



Hume on Artificial Lives with a Rejoinder to A. C. MacIntyre

James King

Hume Studies Volume XIV, Number 1 (April, 1988) 53-92.

Your use of the HUME STUDIES archive indicates your acceptance of HUME STUDIES' Terms and Conditions of Use, available at <http://www.humesociety.org/hs/about/terms.html>.

HUME STUDIES' Terms and Conditions of Use provides, in part, that unless you have obtained prior permission, you may not download an entire issue of a journal or multiple copies of articles, and you may use content in the HUME STUDIES archive only for your personal, non-commercial use.

Each copy of any part of a HUME STUDIES transmission must contain the same copyright notice that appears on the screen or printed page of such transmission.

For more information on HUME STUDIES contact humestudies-info@humesociety.org

<http://www.humesociety.org/hs/>

HUME ON ARTIFICIAL LIVES
with a Rejoinder to A.C. MacIntyre

The variety of human cultures fascinated Enlightenment thinkers and evoked certain problems for philosophical discussion. Wide experience of other societies, as well as the study of history, disclosed moral systems interestingly different from modern European mores. Also a student of other cultures, historical and contemporary, David Hume is a moderate pluralist on the matter of alternative moral systems. He acknowledges that there are systems of values other than that shared by his readers which qualify as moralities; but more interestingly, he also holds that there are some such systems which, despite the claims of their adherents, fail to qualify as moralities. Thus Hume opposes forms of relativism that allow any system which a community deems to be a moral code has to be acknowledged as constituting a genuine morality. In this paper I address the question of how Hume can discriminate among value systems and declare some to be moralities, some not.¹

Given the design of his philosophical approach to morals, addressing this question is a matter of some importance for Hume, since he maintains that moral reflection takes its departure from everyday moral beliefs and sentiments. This being the case, we might expect that what should count as 'everyday moral beliefs and sentiments' would be whatsoever any individual or group puts forward as a morality, and that Hume's pluralism impedes him from raising a critical challenge to any system advanced, no matter how strange it might be. But Hume holds that certain systems advanced for the guidance of life which are sharply opposed to

everyday beliefs and sentiments do not constitute a morality, even if they number many as adherents. It is instructive to observe that A.C. MacIntyre believes that Hume's position is deeply flawed. He asserts that the treatment of rival tables of the virtues constitutes a most serious weakness in Hume's theory of morals.² MacIntyre contends that Hume's spurning of the monkish virtues, for instance, or his preference of Cicero's Offices over the Christian Whole Duty of Man, is devoid of theoretical justification and amounts to a matter of personal idiosyncrasy and eighteenth-century class elitism. Thus this seems a problem worthy of discussion.

In what follows I shall: (a) lay out the problem of artificial lives as it arises in A Dialogue; (b) describe five points of differentiation between artificial lives and nonartificial lives; (c) review some less than fully satisfactory solutions to the problem; (d) introduce what I take to be the chief considerations supporting Hume's rejection of artificial lives; and finally (e) discuss whether MacIntyre's objections to Hume's treatment of artificial lives are sustainable.

1. The Context of the Problem

Hume deals with diversity of morals most expressly in A Dialogue, the short work appended to the second Enquiry.³ The essay records an exchange between one Palamedes, a lover of the novel and the striking, and his interlocutor, referred to merely as "I". Palamedes confounds the interlocutor by narrating a story about a distant people (the inhabitants of "Fourli") whose mores include practices, apparently deemed moral by them, which sharply offend his, and presumably our, moral sensibilities.⁴ Having elicited the interlocutor's

felt disapproval of those practices, Palamedes delights in revealing that the people of whom he has been speaking in cloaked terms are none other than the interlocutor's beloved Greeks of classical antiquity. Not satisfied with astonishing the interlocutor, he goes on to draw a strongly relativist conclusion about morals in general. The interlocutor confronts the choice of either abandoning his moral admiration of the civilization of the Greeks or of accepting some measure of the relativism in morals that Palamedes is advocating.

The interlocutor does neither. He distinguishes between the principles of moral approbation or disapprobation and specific examples of approval or disapproval (E 333). He grants that there are examples of practices of which the ancients apparently approved and contrariwise we disapprove, but he denies that the existence of some such instances warrants the serious sort of relativism that Palamedes would foist on him. Obviously the number of such discrepancies cannot be overwhelming, otherwise the interlocutor's strategy would be ineffective. His approach will work if there is a core of approvals and disapprovals shared between the ancients and ourselves⁵ such as initially to warrant the claim that they and we operate with the same principles of judgment.

The interlocutor imposes on the relativist, in the person of Palamedes, the burden of showing that the morality of the ancients involves principles of approbation different from our own. But rather than await an answer, he goes on the offensive and argues that even in the very series of examples Palamedes adduced to establish his point, the Athenians' operative principles of approbation are the same as the principles of our morality, namely,

pleasure or utility to self or others (E 336). The bulk of the essay exhibits applications of this two-tiered analysis of differences between moral cultures, undertaken without forsaking or trying to stand outside of the genuine moral sentiments that are shared not only by Palamedes and the interlocutor but presumably by the morally sensitive population of the society for which Hume is writing. Hume steers a course between moral relativism and a moral dogmatism that would affirm as unquestionable the particular approvals and disapprovals of one's own age. This allows him to point to ancient values and insights as he passes negative moral judgment on present practices (e.g., the prohibition of suicide) as well as to use present values and insights when passing negative judgment on ancient practices (e.g., infant exposure). In short, Hume admits genuine diversity of morals but denies that it betokens moral relativism: the admission is that of a moral pluralist, the denial is that of a moderate realist about morals; hence, Hume's position may be termed a moderate moral pluralism.

In terms of positive outcome, Hume extracts from the analysis a philosophical lesson. Against Palamedes' theoretical position Hume holds that consideration of the cultures of the ancient world leads us to conclude the existence of principles of approbation and disapprobation are more or less the same over time. Thus, he remarks that "none of these revolutions [in religion, language, laws and customs] has ever produced any considerable innovation in the primary sentiments of morals" (E 336). Accordingly, a modern moralist like Hume would be justified in drawing illustrations for moral principles from ancient lives as well as modern ones, for principles that may somehow be said to be the same may be found

nearly everywhere in human nature (except of course where nature is perverted).

The interlocutor's apparent success with this line of response leads to a problem, however. If he can overcome the genuine differences in morals between the ancients and ourselves, it seems that there could be no differences so great as to warrant classifying any system as other than moral when it is deemed to be moral by its adherents. As a challenge to the interlocutor's position, Palamedes brings up the problem of "artificial lives and manners." He explains what he takes this phrase to mean by pointing to Diogenes (the same eccentric who is reported as having lived in a tub) and Pascal (the ultra devout author of the Pensees), thinkers disposed to subvert the received moral notions of their age, to erect a new table of the virtues and the vices, and to dictate programs of life determined by principles, as Palamedes puts it, at odds with "the maxims of common life and ordinary conduct" (E 341). Are these rival systems to be thought of as alternative moralities? If lives of Diogenes and Pascal (or their followers) are indeed moral lives, they appear to constitute counter-examples to the interlocutor's position, for either they cannot be shown to derive from acknowledged principles of approbation or if they are derivable, they trivialize the principles of morality. In the first case, the interlocutor would be obliged to admit that morality includes principles that lead to the approbation of lives that are prima facie incompatible; in the second case, he would so dilute the import of the principles of pleasure and utility as to exclude virtually no would-be system of morals, thus playing into the hands of the relativist. The interlocutor's response is to deny that lives of the sort

exemplified in Diogenes and Pascal are moral lives. His task is to account for such an exclusion. If he can do so, the notions of pseudo-morality and false virtue will have been vindicated as part of the philosopher's vocabulary. This is what I call the problem of artificial lives.

While this is an engaging philosophical issue, we should note that it is just that. The moral question is never in doubt, as if either Palamedes or the interlocutor harbored some concern whether the program of life of a Diogenes or a Pascal represents an object of admiration. We should not expect that the ensuing discussion will be conducted as a debate between two positions of parity, overseen by judges detached to an imaginary vantage point, for it is a pervasive theme of Hume's writings that there is no detached atemporal vantage point from which human affairs may be viewed. Rather the discussion will be conducted so as to arrive at a conclusion such as would convince a Palamedes but not necessarily such as to disabuse the fanatic of his or her errors (for speculative argument does not of itself touch the passions). That the "maxims of common life and ordinary conduct" should be the point of departure for reflection and inquiry is as it should be, I suggest, for if the basic question about artificial lives is to be raised at all, it will be posed by enlightened persons not caught in the grip of artificial systems.

In summary, three salient points have so far been extracted from Hume's discussion of the problem of artificial lives.

(1) In dealing with alternative moralities Hume's approach is to concentrate on the principles of approbation. He takes pains to show that at the level of principles there is continuity between the

ancients and ourselves, and he concludes that theirs was a genuine morality.

(2) In A Dialogue Hume describes "artificial lives" as programs of life based on and guided by principles at variance with those of ordinary morality. He believes that a comparison between artificial principles and our "maxims of common life and ordinary conduct" will show a discontinuity that contrasts with the relationship between the principles of ancient morality and those of modern morality.

(3) Hume's main problem in A Dialogue is to provide a satisfactory account of the basis on which the interlocutor can differentiate between ancient lives and artificial lives and to explain why sets of principles expressly formulated for the guidance of life, like those of Diogenes or Pascal, should not be deemed moral principles. To this matter we now turn.

2. The Differentiation of the Artificial

It appears that Hume acknowledges artificial lives to be morality-resembling, in that their advocates offer them as guides to right living and may even enjoin them as obligatory. He also recognizes that artificial systems sometimes gain numerous adherents and sometimes become for others the object of a certain sort of fascination or even admiration (E 343). What is it about programs of life such as those of Diogenes and Pascal that would warrant classifying them as pseudo-moralities? Let us begin by observing five ways in which these programs are distinguished from nonartificial lives and nonartificial systems.

1. The system of Diogenes or of Pascal is something that this particular individual authored at a certain point in time, as opposed to a set of beliefs

and practices naturally belonging to a community. Hence the appropriateness of Palamedes' referring to such a system and to a life based on such a system as artificial. Using the term historical morality to refer to the set of sentiments and practices belonging to the community into which an innovator such as Diogenes or a Pascal is born, we can ask whether an artificial system can arise without reference to historical morality. The case of Diogenes suggests that an artificial system is necessarily dependent on an historical morality, for it needs something to stand over against in essential opposition; in fact, it draws the energy for its antagonism from the everyday morality of Athens in Diogenes' day. (And of course a parallel sort of opposition to ordinary morality animated the otherworldly zeal of Pascal.) Thus, there is some reason to think that an artificial system is derivative, and that its opposition to historical morality gives it the character of estrangement from common life.

Perhaps this is the point at which to note that the systems of Diogenes and Pascal both drawing their energy from their contrariety to everyday morality should not blind us to a major difference between them. Despite Palamedes' comment that philosophy regulated the affairs of the ancients in a manner similar to the way organized religion aims to regulate modern existence, in point of fact philosophy never attained the degree of success in regulating men's lives that religion has enjoyed. The Diogenes example is that of a single fanatic who was not widely imitated, whereas Pascal was actually held up as one model for imitation within a sizeable religious organization. This is not because Pascal's thinking was somehow found to be superior but because

his system was aligned with the interests of an institution powerfully capable of influencing conduct. Diogenes is consequently little more than a curiosity; Pascal represents a genuine challenge to common morality. By understanding the connection between artificial systems and institutions we can appreciate how Hume's repudiation of artificial lives is of a piece with his ubiquitous opposition to enthusiasm and superstition.

2. Since an important characteristic of an artificial system is its resistance to an historical morality, it would do us well to get clear about the manner and extent of this opposition. Specifically, we inquire whether the artificial system functions as a corrective of historical morality or is intended to displace it and to stand in its stead. In A Dialogue Hume explains that every historical morality comprises a capacity for adjustment or self-modification. Two sources of such correction are listed: wider experience and sounder reasoning (E 336). Correction occurs in a fashion consistent with the principles of morality: pleasure/utility to self/others. Is this the way that an artificial system bears on the historical morality of the day? Is it merely a corrective?

According to how Hume exemplifies it in Diogenes and Pascal, the way an artificial system stands to historical morality should be recognized as displacement, not correction. Thus it is no surprise that such a system involves rejection of many of the ways of judging and appraising typical of the historical morality -- as is quite aptly indicated in Diogenes' attacks on the way of life and the values of contemporary Athenians. In its dialectical elaboration, such a system may also assault the very principles of judgment and evaluation embodied in the

historical morality over against which it is set. An artificial system on Hume's view aims not merely to correct but rather to dislodge and assume the place of the historical morality of its day.

3. Another characteristic of artificial systems is an aspiration to regulate human affairs with exclusivity. In contemporary jargon, we would describe such systems as inherently normative. They relate to human life in the modality of the ought precisely because of their artificial character. Inasmuch as is pertains to historical morality, an artificial system naturally expresses itself in the ought, since the values it inculcates are those of an order not yet established. Furthermore, this is a strong sense of normativity because the system is presented as an alternative morality and not just as corrective of historical morality.

It should also be noted that an artificial system typically embraces the entire life of its adherents. Even if it happens that outwardly the devotee's behavior is not very different from what it was before his or her conversion to an artificial system, after the conversion that life is reported to be radically altered. Thus, an artificial system has a totalizing character -- it is about the whole world, it covers the whole of life.⁶ Historical morality, by contrast, concentrates chiefly on what is most important to social co-existence and leaves much of life unregulated.

4. Given the artificiality of such a system and its claim to be the exclusive regulator of the whole of life, it is a wonder that it can gain adherents. Hume explains attachment to such a system in terms of psychological and epistemic considerations. He holds that embracing such a system depends on its alignment with certain passions in the human breast. Super-

stitution, for instance, makes its entrance by appeal to men's fear of the unknown; enthusiasm by appeal to men's curiosity and fascination with the unusual. In some cases an artificial system finds adherents with a natural passional disposition; in other cases the disposition must be artificially induced.

Additionally, there are beliefs associated with an artificial system, assent to which is closely tied to embracing its practices. Such beliefs are thought not only to support the system but frequently to undermine the basis of attachment to the historical morality the system aims to displace -- as the religious doctrine of sin can alienate one from one's natural community. Sophisticated artificial systems seem to be belief-dependent in a rather important way, for we can make more sense of attachment to such a system by discovering that its adherents hold certain beliefs. By contrast, we do not explain men's attachment to the historical morality of their time as depending on acceptance of natural beliefs.⁷ Acceptance of the system's belief base, however, only disposes toward, but is of itself insufficient to account for anyone's undertaking, an artificial life; we must also posit a passional component bearing on fear of the unknown, for instance, or a desire for security such as is especially addressed in a metaphysical theory or a religious story. Although men do not come to accept an artificial system as a result of rational demonstration, willingness to entertain the artificial system's belief base is a not unimportant part of the explanation of how it gains adherents.

5. Because the belief component corresponding to an artificial system is important, there may arise a partnership between the advocacy of artificial lives and metaphysics. This happens only when the

artificial life is presented as belief-dependent and the beliefs on which it is dependent are unnatural beliefs. Some apologists think that their cause would be advanced if a rationally satisfying foundation were provided for the set of beliefs corresponding to it -- what I shall call the artificial system's belief base. (A conviction along these lines would explain Pascal's authorship, for instance.) Thus, a transcendent vantage point is imagined from which is spun a metaphysical story -- e.g., that reason or God promulgates natural laws to men -- which is thought to lend welcome credibility and authority to the artificial system associated with it. Or as a variant on the partnership with metaphysics, religious narratives may be recited whose sway is likewise thought to enforce an artificial system. Since such stories are not plausible in themselves, their effectiveness depends on their being enlivened through connection with transcendent sources felt to have influence or authority. Whether through metaphysics or religion, artificial systems are backed by artificial stories. Hume found the conjunction of unnaturalness, normativity and authority in the ambition of the artificial moralist to be particularly pernicious.

In sum, an artificial system is something authored, typically by an individual but possibly by a group, as opposed to an unauthored morality belonging to the historical patrimony of a community. It is not intended by its author or its adherents as a mere corrective to historical morality but as an alternative morality. Set over against historical morality, it presumably has its own authority and justification. There corresponds to it a set of beliefs which may be informal or may, in partnership with metaphysics or religion, take on a formal

structure. Adherence to the system is explained by assent to the beliefs correspondent to it and by the motivational force of the passions that typically underlie superstition and enthusiasm. Thus, such a system is strongly normative, aims to regulate the whole of life, and to do so with exclusivity.

In his discussion with Palamedes the Humean interlocutor maintained a distinction between historical moralities and artificial systems. The question we addressed in this section is how the artificial/nonartificial distinction is drawn. Granted that he would classify ancient moralities as nonartificial, Hume would have to be prepared to say that they differ from artificial systems on all, or at least most, of the points of distinction enumerated in this section. Hume would indeed assert that ancient moralities were unauthored, unallied in everyday life with metaphysics or religion, open to change and correction, and not strongly normative of the totality of life but designed to maintain social cohesion.

Before proceeding, I think it is worthwhile to pause to take notice of how Hume does not go about addressing the problem of artificial lives. It is evident that Hume does not set about stipulating necessary and sufficient conditions for anything that would count as a morality. (Such a rationalist construction would violate his distinctive form of skepticism.) Moreover, he does not invent or appeal to a supreme principle of morality (so as to go on to claim that whatever person or system does not acknowledge such a principle cannot be moral). Nor does he expressly appeal to the principles of everyday morality to support his rejection of artificial lives (as if these principles could be appreciated apart from the approbations and

disapprobations they inform). Rather, he sets about the work of determining whether the practices of the modern are understandable in terms of the principles of pleasure and utility to self and others. It is through the process of endeavoring to interpret other lives, as we endeavor to interpret lives enacted in the theatre, that Hume differentiates the artificial from "common life and everyday conduct." As labelled, Hume's focus is on lives, not conditions, principles or abstract argument.

It is one thing to see how artificial lives are distinguished from ordinary lives, however, and quite another to establish that Hume is possessed of the philosophical resources to dismiss such lives on the grounds that they do not count as moral. Let us now see whether Hume can account for his dismissal of artificial lives and artificial systems.

3. Some Possible Solutions

It is noteworthy that factors treated by scholars as the foremost elements of Hume's moral theory do not furnish fully satisfactory resources for dealing with the problem of artificial lives. What follows are four false starts which, though initially promising, fail in varying degrees to solve the problem.

1. Since morality is more properly felt than judged, it might be thought that we can distinguish a pseudo-morality by the fact that it does not generate felt moral responses, or if it does, these will of necessity be obviously distinguishable from the feelings corresponding to a genuine morality. The trouble with this approach is that a pseudo-morality does generate felt responses; therefore, the question comes down to whether these can be readily set off from moral feelings.

Perhaps it could be argued that in a comparison between an artificial system and an historical morality, since the former is said to be derivative from the latter, an historical morality will necessarily have superior force and vivacity. Besides being inaccurate because an artificial system can have greater psychological force than an historical morality, this argument would explain artificial systems away: by its terms none could ever rival historical morality in force, and thus Hume's concern over such systems would be largely groundless. But an artificial system can indeed eclipse historical morality in force because, while in its morality-resembling respects it is derivative, it also draws its force from other sources (in the case of systems associated with superstition, notably from men's fear of the unknown). Accordingly, it would appear to be a matter of contingency whether a natural morality or an artificial system had the greater force.

2. Neither can the problem of artificial lives be resolved by construing the force of historical morality in terms of its majoritarian appeal. An artificial system can achieve numerical ascendancy over an historical morality by gaining sufficient adherents and simply becoming the common system. If mere commonness settled the issue, then in those times and locales where superstition is dominant, we would be obliged to acknowledge an artificial system as a genuine morality. Recognition that of course it makes little sense to attribute such a view to Hume should lead us to discard any interpretation of his moral philosophy, such as C.D. Broad's, which would make him out a straightforward consensus theorist.⁸

3. It might be thought that moral sentiments must differ qualitatively from feelings corresponding to a pseudo-morality, and so attention to these

differences would suffice to show that, since it does not generate the proper sort of sentiment, an artificial system is only a pseudo-morality. This approach strikes me as an unpromising, however, since descriptions of qualitative differences among feelings are likely to be imprecise and in most cases not open to intersubjective check. The same sort of difficulty attaches to using the canonical properties of the Humean moral judgment to enforce the distinction. Needless to say, artificial systems are not less judgmental than are historical moralities (and may be even more so, since an artificial system aspires to cover the whole of life). Were it the case that judgments conformable to historical morality exhibited the properties of being objective, disinterested, and based on a general point of view altogether differently than judgments informed by an artificial system, this approach might serve to show that on formal grounds the latter fail to constitute a morality. I am diffident of finding a way to settle disputes on this basis, however, and would prefer not to treat historical morality's claim to genuineness as hanging on a set of considerations so highly disputable.

4. Surely the most promising approach would distinguish artificial systems from historical moralities in terms of the former's very unnaturalness: such systems do not come about spontaneously but are contrived, authored and introduced as a result of an individual's or a group's deliberate action. This point captures much of what Hume is driving at in A Dialogue. The trouble is that "artificiality" does not of itself sufficiently differentiate artificial systems and historical moralities. In the Treatise Hume makes it clear that historical morality comprises elements both natural

and artificial. Thus, if these two are to be distinguished in terms of artificiality, the sense in which an historical morality is artificial must be set off from the sense in which an artificial system is artificial. Let us see whether this can be done.

The respect in which historical morality is artificial comes across quite clearly in the context of a Humean correlate of Hobbes' state of nature. In his account of the origin of justice, Hume projects what a strictly natural "morality" would be like. Against Hobbes he holds that men in their rude, uncultivated nature would have a language of virtue and vice, but against traditional natural law theorists he asserts that such a language would not resemble our historical language of morality, for in uncultivated nature terms of praise and blame would be used with reference to the partial interests of self and one's narrow circle. Morality as we know it presupposes the overcoming of that partiality of the natural point of view through the origination of rules of justice in conventions that men by circumstantial necessity found they had to enter into. Commencing with a sense of rule-informed justice, the moral sentiments gradually developed as men grew in sociability and sympathy. With this progress of the sentiments impartial morality became as natural to civilized men as partial morality was to uncivilized men. Once achieved, furthermore, refined morality came to be sustained by social institutions -- upbringing within the family, formal schooling, political socialization, and perhaps even churchmen's reinforcement of the civic virtues -- as well as in the informal give-and-take of everyday social life and in the recognition of oneself as a member of a number of communities. Since disposition to historical morality is not so exceptionlessly

"natural" that its fruition can be counted on independently of this cultural support, there is a genuine sense in which it is artificial. Does this erase the ground for a distinction between the artificiality of artificial lives and the artificial component in everyday morality?

The artificiality of the artificial element in historical morality has to do with abandoning the egocentric vantage point and embracing a socially common point of view. The rationale which Hume offers for doing so, whether simply conventionalist or also contractarian, is of a sort that any individual can and, given his or her interest in achieving a fuller and more enjoyable life, must embrace. Though not natural in the way that procreation, for example, is natural, the rules of justice are nonetheless natural in that the interests which cannot be secured otherwise than through them are entirely reasonable and depend on no abstract theory or inspired narrative. Further, the rules of justice involve no alienation from common life because without them Hume thinks there can be no common life. Accordingly, that the values whose appreciation requires embracing a common or general point of view are advanced by socializing processes does not signify that those values are unnatural. Rather, men, sometimes tempted to preposit selfish to social concerns, need to be reminded of their true and common interests (a point acknowledged by moralists of every theoretical affiliation). It is no surprise, therefore, that the same sort of artificial component is found in the moralities of the Athenians and the Romans, for without it social life such as we know it would be unthinkable. The artificiality characteristic of artificial lives and artificial systems, on the other hand, does not

represent a point that every individual, given his or her ordinary interests, must embrace. It is not a sine qua non of social life, but rather, if Hume is right, a source of alienation from common life. That artificial systems appeal to narrower or specially conditioned interests explains why a corresponding community should be more dependent on support from particular institutions than is an historical morality.⁹

Perhaps this is the place to observe that, while I have presented morals and artificial systems as separate, the historical morality of Hume's day was undoubtedly known to him to be, given the influence of organized religion, an admixture of genuine morality and artificial system. An aim of his in developing a theory of morals is to show that any individual can discover the principles of morality within his own experience, and having done this, begin to sort out the nonartificial from the artificial. That this should be feasible suffices to establish a basis for the approach Hume follows in A Dialogue.

While apologists of religion take the fact of Judeo-Christian influences on Western civilization as bespeaking the worth of artificial systems, Hume treats that fact as a lamentable intrusion whose overcoming is essential to the education of any educated person. It has served some apologists well to present as a felicitous synthesis just what Hume, in characterizing the relationship between historical morality and artificial system, treats as a matter of opposition and antagonism. In support of Hume's view it might be said that the advocates of revealed religion are not always consistent in this matter. Some are prepared to admit that their way of life is sharply contrasted with the ordinary way of the

world, but others seem to wish to subsume a large part of ordinary morality within their system (something Hume would account for from the force of the natural sentiments of mankind).¹⁰

4. Hume's Support for the Rejection of Artificial Lives

We may distinguish three sets of considerations in Hume's moral writings which support his contention that the systems on which are based artificial lives do not constitute genuine moralities. (1) The beliefs on which such systems are based are untrue. (2) Lives determined by such systems are not worthy of moral esteem. (3) Such systems fail to meet one of the formal conditions for a morality.

A. Dissolution of the Belief Base of Artificial Systems

Proponents of artificial systems have looked upon Hume chiefly as a critic of the beliefs corresponding to their way of life. Indeed, the skeptical Hume assaults the belief base of artificial systems, attacking tenets favored by the artificial moralist pertaining to the nature of the self, of agency, liberty and determinism, final teleology, immortality, miracles, providence, and beliefs regarding the nature of moral and political existence -- in short, beliefs which had been fashioned to sustain and support socially dominant forms of artificial lives. Against metaphysically decked out beliefs Hume argues there is no transcendent vantage point from which a survey of the world may be attained which is truer, epistemically more real or categorically preferable to the natural beliefs of common sense. In judging religious narratives he

deploys the same evidentiary criteria we use in assessing the credibility of all other stories and attestations. Consequently, artificial systems turn out to be either groundless or grounded otherwise than in the beliefs traditionally associated with them. So thorough is this attack and so persuasive that today such beliefs cannot be said to serve as a foundation for artificial lives.

The outcome of Hume's attack on the belief base of artificial systems is important because we naturally think it incumbent on their advocates to have and to offer some sort of justification for setting out to overturn historical morality and erect another in its stead. That an artificial system's belief base turns out to be indefensible reinforces the conviction of persons not under its sway that such systems have no claim to constituting a morality; and suggests, further, to those leading artificial lives that they are basing their lives on delusions.

Hume is not so naive, however, to think that exhibiting the untenability of an artificial system's belief base will in fact disentrench artificial lives. This is because attachment to an artificial life may be rooted in passions so as to survive the dissolution of the system's belief base. Accordingly, although the skeptical philosopher may show that the system is groundless, the adherent's attachment to his way of life may continue because it is not conditioned by rational considerations and it is not really belief-dependent in the sense that has been philosophically undermined. The skeptical philosopher's critique of artificial systems is limited in its practical impact because the rationality which informs it does not in fact have universal sway over men's lives.

But Hume's case against artificial systems is more complicated than this. As reflected in the famous doctrine that has come to be known as Hume's Law, morality at its root is not belief-dependent. Therefore, even if an artificial system's belief base were tenable, this would lend the system no support, for ought-statements cannot be derived from is-statements.¹¹ It turns out that artificial lives are twiceover wrong. Their adherents falsely believe that the system by which they seem to themselves to live is intellectually supported by certain beliefs, and of course those beliefs are false.

The second part of Hume's case against artificial lives often goes unnoticed. He shows that the very idea of grounding morality on a belief base is mistaken. (Thus, if Hume is a naturalist in ethics, his form of naturalism certainly does not resemble the classical forms.) To the moralist of common life and everyday conduct Hume's Law is not disturbing because common morality is not belief-dependent as are artificial systems. But to the metaphysical moralist, such a finding is devastating. It would seem that giving itself out to be belief-dependent would have to be essential to such a system, for being something contrived, to gain adherents it must be introduced persuasively; yet shorn of its story line, how it might establish itself (unless politically enforced) seems inexplicable. (Even the phrase belief-base is misleading, for an artificial system, being contrived by apologists as a would-be justification for artificial lives, is not really a base but is merely a construct wherein reason is enlisted, slavetlike, to serve the passions characteristic of superstition or enthusiasm.) Deprived of its putative support, an artificial system loses our respect.

In summary, Hume deploys skeptical arguments against the belief base of artificial systems, and promulgates Hume's Law which asserts that genuine morality is at its root not belief-dependent. The impact of the skeptical assault is to show that artificial systems are groundless, but this finding is significant only with persons for whom rationality is effective. Artificial systems survive the dissolution of their belief base because attachment to them may derive from nonrational factors. Thus, additional arguments would not be out of place.

B. The Moral Deficiency of Artificial Lives

The extent of the worthiness of an artificial system to be deemed a morality is most powerfully exhibited in the moral estimation of the person who fully realizes its ideal. Do we find the Diogenesian Man or the Pascalian Man (as opposed to the actual Diogenes and the actual Pascal) to be the object of praise and esteem? Does either represent an improvement for mankind? If so, the catalog of virtues and vices embodied in such a life should receive our serious attention. If such a person represents no advancement or is the object of our disesteem, the artificial system determining that life loses its claim of being a genuine morality. In point of fact, Hume reminds us, the Diogenesian Man and the Pascalian Man are a sorry lot, such as surely no self-respecting person untainted by superstition or enthusiasm would emulate.

The foundation of Diogenes's conduct was an endeavour to render himself an independent being as much as possible, to confine all his wants and desires and pleasures within himself and his own mind: The aim of Pascal was to keep a perpetual sense of his dependence before his eyes, and never to forget his numberless wants and

infirmities. The ancient supported himself by magnanimity, ostentation, pride, and the idea of his own superiority above his fellow-creatures. The modern made constant profession of humility and abasement, of the contempt and hatred of himself; and endeavoured to attain these supposed virtues, as far as they are attainable. The austerities of the Greek were in order to inure himself to hardships, and prevent his ever suffering: Those of the Frenchman were embraced merely for their own sake, and in order to suffer as much as possible. The philosopher indulged himself in the most beastly pleasures, even in public: The saint refused himself the most innocent, even in private. The former thought it his duty to love his friends, and to rail at them, and reprove them, and scold them: The latter endeavoured to be absolutely indifferent towards his nearest relations, and to love and speak well of his enemies. The great object of Diogenes's wit was every kind of superstition, that is every kind of religion known in his time. The mortality of the soul was his standard principle; and even his sentiments of a divine providence seem to have been licentious. The most ridiculous superstitions directed Pascal's faith and practice; and an extreme contempt of this life, in comparison of the future, was the chief foundation of his conduct (E 342-343).

The form of argument Hume is here engaged in is the accepted eighteenth-century practice of ridicule. Lord Shaftesbury in fact recommended it in the highest terms as entirely suited to moral questions, since it is both more direct and more effective than standard philosophical refutation. But both Shaftesbury and Hume use ridicule as the rhetorical expression for something far deeper, a judgment having moral authority. Thus, the force of

this manner of rejection of artificial systems springs from the basic moral judgment of Diogenesian and Pascalian character.

That moral judgment may be articulated in various ways. Hume could argue that the goals which animate such artificial lives as these -- to attain invulnerability in this life, to store up credit against a future existence -- are false ends that have no place in ordinary moral life. Artificial principles and the catalog of corresponding artificial virtues do not improve men, do not render them more sociable, more useful, more agreeable to self or others. But perhaps the most telling point is the fact that the person who realizes the values of such a system would not be the object of moral esteem. It is not merely that such a life is useless, but that it is judged to be morally defective, whether its practitioner be blameworthy or just pitiable. Accordingly, the principles which guide such a life lose the aspect of moral principles, and the system which determines those principles is a pseudo-morality.

To such a contention the obvious objection is that it begs the question. Hume in fact concedes that adherents of an artificial system will actually derive pleasure from contemplating characters conformable to the system's ideal.

An experiment, said I, which succeeds in the air, will not always succeed in a vacuum. When men depart from the maxims of common reason, and affect these artificial lives, as you call them, no one can answer for what will please or displease them. They are in a different element from the rest of mankind; and the natural principles of their mind play not with the same regularity, as if left to themselves, free from the

illusions of religious superstition
or philosophical enthusiasm (E
343).

We must recall that Hume denies there is a transcendent viewpoint neutral to alternative moralities (genuine or pseudo) from which the latter could be assessed. Exercising moral reflection presupposes attachment to morality which is to be understood, at least presumptively, as everyday morality. Thus, artificial systems do not have the historical authority of ordinary morality, and consequently, Hume finds no reason to exempt artificial lives from accurate and disinterested judgment according to the principles of the morality common to different ages and cultures.

We should note, furthermore, that exhibiting the moral sentiments is an important feature of Hume's work as a moral writer. He not only furnishes numerous examples of moral or immoral characters, particularly in the second Enquiry, but carries through to a moral assessment of such lives in terms which evoke sentiments in the reader. This way of writing replicates how morality extends its influence in human life: perspectives are shared, sentiments spread by contagion, sympathies communicated. Endorsing the moral estimation of a character is one of the ways that moral persuasion is effected: when the same sentiment is aroused in us that we recognize in historical morality, we find we are won over. But the success of this mode of persuasion derives from the fact that our sentiments are naturally evoked through the proper presentation of the object; were this not the case, we should not enter into the author's assessment of the examples he adduces. (We would be untouched, perhaps even puzzled by them. Or if we were attached to an artificial system, we might

find ourselves disapproving where others approve, or vice versa). The explanation of the manner of moral persuasion Hume practices in his moral writings is that, unless our sentiments are perverted, we have at root a common natural predisposition to be pleased by what is pleasant/useful to self/others. Thus, Hume's deploying such a mode of communication is thoroughly appropriate. In fact, this way of achieving moral persuasion is required by the general character of Hume's moral theory. Having denied that reason alone can move men, Hume is unlikely to argue from abstract rational principle; having claimed that morality is not at root belief-dependent, he will not talk theories or narrate stories. To the extent that the moral writer does the work not just of the anatomist, but of the moral artist (which is what he is doing in giving illustrations), he will proceed by appeal to sentiment. Nothing else would complete the work of exposition on morals.

The moral sentiments are so important in Hume that they provide a test against which speculative theories may be appraised. We are indebted to David Norton for having emphasized this aspect of Hume's thinking.¹² Hume holds that any theory of men's social existence which conflicts with the common sentiments of mankind must be deemed erroneous. Two points should be remarked: the sentiments against which a theory is tested are not the personal sentiments of an individual but the common sentiments of men -- which I think we can treat as sentiments embodied in historical morality; and this is a test used for falsification not for verification. This being Hume's view, we can see that the moral rejection of artificial lives and artificial systems is actually twofold. At one level it tests the system by translating it into a fit object of moral

appraisal -- personified in the character which fully realizes it; our moral rejection of the person constitutes grounds for denying that the system is a moral one. But at a deeper level, we see, given that what opposes the moral sentiments of mankind must be unsound, the sentiment-based rejection of an artificial system indicates that the system is also false. Thus on either ground it may be rejected as a pseudo-morality.

C. Incurrigibility and Extremism

Hume's A Dialogue provides the resources for the argument that an artificial system does not constitute a morality because it lacks an essential feature of a morality, namely, corrigibility by experience and reasoning.¹³ Although Hume finds much in Athenian morality that is morally objectionable, Palamedes and he agreed that there is continuity between the ancients and moderns in matters of principle. This continuity affords a context for argument, even if only fictive, between ancients and moderns such as has the potentiality of yielding a fair consensus because the principles of the one are the same as the principles of the other. Thus, in admitting that Athenians' sentiments and practices were a morality, we admit only a limited divergence in morals, confined by the consideration that wider experience or sounder reasoning would reduce the differences on either side. In this fashion Hume arrives at a general claim about alternative moralities, that they are mutually corrigible because their principles are common. But not every system that would pass itself off as being a morality is mutually corrigible with our historical morality. Thus, this general claim may be used with a view to

determining whether some system is or is not a genuine morality.

It turns out that artificial systems, at least as typified by Diogenes and Pascal, are not mutually corrigible with historical morality. This is because they are based on principles of their own that are not found in ordinary life and experience. It is not just that an artificial system draws energy from its opposition to historical morality; it is that such a system seeks to remake life totally. That there is little if any ground for mutual learning in a give-and-take between an artificial system and an historical morality is part of why the former aims to displace the latter. Accordingly, even when the practices of ordinary life may be subsumed within an artificial system, this does not mean that the system's principles are the same as those of historical morality but that those practices are given a fresh justification within the artificial system.

Now Hume is of course not claiming that an artificial system is incorrigible in every respect. He can admit that correction by wider experience and by sounder reasoning has a place within an artificial system, but it is only to render it more consistent either with itself and its belief base or with the data that articulate its principles for practice. No fundamental correction seems possible from wider experience because the world of experience stands to the system as material to be made over, not as a source of correction; and the same consideration makes it unlikely that correction should come from reasoning concerned with applying those principles. Its advocates must treat such a system as inherently right from the start, since it is not subject to significant correction once it is embraced.

Related to this point of differentiation is the fact that a morality that is open to correction tends naturally toward 'moderation. Such a characteristic is inherent in ordinary morality, which rejects ethical monism in favor of a plurality of principles and avoids extremism of every stripe. By contrast, an artificial system is exclusionary and strongly normative by its nature. The examples of Diogenes and Pascal bespeak a tendency toward extremism in artificial lives. (Hence the special import of the fact that, deprived of a belief base, such systems have no fulcrum whereby to support a claim to be justified -- to be right from the start.)

This third contention indicates that an artificial system does not qualify as a morality on formal grounds. It has the interesting ramification of showing how it is that the Humean moralist can claim continuity with the Greeks and Romans while the advocates of artificial systems cannot. And this consideration directly answers the question with which we began, namely, how can Hume differentiate between ancient lives and artificial lives, so as to accept the former as moral and reject the latter as aberrant.

In summary, from Hume's writings on morals we may extract three considerations which support his rejection of artificial lives and artificial systems. First, he critiques the alleged belief base of the leading artificial systems and finds them to be unwarranted; he also contends that it is a mistake to attempt to derive a morality from a set of beliefs (by way of metaphysics or of religious narrative). Second, he judges the lives of advocates of artificial systems to be morally defective, and he also contends that our negative moral estimate of those lives indicates that the systems of which such

lives are the personification cannot be warranted. Third, he remarks that a system's not being mutually corrigible with ordinary morality suggests it is not an alternative morality but an alternative to morality. In assessing these considerations those among us who would look for an absolutely conclusive, 'knock down' argument will be disappointed. I suggest that Hume's approach be interpreted along the lines of the form of persuasion that is like the case a lawyer builds for his or her client: the aim is to achieve an overall conviction and through the adversary method to achieve a greater credibility than the opposition. Taken in this fashion, I believe the case Hume builds is a powerful one.

5. Hume and MacIntyre

With his customary astuteness A.C. MacIntyre has recognized the importance and the far-reaching implications of the argument of A Dialogue. I have already remarked that MacIntyre thinks Hume's treatment of artificial lives to be deeply flawed. I shall now review the case he makes against Hume and attempt a critical assessment of it. Then I shall raise the further question whether MacIntyre's attack on Hume is entirely consistent with his philosophical program in After Virtue. To begin, I shall give MacIntyre's characterization of Hume's position on artificial lives.

MacIntyre notes that Hume says both: (a) since knowledge of the virtues is something readily accessible to all, in developing a catalog of the virtues apparently we cannot be mistaken, and yet (b) some accounts of the virtues (e.g., those of Diogenes and Pascal) are mistaken. What needs explaining here is (b), according to MacIntyre, for on Hume's standard approach disagreements in morals are

explained by the same human nature responding to different circumstances. But Hume cannot reject some accounts of the virtues on the mere grounds that the theories underlying them are false, since he does not make the truth of a theory underlying morality a condition of its acceptability. MacIntyre reasons that Hume's "final court of appeal can be no more than the appeal to the passions of men of good sense, to a concurrence of feelings among the worldly."¹⁴

The first question I shall raise is whether MacIntyre has got Hume right. Although he seems generally correct in his reading of A Dialogue, it is not quite accurate to say that for Hume artificial lives are explained by the same human nature responding differently to different circumstances. Rather, Hume holds that an artificial system is not an alternative moral response but an alternative to a moral response -- not a point we can afford to overlook. Further, I trust that the exposition unfolded in the foregoing pages supports the remark that MacIntyre may be overextended when he claims that for Hume the cases of Diogenes and Pascal "can scarcely be dealt with at all."¹⁵ (Perhaps all he means is that on the basis of approaches such as reviewed in section 3 above Hume cannot deal with these cases to MacIntyre's satisfaction.) Let us now look at the reason he gives for thinking Hume's position is deeply flawed. I shall quote his argument.

Thus the appeal to a universal verdict by mankind turns out to be the mask worn by an appeal to those who physiologically and socially share Hume's attitudes and Weltanschauung. The passions of some are to be preferred to the passions of others. Whose preferences reign? The preferences of those who accept the stability of property, of those

who understand chastity in women as a virtue only because it is a useful device to secure that property is passed only to legitimate heirs, of those who believe that the passage of time confers legitimacy upon what was originally acquired by violence and aggression. What Hume identifies as the standpoint of universal human nature turns out in fact to be that of the prejudices of the Hanoverian ruling elite. Hume's moral philosophy presupposes allegiance to a particular kind of social structure as much as Aristotle's does, but allegiance of a highly ideological kind.¹⁶

If we strip away the rhetoric in this attack on Hume,¹⁷ it turns out to be a moral argument, and an argument interestingly similar to Hume's own repudiation of Diogenesian and Pascalian lives. I am going to make the methodological assumption of treating MacIntyre's argument as intended to appeal to sentiments he can expect to be common among his contemporary readers (e.g., rejection of the sexual double standard), and not as an expression of sentiments associated with what Hume would call an artificial system. I find this kind of argument to be a singularly weak counter to offer to Hume's treatment of artificial lives, and shall now explain why.

MacIntyre's attack on Hume depends on the assumption that the three points he makes (relating to justice, chastity, and political legitimacy) are undetachable from Hume's account of morals. This might be plausible if we treat Hume's account of morals as a text frozen in time, but the notion of morals of which Hume writes is characterized by its capacity for adjustment and correction. The chief message of A Dialogue is that historical morality is settled in its basic principles of pleasure and

utility, but is adaptable in accommodating a variety of particular practices. It seems to me that Hume could account for our more liberal modern sexual morality, to pursue our example, from those same principles of morals by emphasizing the process of correction through wider experience and sounder reasoning so basic to the argument of the Dialogue. (To confirm this, one need but consult Hume's treatment in the Dialogue of the sexual mores of contemporary eighteenth-century French salon society.) MacIntyre's critical observations, rather than constituting grounds for rejection of Hume's position, offer an interesting basis for dialogue, if only fictive, potentially leading to mutual corrections (because it is taken for granted that between the historical moralities of Hume's day and of our day there is continuity of principles). But this type of criticism is inadequate as a counter to Hume's case against artificial systems, for although MacIntyre makes us think critically about historical morality, his argument does nothing to induce us to abandon our morality and embrace an artificial system. In sum, MacIntyre's counter to Hume's position in A Dialogue does not amount to a damaging criticism.

Turning now from his criticism of Hume to MacIntyre's own position, I raise the question of whether that attack is fully consistent with MacIntyre's own philosophical program. Since After Virtue is so well-known a work, I shall attempt no synopsis, and say merely that MacIntyre is concerned with questions of a radical nature, viz. what if there should be a time when the society in which the thinker finds himself or herself does not live by a morality at all? Or what if what goes as a "morality" is not worthy of the term? Although Hume

does not address such questions as these, MacIntyre does, for he feels that the present age is one of moral decay and that genuine morality can be discovered solely through the study of history. Accordingly, going back to Aristotle and the Athenian polis is for him the way to recover the morality he says we once had but have now lost. How can MacIntyre support his claim that Aristotelianism should be preferred as a moral system?

To support his project he offers an historicist reading of the past. Whereas the artificial moralist has cut himself off from the historical world and must try to ground the authority of his artificial system in some transcendent claim, MacIntyre embraces the entire historical world but seems hard pressed to account for his preference for Aristotelianism. This is because he rejects both what passes as the historical morality of his day as well as foundationalism. (He follows a Humean course when he resists giving his moral thinking a foundationalist undergirding). Consequently, MacIntyre appears to have arrived at the position of the moral expatriate. How this poses a consistency problem becomes particularly clear if we consider that his criticism of Hume's views on morals is effective just because contemporary historical morality (i.e., the morality that I have said MacIntyre and his reader share) affords the resources for a negative judgment of the allegedly narrow approach to justice, chastity and political legitimacy in the historical morality of Hume's day. MacIntyre may choose to be a critic both of modern morality and of eighteenth-century morality, but as one who doesn't accept either, he places himself in an odd position by using the former against the latter.

But perhaps MacIntyre has a way out. What if the methodological assumption I earlier made is wrong, and his counter to Hume is after all that of an artificial moralist who rejects our historical morality? In that case, however, the particular moral criticism he makes of Hume may more fittingly be made of an Aristotelian, since on at least two and perhaps all three of the counts MacIntyre brings up against Hume the aristocratic Aristotle would surely be even further from the contemporary mind. (Should MacIntyre counter that Aristotelianism may be detached from the historical Aristotle, the same defense is, as we have already noted, available for the Humean.)

In closing, I submit that being a radical critic of socially dominant moral theories and many of the beliefs of his day is not the point whereby MacIntyre may be sharply distinguished from Hume. Rather, what separates them is, I submit, a hope for betterment based on confidence in human nature. While unquestionably MacIntyre has the benefit of two additional centuries of historical hindsight, I for one do not think this suffices to warrant his pessimism over the contemporary world. In addition to concluding that MacIntyre's is not a damaging criticism of Hume, I am consequently tempted to entertain the suggestion that the comparison of the two projects indicates that Hume's may have more to recommend it than we otherwise might have realized.

James King
Northern Illinois University

1. I am indebted to Rosalind Hursthouse for drawing my attention to the problem of artificial lives at the 1984 Hume Conference. I also owe thanks to persons in the audience who raised questions when a shorter version of this paper (from which the final part was omitted) was read at the 1986 meeting of the Hume Society in Edinburgh, namely, John Biro, John Davis, Donald Livingston, John Passmore, and very particularly to the chairman of the session, Roger Gallie.
2. A.C. MacIntyre, After Virtue (University of Notre Dame Press, 1984). See especially pages 230-234.
3. David Hume, Enquiries Concerning the Human Understanding and Concerning the Principles of Morals, 2nd ed., ed. L.A. Selby-Bigge (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), pp. 324-43. Further references to the Enquiries will be cited as 'E' followed by the relevant page number(s).
4. The following practices of the ancients are listed as vices: homosexual loves, sibling incest, assassination, endurance of personal abuse, suicide, infant exposure, and "rusticity and ill-manners." Additionally, certain practices among the French also draw moral disapprobation: adultery, duelling, blind fealty to the sovereign, imprisonment of the innocent (relatives of a criminal), and exaltation of the female.
5. If pressed, Hume might be expected to lay down a few stipulations concerning the personal qualifications of the authors of moral judgment. Such stipulations are of a rather routine sort, such as his proviso in A Dialogue that the judgment of older persons is probably a better standard than that of voluble youth (E 341). The thorough enumeration of a set of conditions distinguishing the competent from the incompetent judge of morals would extend from aesthetics to morality the approach Hume essays in Of the Standard of Taste.
6. Although generally the style of A Dialogue impedes Hume from descending to details, he seems to go out of his way to register the point that an artificial system has a totalizing character. "...modern religion, which inspects our whole conduct, and prescribes an universal rule to our actions, to our words, to our very thoughts and inclinations; a rule so much the

more austere, as it is guarded by infinite, though distant, rewards and punishments; and no infraction of it can ever be concealed or disguised" (E 342).

7. Naturally there are beliefs concomitant to any element of historical morality, as there are to all the important turns of human life, but such surely do not function as a belief base in a manner parallel to the way attachment to an artificial system is conditioned on acceptance of the beliefs that correspond to it. Not even the beliefs accompanying an artificial virtue function in the requisite sense as a belief base. The belief, for example, that concurrence in the system of rules of justice will in fact advance the public interest is for persons living in a civilized polity a matter of experience (and in this sense resembles natural beliefs) and not a matter affirmed through an act of believing or accepted through an act of the will.
8. C.D. Broad, Five Ethical Theories (Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1967), pp. 85f., 114f.
9. Is it possible that the "unnaturalness" consideration could be rephrased in a cogent form, along the lines, for instance, that artificial systems are really not liveable, and that this would serve as sufficient basis for differentiating them from historical morality? This suggestion, which I owe to Roger Gallie, strikes me as intrinsically engaging, but I am not sure that it may be attributed to Hume, since the liveability or practicability of morality does not seem to be a consideration of moment in Hume's writings on ethics, and furthermore, I suspect there may be a very good reason why, given this approach to morals, Hume did not take up that topic.
10. Although the sheer quantitative force of the natural sentiments are insufficient, as I argued above, to serve as the source of differentiation of genuine and pseudo-morality, that force is a factor in the course of development of artificial moralities. Earlier I observed that artificial morality, at the point of its introduction, stands over against historical morality in the stance of opposition. Indeed, in some forms of artificial system this stance of antagonism is dominant, but in others there occurs, often after it becomes fairly

established, an accommodation with the force of the natural sentiments (which can make for a characteristic doublemindedness in its adherents). (The difference between these two forms of artificial system strikes me as similar to the contrast between the religiosity of Tertullian and the theology of Thomas Aquinas.)

11. It almost seems, in fact, that the is/ought passage was written with artificial systems in mind. The reader is invited to re-read pp. 467 f. of the Treatise of Human Nature, substituting "artificial" for "vulgar," and noting how the contrast Hume there sets up between "systems" and the everyday world corresponds to the contrast to be found in A Dialogue between the "artificial" and the common or ordinary.
12. David Fate Norton, David Hume: Commonsense Moralist, Sceptical Metaphysician (Princeton University Press, 1982). See especially pages 134-147.
13. It is noteworthy that in the second sentence of Palamedes' introduction of the problem of artificial lives Hume remarks by way of contrast that in everyday morality, "Experience and the practice of the world readily correct any great extravagance on either side" (E 341).
14. MacIntyre, p. 233. I find it most interesting to remark that the role assigned by Aristotle, in his very definition of virtue, to the man of sense or practical wisdom parallels the role assigned, in MacIntyre's synopsis of Hume's approach to morals, to the passions of men of good sense. See Nich. Eth., 1107a1-3.
15. MacIntyre, p. 230.
16. MacIntyre, p. 234.
17. That Hume's ethics is reducible to the ideology of the "Hanoverian ruling elite" is tendentious, to say the least. (See Annette Baier's critical comments on MacIntyre's treatment of Hume in Postures of the Mind (University of Minnesota Press, 1985), ch. 13.) In my opinion, MacIntyre over-particularizes. Hume does take the historical morality of his day as his point of departure, presumably because starting from actuality is a way of affording a basis for settling disputes of a skeptical sort. Moreover, Hume has a conception of personal

excellence drawn from Cicero which emphasizes civic virtue and qualities of social or public character. Thus the Humean man is a man of his age and society. But from this it is, I submit, quite a distance to traverse to arrive at the judgment that the apparent cosmopolitanism revealed in A Dialogue and throughout the second Enquiry is nothing but a mask cloaking a narrowly parochial ideology. On the Ciceronian influence, see Peter Jones, Hume's Sentiments (University of Edinburgh Press, 1982). On how the Ciceronian ideal of civic virtue may be associated with a skeptical bent of mind, one may profitably consult Jerrold E. Seigle, Rhetoric and Philosophy in Renaissance Humanism (Princeton University Press, 1968). And for a synoptic view of Hume on morals and public life, the best work is Donald Livingston's Hume's Philosophy of the Common Life (University of Chicago Press, 1984).