

ideas - bad - good
not absolute
Taylor idea

virtue ideas
lead lead to bad ideas
not relevant.

(b) Analyse the reasons why **Virtue Ethics** may be considered the most persuasive of ethical theories.

(20)

The reason why Virtue Ethics can be considered more persuasive than other ethical theories is due to its reflecting ideas - which many people would consider to be a positive aspect to the theory. Aristotle's theory focuses on the agent-centred idea that we should follow virtues and be virtuous, while reflecting ideas e.g. greed, which often lead to bad characters of people, and often bad consequences. This ~~idea~~ differs from other theories as they often allow bad actions to occur through their principles, as in Utilitarianism, as long as the majority of people wish to do something then people can do it as it follows the principle of utility ("the greatest good for the greatest number"), meaning if everyone wanted to kill, they could under the principle. Furthermore, in Natural Moral Law, as long as somebody is following a primary precept, their actions are acceptable e.g. rape could be okay as it's trying to follow the precept of reproducing. This makes Virtue Ethics more persuasive as, while it's not focused on actions, many followers of it say that virtuous people wouldn't want to do those actions and that they are acting in excess in the Golden Mean, so people can't do ideas and by consequence bad actions if they are being virtuous, showing how it's more persuasive than the other ethical theories. However, some critics disagree with this idea and state that virtues can lead to bad things, as many Virtue Ethics followers would say e.g. loyalty is a good virtue, but critics would say loyalty to e.g. Hitler is bad, as they

HA059045162



P 7 5 7 3 1 A 0 9 2 4

9

Turn over ►

are therefore supporting bad actions even if they aren't directly doing it. This shows how, even following certain virtues at times can be negative, and so while it may not be a vice, it isn't very moral. Furthermore, modern adaptations of Utilitarianism of JPH mean it now has the Harm Principle - meaning you can't hurt ~~someone~~ get out of pleasure if someone gets hurt - minimising its negative effects. This means that other theories like Utilitarianism could be more persuasive than Virtue Ethics, as new policies have been put in place to ensure no bad consequences occur. But, modern supporter Philippa Foot argued that virtues aren't virtues if they lead to bad outcomes, meaning loyalty to Hitler isn't a virtue. This adaption ensures that virtues (or "corrective as Foot calls them") remain good and have no negative consequences, confirming its persuasiveness above the other theories.

Another reason its persuasive is due to, as Taylor argued, it not adhering to strict absolute laws like other theories do e.g. Kantian Ethics, Natural Moral Law etc. This makes it a persuasive argument as it therefore allows people to use their reason to make decisions and be virtuous and so allows people to grow and flourish and build their character autonomously. This is beneficial as it therefore allows people to be ethical by themselves and become better through experience above them simply being told what to do. Taylor says that the lack of absolute rules was good as it meant that they weren't being good due to others telling them to be - which many argue isn't



virtuous at all. This therefore makes it better than other absolutist theories which are as applicable as Virtue Ethics is as it means that they don't consider the uniqueness of complex descriptions and how every situation requires thought and consideration. This shows a strength to the lack of rules and virtue ethics has. However, a counter to this is that its lack of rules makes Virtue Ethics harder to follow as it doesn't explain what to do when virtues clash or what to do if people have alternate views on what virtues are due to how subjective the theory is. This shows how its lack of rules makes it harder to follow as it means that people have no way of knowing what is virtuous in certain situations while e.g. Natural Moral Law has strict rules, so people know what to do, showing how Virtue Ethics isn't a persuasive theory in comparison to other theories.

Lastly, virtue ethics is a persuasive argument, due to it being universal and persuasive, as it appeals to both religious and secular ideas. This is because the ~~theory~~ theory doesn't rely on God, making it more secular, but many can apply their religious teaching to it as e.g. when it discusses a virtuous role model to follow, for those that could be Jesus, and it has similar teachings to Christianity e.g. promotes human flourishing (eudaimonia) and the rejection of vices. This demonstrates how its more persuasive than other theories which either fully rely on God (Natural Moral Law) or - excluding secular believers - or ignore God (Utilitarianism) and so exclude believers, making it



a strong universal moral system. However, there are some theories that are ~~less~~ persuasive as can be applicable to religious and secular people as well e.g. Kantian Ethics or Situation Ethics. Kant uses reason which was not given and Fletcher and Robinson use Jesus and his example and teachings e.g. Good Samaritan ~~idea~~ in their theory, showing how virtue ethics is more persuasive than some due to its universality but not others. Furthermore, Vardy said that virtue ethics isn't compatible with religion as it excludes God and his omnipotence. He said that religion was moral and so Aristotle's rejection of God in his theory shows how it's not universal. Also, religion focus on worshipping God over being a good person. This shows how other theories can be more persuasive than virtue ethics as e.g. Situation Ethics focuses more on Jesus and religion than virtue ethics, showing how that's better.

In conclusion, it's clear that while all the theories have merit, virtue ethics is the most persuasive as it focuses on our character over intentions and ~~action~~ consequences which are harder to control or predict, meaning that we can all become good people and leads to more moral actions, showing its persuasiveness.

