



George Edward Moore on the Indefinability of Good

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Research Article

Submitted: 24.09.2022 | Accepted: 03.11.2022

Abstract: “Good” is the central concept in George Edward Moore’s value theory. Moore, who has an influential work on the indefinability of “good” in moral philosophy, published a book in 1903 titled *Principia Ethica*, affirming that the most fundamental question in all Ethics is how “good” is to be defined. For Moore, it is essential to determine the appropriate subject of ethics in a precise sense as the concept of “good”. In *Principia Ethica*, Moore argues that people make mistakes when defining the “good”. According to Moore’s philosophy, “good” makes value prediction possible because it is a non-natural and unique concept. Despite the many theoretical debates among philosophers about the definability of the term good, this article critically examines the “open question argument” and the “naturalistic fallacy” that Moore’s rational analysis leads to the conclusion that “good is indefinable”.

Keywords: George Edward Moore, ethics, good, indefinability, naturalistic fallacy.

Introduction

Despite the many theoretical debates among philosophers about the definability of the term good, this article critically examines the “open question argument” that Moore's rational analysis leads to the conclusion that “good is indefinable”.¹

According to Moore, it is essential to determine the appropriate subject of ethics in a precise sense as the concept of “good”. Although it is very challenging to decide whether the notion of “good” is definable, Moore makes a convincing argument that he provides for the question of: “How is *good* to be defined?” This paper considers what Moore means by saying that “good” is indefinable. To achieve this, the paper will be divided into four sections, each dealing with critical concepts essential to clarifying the issue raised in the research. The initial section will provide a brief explication of the concept of *good*. This helps in knowing Moore's concept of “good”. By “good” he does not mean many other qualities that go by the same name but have nothing to do with ethics, but the characteristic on which he believes all his right and wrong judgments are based and which he believes to be inherent in ethics. Likewise, it serves as a platform for understanding how Moore's ethical judgments build. The second part introduces Moore's meaning of the “naturalistic fallacy” and what he considers to be its fallaciousness. In *Principia Ethica*, Moore argues that people make mistakes when defining the “good”. The third segment will more thoroughly examine Moore's “open question argument” in which he concludes that “goodness” is not a naturalistic property. The fourth section of the paper briefly tackles some of the criticisms of Moore's position, as proposed by William Frankena, Tara Smith, Fred Feldman, Alexander Miller and Arthur Prior. The last part of the paper provides a conclusion in which the major themes discussed will be reiterated together with the opinion of the writer. In the end, it will be concluded that *good*,

¹ George Edward Moore, *Principia Ethica* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1903), § 5.

the fundamental conception of ethics, is not analyzable, and consequently indefinable.

1. The Definition of Good

Moore explores what good is in the first four chapters of *Principia Ethica*. He examines what the word “good” means and determines the nature of goodness. Although it has nothing to do with ethics, the concept of good is used in many ways. To illustrate, one may say, “this novel is really good” or write, “this could really be a good life”. While “good” is used here in the sense of tasty or efficient, this is certainly not the meaning of the concept of “good”, which includes ethical language. In this regard in *Principia Ethica*, Moore argues that people make mistakes when they try to define the good. Nevertheless, he explains “A definition does indeed often mean the expressing of one word’s meaning in other words. But this is not the sort of definition I am asking for. Such a definition can never be of ultimate importance in any study except lexicography.”² He emphasizes that the problem in terms of linguistic definition is not to define the “good” because a linguistic description is about the way people tend to use a word or conditionally define a word. According to Moore, “good is good is the answer to the question of what is good?”³ He defends the assertion that “goodness is simple and indefinable.”⁴

Moore takes properties as either “simple or complex” and argues that the “good” cannot be described since it is a simple concept, a simple object of thought, and an “unnatural” object; therefore, it is necessary to clarify exactly what is meant by simple and complex notions.⁵ To illustrate this, Moore shows the concept “good” as a simple notion, arguing that it is as impossible as defining “yellow” because “yellow” is a simple concept that cannot be described in terms of further notion (i.e., “yellow” cannot be de-

² Moore, *Principia Ethica*, § 6.

³ Moore, *Principia Ethica*, § 6.

⁴ Moore, *Principia Ethica*, § 23.

⁵ Moore, *Principia Ethica*, § 26.

defined by the concept of “green”) and it cannot be explained entirely to anyone who does not already know of it. Similarly, “good” cannot be defined as a simple concept; furthermore, to define “good” as anything other than itself is, thus, to commit the “naturalistic fallacy.” On the other hand, a complex idea, such as is denoted by the concept horse, for example, can be defined because it “has different properties and qualities, all of which can be enumerated.”⁶ Then the horse is an example of a complex concept that is definable. Therefore, it can be interpreted that, from Moore’s point of view, a definitional analysis of “good” in naturalistic terms is impossible.

According to Sylvester, Moore argues that “good” is a concept and an object of thought; although “good” is a concept, it is not definable with any individual’s idea. However, it is not only real, but it is also an abstract entity, a quasi-concept: “As has already been indicated, Moore’s view maintains that *good* is present in the world quite independently of any awareness of it; that is, “good” is independently real.”⁷ It might be interpreted that from the point of view of Moore’s doctrine, “good” is something exemplified in the world and exists in the universe, independent of any or all observations. According to Moore’s philosophy, “good” makes possible the prediction of value because it is a non-natural and unique concept. As Sylvester maintains that “good” becomes exemplified in the world and, as has been said, qualifies things, actions, and events: “Things that are good are things that have intrinsic value, for the terms *intrinsic good* and *intrinsic value* are names that refer to the conceptual entity called good.”⁸

2. The Naturalistic Fallacy

There have been numerous definitions of “good”. According to Moore, considering that philosophers will insist that “good is pleasure”, another definition may be that “good is that which is

⁶ Moore, *Principia Ethica*, § 7.

⁷ Robert Peter Sylvester, *The Moral Philosophy of G. E. Moore* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1990), 6.

⁸ Sylvester, *The Moral Philosophy of G. E. Moore*, 8.

desired”; therefore, “a fallacy is committed by every philosopher who defines the concept.”⁹ Moore rightly notes that it is a mistake to define the notion with regard to some natural properties such as “pleasant” or “desirable”, labeling this mistake as the “naturalistic fallacy”. Thus, Moore claims that philosophers who attempt to describe “good” in terms of its “natural properties commit the naturalistic fallacy.”¹⁰

By the “naturalistic fallacy”, Moore means that “the assumption that because some quality or combination of qualities invariably and necessarily accompanies the quality of goodness, or is invariably and necessarily accompanied by it, or both, this quality or combination of qualities is identical with goodness.”¹¹ To understand the “naturalistic fallacy” from Moore’s point of view, it is essential to understand his project; one way to see Moore’s writings on the “naturalistic fallacy” is to view it as try to describe “what is good” and “what is not”.

In *Principia Ethica*, he analyses the concept of “good” and affirms that the most fundamental question in all ethics is how “good” is to be defined. According to Moore’s reply to this question, *good* is undefinable and an answer that, while apparently disappointing is also “of the very last importance.”¹² Baldwin indicates that “many issues arise here, both as to why this thesis is so important and concerning Moore’s conceptions of good, goodness, and definition.”¹³ According to Baldwin, a suitable approach to start considering these issues is to recognize Moore’s contrast between “the indefinability of good” and “the definability of the good”:

⁹ Moore, *Principia Ethica*, § 11.

¹⁰ Moore, “The Open Question Argument,” *Arguing about Metaethics*, eds. Andrew Fisher & Simon Kirchin (New York: Routledge, 2006), 31-46.

¹¹ Arthur Norman Prior, *The Naturalistic Fallacy: The Logic of its Refutation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1949), 6.

¹² Moore, *Principia Ethica Revised Edition*, ed. Thomas Baldwin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 58.

¹³ Thomas Baldwin, “The Indefinability of Good,” *The Journal of Value Inquiry* 37 (2003), 313.

But I am afraid I have still not removed the chief difficulty which may prevent acceptance of the proposition that *good* is indefinable. I do not mean to say that the *good*, that which is good, is thus indefinable; if I did think so, I should not be writing on Ethics, for my main object is to help towards discovering that definition. It is just because I think there will be less risk of error in our search for a definition of *the good*, that I am now insisting that good is indefinable.¹⁴

On this basis, it may be inferred that Moore accepts that “good” itself is indefinable; however, “the good” is definable. Moreover, accepting the indefinability of “good” seems to be a necessary condition for an appropriate approach to questions about defining the good. He supposes that “good” could be granted as an adjective; nonetheless, the good, or “that which is good, must be substantive to which adjective good will apply.”¹⁵

Moore attempts to define the “naturalistic fallacy” in various ways, both by describing the context of the argument against naturalistic and metaphysical theories and by using examples. Moore suggests considering Hedonism, in which the concept of “good” means “pleasure”, or Spencer's view of “evolutionary ethics”, as examples of such theories. This explains the concept as conducive to life or, alternatively, that it is morally better to evolve more than not to evolve so much.¹⁶ It is said that Moore, both theories and all other theories that seek to define the “good” in terms of natural property or object, are based on a “naturalistic fallacy”; he also shows that naturalistic theories and Hedonism precisely operate the “naturalistic fallacy”.

Similarly, from the point of view of Moore, who claims that no theory of metaphysical ethics can be true, these theories evaluate the “good” in terms of metaphysical properties or objects. According to Moore, “They all imply, and many of them expressly hold, that ethical truths follow logically from metaphysical truths that

¹⁴ Moore, *Principia Ethica*, § 9.

¹⁵ Moore, *Principia Ethica*, § 9.

¹⁶ Moore, *Principia Ethica*, § 31-7.

Ethics should be based on Metaphysics. And the result is that they all describe the Supreme Good in metaphysical terms.”¹⁷ As can be understood from these statements, it is seen that naturalists define the “good” based on the properties related to the natural sciences and psychology. In this context, it can be interpreted from Moore's claim that his theories of metaphysical ethics assume the “naturalistic fallacy” that proponents of naturalism and other theories fall into the mistake of making wrong.

Moore states that other theories are wrong because they misidentify the concept of “good” and that this misidentification is a “naturalistic fallacy”: “The naturalistic fallacy [is] the fallacy which consists in identifying the simple notion we mean by “good” with some other notion.”¹⁸ It is obvious that it is a mistake to identify any concept with another concept that is not identical, and this is a mistake sufficient to make any theory wrong.

Also, Moore, who many times explores the “naturalistic fallacy” in more general terms, suggests that to fall into the “naturalistic fallacy” is just to try to propose any definition of the concept of good. Given Moore's belief that the “good” cannot be defined, these views may be reasonable. However, according to Frankena, a naturalist may argue that this may not be a fallacy, given this more comprehensive concept of “naturalistic fallacy”. Also, a naturalist will decide whether the theory is wrong not by looking at whether he is trying to define the good, but by looking at whether the theory expresses the definition correctly.¹⁹

According to Miller, Moore's reason for thinking that the “good” cannot be defined in terms of natural properties is that he believes that it cannot be defined even in terms of unnatural properties, such as metaphysical properties. Miller states that from Moore's perspective, even if “good” were a natural property, in attempting to define *good*, one would still commit the “naturalistic

¹⁷ Moore, *Principia Ethica*, § 66.

¹⁸ Moore, *Principia Ethica*, § 35.

¹⁹ William K. Frankena, “The Naturalistic Fallacy,” *Arguing about Metaethics*, 47-58.

fallacy”: “Even if it were a natural object, that would not alter the nature of the fallacy nor diminish its importance one whit. All that I have said about it would remain quite equally true: only the name which I have called it would not be so appropriate as I think it is.”²⁰ Proceeding from these views, it should be noted that Moore emphasizes that the “naturalistic fallacy” is made by someone who is trying to provide a definition of the “good” or an analysis of the concept on which it is based.

3. The Open Question Argument

Moore' with his “open question argument”, led to a tremendous influence on the views of twentieth-century meta-ethicists. As part of his proof that the term “good” is a non-natural property, and in support of his theory that every form of naturalism commits the “naturalistic fallacy”, Moore suggests an “open question argument”. Moore’s whole proof that goodness is simple and indefinable is contained in the thirteenth chapter of *Principia Ethica*. Altman cites that Moore’s “open question argument” aims to disprove any proposed identification of “good” with some natural property, and Moore concludes from the “open question argument” that “good” must be a non-natural property. According to Altman, the received opinion is that the “open question argument” is a failure. Even commentators who think that the discussion hints at some important meta-ethical truths do not think that the discussion itself is good.²¹

In arguing that “good” is a simple, indefinable property, Moore emphasizes that, by definition, he does not mean a verbal definition, which is contingent, a posteriori, and synthetic; however, the definitions of which Moore is thinking are necessary, a priori, and analytic. Furthermore, Moore stresses that although

²⁰ Alexander Miller, *An Introduction to Contemporary Metaethics* (Oxford: Polity Press, 2003), 13.

²¹ Andrew Altman, “Breathing Life into a Dead Argument: G. E. Moore and the Open Question,” *Philosophical Studies: An International Journal for Philosophy in the Analytic Tradition* 117, no. 3 (2004), 395-408.

verbal definitions have a linguistic subject matter, analytic definitions concern the nature of goodness. He delineates the possible properties goodness could possess. If it is not the case that “good” means something simple and undefinable, only two alternatives are possible: either it is a complex, given whole about which the correct analysis might not offer agreement, or else it denotes nothing at all, and there is no such subject as Ethics. The concept of “good” is simple (and hence, undefinable), or it is complex, or it has no meaning. By this third possibility, Moore states that there is no one thing that “good” denotes. From this point, it might be that there is more than one thing and there is no ‘concrete’ meaning. This would clarify his claim that if the concept of “good” had no meaning there is no such subject as ethics. In the end, if there were no single thing that is the only simple object of thought relevant to ethics, then the discipline would be based on a fault.

The rest of the thirteenth chapter of *Principia Ethica* is dedicated to recognizing that the term “good” is not complex nor is it meaningless. Considering his proof that “good” is not complex, Moore states:

The hypothesis that disagreement about the meaning of good is disagreement with regard to the correct analysis of a given whole, may be most plainly seen to be incorrect by consideration of the fact that, whatever definition may be offered, it may always, be asked, with significance, of the complex so defined, whether it is itself good.²²

It seems that Moore proposes that if one can ask meaningfully, “with significance” whether the complex definition of *goodness* is good, then the definition is wrong. According to Moore, if we consider such philosophers and what they say about *good*, they do not reach any decision among themselves. They consider that they are right as to the meaning of “good” and attempt to prove wrong other people who express “good” as something else. Anyone, for example, will accept that “good” is pleasure; some, imaginably, may express that “good” is that which is desired”; from this point,

²² Moore, *Principia Ethica*, § 13.

one may claim that “good is nothing, yet is the object of desire”; moreover, some may attempt to state that “good is not pleasure”.

From point of Moore, “good just denotes the object of desire”, two points be followed in terms of proof: Initially it might be attempting to prove that pleasure is not the object of desire:

But if this be all where is his ethics? The position he is maintaining is merely a psychological one. Desire is something which occurs in our minds, and pleasure is something else which so occurs; and our would-be ethical philosopher is merely holding that the latter is not the object of the former.²³

According to Moore, “if good is defined as something else, then it is impossible either to prove that any other definition is wrong or even to deny such definition.” The second alternative is that the argument is a “verbal one”, such as when X claims that “good means pleasant” and Q claims that “good means desired”. Moore notes:

They are all so anxious to persuade us that what they call the good is what we really ought to do. Do, pray, act so, because the word good is generally used to denote actions of this nature: such, on this view, would be the substance of their teaching. And in so far as they tell us how we ought to act, their teaching is truly ethical, as they mean it to be. But how perfectly absurd is the reason they would give for it!²⁴

Indeed, Moore states that ethical philosophers try to define the good, but do not understand what such an attempt means; in fact, these scholars use arguments that involve one or both absurdities discussed in the eleventh chapter. Moore states that two important options to be considered for concluding that “good means a simple and indefinable concept” are that: (1) “Good may possibly denote a complex, as a horse does”; or (2) the term may have no meaning at all. Both alternatives have not been clearly comprehended by philosophers.²⁵

The semantical claim about “good”, from Moore’s point of

²³ Moore, “The Open Question Argument,” 39.

²⁴ Moore, “The Open Question Argument,” 39.

²⁵ Moore, *Principia Ethica*, § 11.

view, is that the meaning of “good” cannot be captured in naturalistic terms. Naturalism may be true only in two ways: firstly, naturalism might be true if an ethical term such as “good” had the same meaning as a simple concept such as pleasant. Secondly, naturalism might be true if “good” had the same denotation as a complex naturalistic concept such as “the object of a desired desire”. According to Moore, these possibilities are disproved by the following argument. A question such as “Is pleasure pleasant?” is closed -if one understands this question, one could not doubt that the answer is “yes”. On the other hand, a question such as “Is pleasure good?” is open- one could understand this question perfectly well, and yet doubt whether the correct answer is yes”.²⁶

Moore believes that philosophers must first determine the exact domain of ethics before they can deal with further implications of ethics. According to Moore, who notes that philosophers have different opinions about “whether pleasure is always good”, this kind of question is obvious. However, he argues that “good” cannot have the same meaning as pleasant. He states that if one thinks “pleasure is good or not”, one can see that one is not just wondering if “pleasure is pleasant” or not. Further, he asserts that this is a valid argument for any possible “naturalistic definition of ethical concepts.” Therefore, he proposes that the “good” is superficial and unanalysable, he considers this possibility inconsistent with naturalism.²⁷ Moore brings into play the “open question argument” to prove that, in fact, goodness is not identical with both complex natural and metaphysical properties. This still leaves the possibility that goodness is the same as a simple natural or metaphysical property. Moore provides an example of the functioning of such a complex definition and argument, which he considers the definition of “good” to be:

When we think that A is good, we are thinking that A is one of the things which we desire to desire, our proposition may seem quite

²⁶ Moore, *Principia Ethica*, § 25.

²⁷ Moore, *Principia Ethica*, § 25.

plausible. But, if we carry the investigation further, and ask ourselves “Is it good to desire to desire A?” It is apparent, on a little reflection, that this question is itself as intelligible, as the original question, “Is A good?”—that we are, in fact, now asking for exactly the same information about the desire-to-desire A, for which we formerly asked with regard to A itself. But it is also apparent that the meaning of this second question cannot be correctly analysed into “Is the desire-to-desire A one of the things which we desire to desire?”: we have not before our minds anything so complicated as the question “Do we desire to desire to desire to desire A?”²⁸

Moore asserts that when one substitutes for “good” in “Is it good to desire-to-desire A?”, the words denoting the characteristic have been proposed as a definition, and the question that arises is more complicated than the one with which we started, which is proof that the questions are different. This argument is that goodness is not a complex property.

4. Objections to Naturalistic Fallacy

It is worth noting that almost all philosophers disagree that the “naturalistic fallacy” is really a mistake. His method is subject to objections in many ways; for example, according to Frankena, who is among the critics of Moore’s method, the idea that naturalistic accounts of goodness commit “naturalistic fallacy” begs the question, which is a general form of falsehood committed when anyone tries to define the indefinable. Frankena states that Moore uses the “naturalistic fallacy” like a weapon, philosophers who use their accusations like a weapon make mistakes.²⁹ However, it can be said that Moore’s opinion is a sophisticated and influential analysis of a mistake made by many philosophers. Moreover, he does not use the “naturalistic fallacy” as a weapon but rather defines a certain type of error as a “naturalistic fallacy”.

The claim that a theory causes the “naturalistic fallacy” is acceptable, however, according to Frankena, who notes that this is

²⁸ Moore, *Principia Ethica*, § 13.

²⁹ Frankena, “The Naturalistic Fallacy,” 47-58.

only the result of an argument against the theory in question, it is acceptable if it does not have an initial premise. He states that a thinker who argues that a theory is wrong because it falls into the naturalist fallacy, intuitionists make the same mistake that naturalists are charged with. He also claims that he assumes the correctness of an opinion that needs to be discussed. In other words, for Frankena the “naturalistic fallacy” is the definition of the indefinable “good”, arguing that Moore did not give any arguments, but only assumed that the “good” is indefinable.³⁰

Similarly, Smith claims that it is not clear what the notion of “good” as a simple notion means. He comments that “Moore, of course, would insist that goodness is a simple, non-natural property, and thus does not consist of more primitive elements. But this hardly resolves the difficulty. For it leaves unexplained the basis for identifying things as possessing this property.”³¹ Whereas Moore objects to a certain kind of definition for the concept of “good”.

According to Feldman, who does not think that it is adequate to say “good” is indefinable, “metaphors and analogies and enforced silences will not help us to understand each other or the object of our common interest.” He points out that confusion is not only about the inner “good”, but also about other concepts related to axiology and, perhaps, normative ethics. For this reason, it is an understandable reason to demand clarity on the concept of “good”, which has a very important position in moral philosophy.³² However, while Moore claims that “good” is undefinable, he is not actually stating that “good” is a vague concept that is difficult to clarify. Instead, he means whether the concept of “good” can be defined by any individual characteristics.

Another objection comes from Miller who states that Moore

³⁰ Frankena, “The Naturalistic Fallacy,” 47-58.

³¹ Tara Smith, “Intrinsic Value: Look-Say Ethics,” *The Journal of Value Inquiry* 32 (1998), 541.

³² Fred Feldman, “Hyperventilating about Intrinsic Value,” *The Journal of Ethics* 2 (1998), 340.

has not emphasized how the word “good” is used; his emphasis attempts to apply a conceptual analysis to “good”:

I shall, therefore, use the word in the sense in which I think it is ordinarily used; but at the same time, I am not anxious to discuss whether I am right in thinking it is so used. My business is solely with that object or idea, which I hold, rightly or wrongly, that the word is generally used to stand for. What I want to discover is the nature of that object or idea, and about this I am extremely anxious to arrive at an agreement.³³

Moore highlights that “good” is not analyzable; thus, he claims that defining it according to its natural properties is to commit a “naturalistic fallacy”. Therefore, Moore considers “good” cannot define as “natural properties”. From Moore’s point of view, “natural properties” are undefinable, too.

According to Prior, Moore’s explanation of the “naturalistic fallacy” emphasizes a very important point. If the naturalist wants to make a naturalistic definition of goodness and thereby show that other definitions are wrong, the naturalist’s explanation must be a realism in which it can be trivially correct and obvious to everyone who thinks about it “pleasure is pleasure”. It should also be noted that if someone wants to propose a naturalistic definition, then if he tries to assert that he is right, the argument in favor of the opinion will probably show that all the others are wrong; nevertheless, the definition will not have only pretension. Although they seem important to Prior, who states that the views of “naturalistic fallacy can be seen as an argument against naturalists who want or expect realism to have logical force”, he still calls them “inconsistent naturalists”. In addition, Prior claims that he applies the “open question argument” to indicate that “good” is a simple and inadequate definition.³⁴ It can be concluded that this claim is understandable, since, from his point of view, an analytical definition is a result of being simple. It is striking to note that, despite

³³ Miller, *An Introduction to Contemporary Metaethics*, 12-3.

³⁴ Prior, *The Naturalistic Fallacy: The Logic of its Refutation*, 6-17.

all the diversity of interpretations and analyses of Moore's work, a single idea dominates his thinking.

Conclusion

Moore considers it essential to establish specifically “what the proper subject of ethics is thus, he takes the proper subject of ethics to be good” and accepts that ethics is the “general enquiry into what is good.” He considers it necessary to determine specifically what the subject of ethics is; therefore, he considers the appropriate subject of ethics to be “good” and recognizes that ethics is “the general investigation of what is good”. Also, Moore claims that no theory of “metaphysical ethics” that defines goodness in terms of metaphysical properties or objects can be true. Therefore, a large part of his work is to determine the meaning of goodness. For Moore, ethical naturalism perpetuates the misconception that goodness is not any natural property or object, no matter what form it takes.

Also, his “open question argument” contains two arguments rather than a combined argument that the “good” is not identical to any unnatural property. These are that the term “good” is not a complex feature, nor is it meaningless. “Can we define the good?” although the question is a controversial topic in philosophical ethics, the centrality view -good is simple, indefinable, unanalysable, unnatural and is a unique object of thought- we can infer that Moore provides the appropriate answer, which is a theory of value. According to Moore, only “good” is the simple and unanalysable predicate of value. As Moore notes, “a wrong answer leads to wrong results”. The task of ethics is to discuss such questions and statements, to discuss the correct answer when they ask what is true, and to make statements considering whether a person's statements about his personality or “morality of actions are true or false”. As Moore points out, in various situations that make statements that include any of the words “virtue, vice, duty, right, necessary, good, bad”, people form ethical judgments. This means that if a person wants to debate his own reality, he is examining a fact

of ethics. In that respect, it is very important to underline the importance of ethics in discussing human conduct. Moreover, the question of “what is good conduct” is one of the central questions of ethics. For that reason, “what is good” in general becomes important in terms of settling the question of good conduct. In this respect, the question of “what is good?” or “how good is defined” is significant for reaching true ethical judgments. Although many philosophers believe that the “naturalistic fallacy is not a fallacy” besides that the “open question argument” has not been adequately discussed, Moore's position can be used to understand issues of ethical philosophy, such as the debate around the definability of “good”. As a final word, it should be noted that although it seems impossible to decide whether “good” is definable or not, it can be said that both the “naturalistic fallacy” and the “open question argument” are convincing arguments that complement each other.

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