturalist formulations, which is frequently associated to anarchism. Franks, following largely post-anarchist Saul Newman, discerns three issues which make anarchism and moral universalism unattainable meta-ethical stand for anarchism. These are disempowerment of agency, promotion of hierarchies and epistemological inadequacy. By disempowerment of agency is meant that moral universalism restricts moral subjects' ability to create norms, not just choosing the perceived right from wrong as in traditional humanism. Promotion of hierarchies brought by moral universalism is based on the account that there are 'rules which apply to all regardless of context ignore, and therefore disadvantage, those who are in an unequal position to begin with' (Ibid., 142). Finally, epistemologically moral universalism is in its most vulnerable according to its critics, since such claims ultimately rely on constructions which are unknowable and untestable, beyond the grasp of critical examination. (Ibid., 140-144.)

After positively referring to Newman's post-anarchistic critique of moral universalism, heavily inspired by Max Stirner, Franks offers criticism to post-anarchism and particularly to its preferred meta-ethical position of subjectivism. Again, Franks discern three grave errors in post-anarchistic subjectivism: solipsism, recreation of social hierarchies and epistemological failure to recognise its own social embeddedness. Moral solipsism, which is at least implicitly exalted in post-anarchism through influence of Stirner and Nietzsche, makes critical debate of moral philosophy impossible, since only the self can be the source of moral knowledge and one can morally legitimise every conceivable action imagined, if one so wills. Post-anarchism's commitment to the Stirnerian ego who is on the path of one's own development towards liberated existence allows, and in order to able to distinguish one's enlightened state implicitly even demands, ignorant mass as its counterpart, thus (re)creating hierarchises. Lastly, universally abstracted Stirnerian ego freed from the social order does

neglect grossly material and social circumstances in which such abstraction can come into being in the first place and one cannot abstract oneself from the surrounding world and not be part of it as was already shown by Marx in his criticism of Stirner (see e.g. chap. 5.2. in this thesis for Choat's Marxist critique). (Franks 2008, 144-146.)

From the criticism which Franks (2008) present for both moral universalism and subjectivism, which, as Franks also recognises (Ibid., 148), do fall to prey to similar criticisms with each other, albeit from different perspectives, he presents his own proposition as the needed meta-ethical stand which combines the best of universalism and subjectivism, that of practical, or prefigurative, anarchism based on the Alasdair MacIntyre's virtue ethical theory that places emphasis on the practices and internal goods provided by those practices, theory which he has since constructed in more detail in later works, especially in his article *Anarchism and the Virtues* (2010) (see chap. 2. and 3. in this thesis for elaboration of MacIntyre and Franks' theories). What is most relevant here is Franks' persistence of rejection of essentialism in any form, which he, as Newman and other post-anarchists, sees as *inherently* oppressive. This view of Franks is permeated throughout his writings (see e.g. 2008, 136; 2007, 140; 2010, 144, 154-155). As Swann (2010b, 211; see also 5.1. in this thesis) analyses Franks posits moral universalism, thus essentialism at the same time, as diminishing agency and promoting hierarchies without consideration that universalism's content could be described positively, aligned to the practical anarchism's position of contesting hierarchies as the content of subscribed universalism. Besides narrow and inherently negative understanding of universalism, Franks position is locked to be anti-essentialist also in his strong conviction that there is no epistemologically convincing 'methodology for discovering what constitutes humanity's universal quintessence' (2010, 144), or failure to reach consensus amongst essentialists which form of essentialism to accept (Ibid.). These claims, alongside the insistence that essentialism inherently restricts revolutionary activity, show Franks' unwillingness to change his view of essentialism and what that could be and mean. As I have argued above (see chap. 6.1.) there is an essentialism, that of materialism which constitutes

humanity's universal quintessence and there is a consensus about that essentialism as the lived experience of our daily lives. Admittingly, materialism as essentialism is usually only implicitly recognised state of affairs which ought to become consciously recognised in order to have a real effect upon political and moral practices. This kind of transition could be described analogously in regard to Marxism as a change from materialism-in-itself to materialism-for-itself. Furthermore, Franks' understanding of essentialism as a fixed and ahistorical is not particularly convincing either, as essentialism which would subscribe to naturalism and scientific facts, as materialism does, implies that evolution of species and life is ever changing and dynamic process where multiple factors influence the outcomes and directions which that development takes. That process' status of being in constant flux, nevertheless, does not change that fact that it does ground its processes on materialist foundation. This being true in natural sciences it can only mean to be more relevant in social sciences because of their subject material of human individuals and communities to alter radically, if necessary, our living circumstances and structures. Therefore, it would be wrong to say that essentialism, at least in the form of materialism which I espouse, restricts possibility of change, when in fact it makes change intelligible and meaningful. Also, one of the most regrettable feature of post-anarchism for the anarchist, or in general to the libertarian socialist, canon has been its propensity to overlook class and economical factors in the struggles for emancipation and this is also duly noted by Franks (2007, 136-138, see also above chap. 5). While Franks does voice his concern for negligence of economical inequalities brought by capitalism, here, perhaps more than elsewhere, is seen the weakness of Franks' position for not embracing materialism since materialist deprivation and vulnerability tend to manifest itself in the economic sphere, i.e. poverty. Without the solid anchoring of his theory in materialist foundation which takes on a firm foundational level as a starting point our material constitution, I am doubtful of Franks' theory's capability to address sufficiently the strain put to our material subsistence under the capitalist system of production.

Above (see chap. 6.) I presented essentialism in the form of materialism as a needed amendment to Franks' theory to make it appealing and meaningful theory for anarchism, but the large amount of argumentation and consistency of Franks for the vehement rejection of essentialism suggest that there is no place for essentialism in any form in Franks' theory as it consciously positions itself against essentialism. Thus, it makes sense for me to distinguish my attempted amendment from Franks' theory and use it as a basis for my own theory, which I would call materialist-virtue ethical anarchism, while recognising the strong influence of Franks' practical anarchism.

8. Further Paths of Inquiry

Closely connected to the critical remarks is the further work which is to be done on development of materialist-virtue ethical anarchism. In this chapter I tentatively present some of the directions to go with in order to deepen the analysis regarding materialist-virtue ethical anarchism and conceptualise it into more fully fleshed out theory. Firstly, more thorough examination is needed of post-anarchism and particularly post-structuralism, which is another tradition of thought alongside anarchism constituting the formulation of post-anarchism. Here my conception of post-anarchism has been formed largely through the gaze of anarchist thinkers, who are not themselves post-anarchists, albeit ones who sees the value of the critique of classical anarchism presented by post-anarchists. Amongst the post-anarchist thinkers, the work of Todd May has been largely ignored here, partly because of Franks' preference for Saul Newman' s criticism of classical anarchism's perceived essentialism. May's post-anarchism offers a more complex and nuanced view of post-anarchism in contrast to Newman's who focuses more on the question of essentialism. May, whose version of post-anarchism has been characterised as 'tactical' and dealing with considered sophistication around the question of power (Jun 2010, 48-49; see also May 1994) is, therefore, a post-anarchist thinker with whom I wish to engage more in the future. Moreover, the seminal works of thinkers often grouped together under a loose label of post-structuralists, such as Michel Foucault and Gilles Deleuze, have a lot to offer not

only through post-anarchists, but also their own original work. Foucault's Nietzschean project of genealogy does have, or at least it can be interpreted to have, a verifiable materialist foundation, whether it is called contingent physicalism and/or micro-Marxism (Ojakangas 1998, 26), which does not seem to succumb to essentialism in any rigid sense, or it is certainly not Foucault's aim. Furthermore, MacIntyre in his later period work *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry* (1990) takes Foucault to be the best successor of Nietzsche and his genealogy project which MacIntyre pits alongside encyclopaedical understanding characterised by ninth edition of *Encyclopaedia Britannica* against his favoured Thomism for the best theory to explicate moral enquiry. There MacIntyre clearly continues the work of *After Virtue*, especially its pivotal chapter 9 titled *Nietzsche or Aristotle* (1981/2014, 127-139) but reflecting the change of his thinking main stage is now taken by their finest disciples, at least in MacIntyre's mind, Foucault and Aquinas.

Another interesting road to examine in relation to my sketched theory of materialist-virtue ethical anarchism is the Frankfurt School. What strikes to me as a particularly shared concern is the need to carve a theory which is at the same time aimed towards emancipation, yet never closing itself off akin to a closed consciousness, since emancipatory theory in order to be such must always be open for new horizons instead of becoming stifled. This is clearly recognised in Theodor Adorno's thought on moral philosophy and negative dialectics. The most obvious link between Frankfurt School and anarchism in general is Herbert Marcuse both in his writing criticising from a broadly, yet always committed, Marxist perspective cold war and their ideological bases, as well as in his role as one of the foremost figures of the New Left of the 1960s. As New Left did embrace many forms of new and older conceptions to revitalise socialism, so did Marcuse. While both Marcuse and anarchists, such as Murray Bookchin, rejected the label of anarchist for him, Marcuse, nevertheless, comes rather close to anarchistic positions in many of his writings, most clearly in *One-Dimensional Man* (1964/2002) where he condemns both capitalistic west and socialist east for repressing freedom and individuality in the name of ever-growing hold of bureaucratic power to increase production and

economic growth, echoing the shared goal of both anarchism and Marxism originating far before bureaucratic state socialism came to become the standard of socialist practice, that in ideal situation there would not be capitalism or states. Also, in relation to Hegel's essence and existence and distinguishing the difference between them, Marcuse offers essence as something which enables to see the transcending qualities, yet unrealised potentialities in contrast to existence's acceptance of reality principle, settling for things as they are; Former is characterised as negative thinking, while the latter is positive thinking (Kellner, 1984, 133-135). Such a definition of negative thinking is found also in Adorno as a crux of moral philosophy of which Adorno was famously reluctant to give any positive content emphasising the negative, which enables the emergence of new, unexpected even, possibilities to manifest themselves without confinement to the pre-determined and possibly restricting course of action (Kotkavirta 1999).

9. Revolutionary Trinity: Anarchism, Materialism and Virtue Ethics

For conclusion I will summarise the argument which I have presented in this thesis for materialist-virtue ethical anarchism, and claim based on the inquiry I have conducted here that there is a case for a theory which explicitly combines anarchism, materialism and virtue ethics. As a starting point I took Alasdair MacIntyre's highly influential virtue ethical account, and particularly the formation of it found in his book *After Virtue* (1981/2014), and Benjamin Franks' theory of anarchism built around high degree of compatibility between anarchism and virtue ethics, especially that of MacIntyre's during his *After Virtue*-era which emphasised practices as the most defining feature of virtue ethics. I identified the question of essentialism to be highly problematic for both of them and through that discovery came to conclude that in order to ground virtue ethical anarchism as developed by Franks, a strong anti-essentialist, more convincingly it needed essentialism as would, and has been the case historically from classical anarchism of the 19th century to post-anarchism of the 21st century, any anarchist theory which takes core anarchist values such as autonomy seriously. Insight illuminating

the ubiquitous nature of essentialism in the works of anarchist thinkers was provided by the work of Thomas Swann (see 2010a; above chap. 5.1.). I developed my theory of materialism as a necessary essentialism against MacIntyre's later era embrace of Thomism and Thomistic essentialism. Then I looked into Franks' inherent anti-essentialism in his theory and constructed out of it a counter-argument against my explicitly essentialist standpoint and also acknowledged some of the alternative ethical conceptions to virtue ethics which can be taken in the context of anarchism. Finally, I addressed some of the future themes which could and should be examined in the forthcoming works in developing further materialist-virtue ethical anarchism.

Vindicating materialism as an emancipatory and open, yet not an oppressive and closed, essentialism is needed for comprehensive and appealing theory and practice of anarchism. Swann's criticism has acutely shown that deficiency in Franks' otherwise invigorating and promising theory, is the lack of proper foundations for his theory, while at the same time claiming to reject relativism, while inadvertently falling prey to it. I have, like MacIntyre, brought essentialism to the theory, but unlike MacIntyre's Thomistic turn, I have placed less demanding but practically unobjectionable 'first principle', materialism, to the foundational level of not only moral and political philosophy, but that of basis for all thinking and action, refocusing our attention to our shared material experience through, first and foremost, our bodies and its vulnerability and dependence of others. No matter how common sensical such approach would seem, it is crucial and comes naturally, so to speak without going here to discuss ambiguousness associated to the term, to us all in our being, so neglecting it is a grave error. Accepting explicitly materialism which I have been developing in this work, and this point I cannot stress enough, does not mean determinate reductionism, but makes conditions, in and through we live, recognised more fully, enabling us to make better decisions. And those decisions I would suggest ought to be according to principles of anarchist, or more broadly speaking libertarian socialist, theoretical tradition opposing hierarchies and building truly equalitarian, not only in form and but also in content, alternatives to contemporary liberal-democratic capitalism which places priority

solely to the external goods, such as economic wealth and growth. Franks has argued, rather convincingly in my opinion, virtue ethical prefiguration and practices are integral to achieve such alternatives which places importance to the practices' internal goods, such as social justice and equality. However, such endeavour, I claim, can only be meaningfully, and with large mass appeal, generated with a sound essentialism making intelligible those enterprises by grounded understanding and commitment to our material constitution.

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