EMOTIVISM = A CRITICAL ANALYSIS

By

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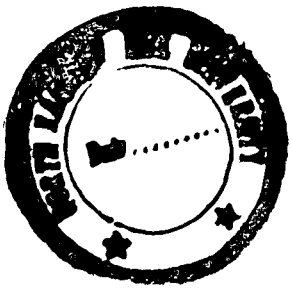

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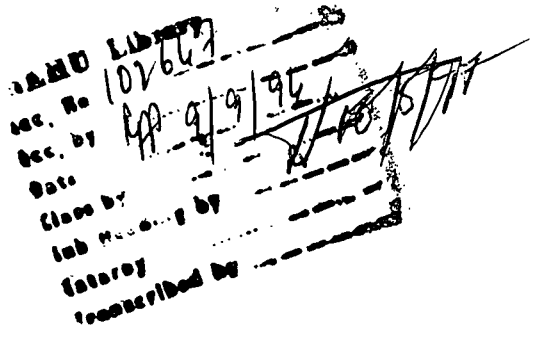
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CERTIFICATE

Certified that the subject matter of this dissertation is the record of work done by ***Mitali Choudhury****, that the contents of this thesis did not form a basis of the award of any previous degree to him, or, to the best of my knowledge, to anybody else, and that the dissertation had not been submitted by her for any research degree in any other University.*

In habit and character ***Mitali Choudhury*** *is a fit and proper person for the* ***Degree of M.Phil.***

SHILLONG

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(S. C. Daniel)
Supervisor

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SHILLONG ***(MITALI CHOUDHURY)***

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

My thesis is entitled, "Emotivism – A Critical Analysis". It consists of four chapters, namely:

1. Introduction.
2. Language and Ethics.
3. Attitudes and Ethical Conventions.
4. Emotivism and Logical Positivism.

In the first chapter, I would attempt a historical account of the emotive theory. The 'Emotive Theory' of ethics is a systematic answer to the questions, 'What is it to have an ethical convention?' or an opinion about values. 'What is the meaning of words like, 'right' or 'good' which are characteristically used to express such conventions or opinions, 'what kind of justifications or, reasoning can support them?' As such this theory is a part of crucial ethics, or meta-ethics, and not a substantive theory in ethics, like hedonism or utilitarianism.

Now what do we mean by meta-ethics? – It is a section of ethics which elaborated problems of the epistemological and logical nature of ethical language. The term was intro-

duced into ethics by the logical positivists, for whom meta-ethics is a specific philosophical discipline, which in contradiction to normative ethics, studies only the ethical language and which claims to be neutral to different moral views. Strictly speaking, there is nothing wrong in studying the logic of ethical judgement and in including methodological and logical problems of ethics into a special sphere, but the positivists understand meta-ethics to be a purely formal study of ethical judgements regardless of their content. Such a study is not concerned with the questions as to what is good and what is evil, as to how morality depends on socio-historic conditions, and as to what importance morality has in man's life. However, unless these questions are solved, meta-ethics cannot become a philosophical theory and turns into a variety of modal logic. The positivists claim that they have created ethics as a 'non-party', 'neutral' science is equally erraneous. The sociological, historical and philosophical problems of ethics are organically corrected with questions that have a bearing on man's choice of his moral position and behaviour in practice. In this respect it is like philosophical theories about the meaning and justification of scientific statements in contrast to theories in science, like Darwin's theory and the theory of gases.

The main contentions of the emotive theory may be

described, by way of preliminary summary, as consisting of a negative and a positive claim, which are as follows:

(1) The negative claim which is directed against natural and intuitional theories, is that ethical judgement and reasoning are drastically different from judgement and reasoning in science. Now what do we understand by naturalist and intuitionalist? Naturalist is the methodological principle used by some pre-Marxists theories to explain the development of society by the laws of nature. In the 17th and 18th centuries, Naturalist played a positive part in the struggle against spiritualism.

Intuitionalism is an idealistic trend which has gained great influence in bourgeois philosophy in the epoch of imperialism. Intuitionalism counterposes to rational knowledge the immediate perception of reality based on intuition which is understood as a special ability of the mind, irreducible to sense experience and discursive logical thought. Intuitionalism is directly associated with mysticism. Bergson and Lossky were the main proponents of intuitionism. A trend in bourgeois ethics gave rise to modern formalism in ethics. Intuitional ideas in ethics were first formulated by the Cambridge School in the 17th and 18th centuries and later developed by contemporary bourgeois proponents of ethics. Ethical convèntions are a kind of thing wholly different

from scientific beliefs: words like 'wrong' and 'good', unlike scientific predicates, do not name properties or at least do not do so primarily; ethical convictions can neither be demonstrated, like propositions of arithmetic nor tested by observation or experiment, in the manner possible in the empirical sciences.

(2) The positive claim is that ethical words function rather like interjections ("Alas!") or optatives ("would that ...!") or performatives. (A performative verb is one, which, like 'condemn' and 'promise', can be used to do something, like condemn or promise, as well as to describe an action. Ethical expression may be thought to function like the performing uses of such verbs or even to be substantially synonymous with some, for example, "I condemn you for....") Different types of emotive theory exhibit wide variations of the positive claim and also some variations of the negative one. All types agree in denying that naturalism and non-naturalism or intuitionalism are adequate theories of ethics. What follows is primarily a discussion of the second, positive claim.

Some parts of the theory are old: the Greek recognised that ethical statements, unlike those of science are expressions of praise or derogation and that they influence conduct. Moreover, the meta-ethical theories of Francis Hutchson and

David Hume, in the early 18th century, are most reasonably construed as forms of emotive theory. But it was not until the 1930s that the plausibility of a theory of this sort was intensively examined by philosophers. The logical positivists' theory of meaning, which was influential in the 1930s, was a strong motive for attention to the emotive theory, but the emotive theory is logically independent of this theory of meaning, which is today accepted by few.

Positive Content

Some forms of the emotive theory suggested in the 1930s have hardly any supporters today. Such forms would include the suggestion made, for example, by R. Carnap, that to say a person 'ought' to do something is to issue a designed command and the proposal by A.J. Ayer, for example, that ethical terms function typically to express emotion. The more influential types of theory after 1950 agree on some variant of five major contentions an agreement which permits a wide spectrum of differences. All five contentions build on the non-controversial assumptions that there are cognitive-emotional dispositions (different from cognitive frame of mind, like belief or expectations) such as being in favour of something, being committed to a policy (or having decided on a policy); having a preference or interest, being disposed to become emotionally aroused about various types of situation

for instance, being ready to feel guilty about doing a certain thing or to be indignant about someone else doing a certain thing). The generic term 'attitude' may be used to refer to such dispositions. It is fruther generally agreed by philosophers that whereas attitudes cannot contradict one another in the way in which belief may (when one belief cannot be true if the other is), they may conflict in the sense that the goal of behaviour to which one attitude tends to lead is incompatible with the realization of the aims of behaviour to which another attitude tends to lead. Thus, if one attitude tends to lead to voting against it, it is helpful to speak to the attitudes as clashing or conflicting.

General theories of ethics typically take the form of attempts to analyse or characterize moral concepts and moral judgements so far as that could be done without mentioning the application of the former, or any grounds of the latter; for instance, moral terms were said to be – whatever it might be that they were thought applicable to – 'emotive', and moral judgements to be – whatever this person that might think were proper ground for them. Emotivism is not committed to denying that the questions of what people want and what would actually conduce to their satisfaction are questions of empirical fact. What they do resist is an attempt to blur the distinction between the descriptive and the normative uses of language.

After an attempt at the definition of the word 'Emotive' and the theory itself, I would discuss albeit briefly the principles of David Hume. This chapter would also include the views of C.L. Stevenson and logical positivists such as A.J. Ayer and Schlick. First, I would like to start with David Hume. It is no exaggeration to say that modern emotivism owes it existence to Hume.

Hume's theory, although not an emotive theory, draws our attention to the same facts as does the emotive theory. It is superior to the emotive theory in further pointing out that when we use the word 'good', we speak not the language of self love but the ' language of humanity'. Some critics have been misled by Hume's use of the moral 'mean' when he speaks of our meaning nothing by the use of moral predicates – but that the contemplation of the actions or characters to which we apply them causes us to have favourable or hostile feelings. However, it would be wrong to think that Hume is advancing the thesis that a statement, of the form 'X is good' is logically equivalent to the statement 'I have a feeling of moral approval in contemplating X' or yet to some such statements as 'the contemplation of X arouses a feeling of approval in most moral men' or 'in most of the members of such and such a society. And the same applies to statements about the rightness of actions or the obligation to perform

them. We cannot credit Hume with the view that in making statements of either of these sorts we are covertly asserting something about ourselves or about other actual or possible critics. There is indeed a sense in which he is offering an analysis of our moral judgements; but the analysis is not intended to supply us with a recipe for translating the sentences which express them. It consists rather in an account of the circumstances in which we are induced to employ moral predicates, and of the purposes which their employment serves. Moreover, if we did insist on extracting from Hume a reformulation of our moral statements, we should come nearer the mark by crediting him with the modern 'emotive' theory that they serve to express our moral sentiments rather than with the theory that they are statements of facts about one's own or other peoples' mental condition. A difficulty is faced by Hume's theory, which to say something is 'good' is to say that I approve of it ... do so as well and 'bad' that I disapprove of it. Take for instance a well-known passage from Hume's.

> Take any action allowed to be vicious, murder, for instance. Examine it in all lights and see if you can find that matter of fact or real existence whichever way you take it, you find only certain passions, motives, volitions and thoughts. There is no other matter of fact in the case. The vice entirely escapes you as long as you consider the object. You can never find it till you turn your reflection into your own breast and find

> a sentiment of disapprobation, which arises in you, towards this action. Here is a matter of fact. It lies in yourself, not in the object.1

This much quoted, example makes it clear that the badness of the act is not an additional feature of it, ranking alongside the facts that the killer had such and such motives, or that he brought about the death of his victim in such and such a fashion. Neither is it manifested as a sort of glaze with which the conjunction o such facts, is overlaid. My statements that it was a wrongful act may carry a descriptive content, if it is construed as presupposing my acceptance of some prevalent code of morals which I can then be taken as asserting that the action violates, but it is not bound to any such presupposition. It would not be invalidated if my moral sentiments were at variance with those that prevailed in my community or indeed in any other. I could be argued out of them; in this or another instance, not only by its being shown to me that I was not properly or fully informed of the facts, but in a variety of other ways. For instance, I may be convinced on philosophical grounds that law-breakers should not be regarded otherwise than as sufferers from diseases; I amy attach importance to maintaining consistency in my moral attitudes, and may be persuaded that this case

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1. L.A. Selby Bigge & P.H. Nidditch, A Treatise of Hume Nature, Second Edition Bk. III, Part I, Sec. I, pp. 418-19.

does not differ significantly from others which I have taken a different view: I may be given cause to think that my view of the case is clouded by untoward features of my own experience and character. I may consequently decide that my original moral judgement was mistaken. I say 'mistaken' rather than 'false', because I think it conductive to clarity to assign a truth-value only to moral judgements which carry the presuppositions of some code so that it becomes a factual question whether the judgements accord with the rules of measurements which the codes furnish. Evidently this does not imply either that any one code is sacrosanct, or that all moral judgements are equally acceptable.

In this theory (emotive) words such as 'good', 'bad', 'right' and 'wrong' function like 'nice' and 'nasty'. If I say 'Beer is nice' this means I like it. If you say 'it is nasty' this means that you dislike it; and both these propositions are true. I like beer and you dislike it. 'Beer is nice', 'beer is nasty' seems to be about beer and seems to contradict each other. But they are about you and me and are quite compatible with each other. It would of course be a contradiction for me to say 'beer is nice' and 'beer is nasty' because this would mean that I both like and dislike it. In most cases the truth of a proposition is independent of the person of the speaker. If I say 'Queen Anne is dead'

this is just as true if you say it. But in some sentences the truth depends on the speaker; for instance, 'I am short-sighted' which is true to me, if said of me and false, if said of you. This is because the 'I' refers to the speaker. Now, on the Humean theory the truth of the statement 'beer is nice' depends on who says it, though it does not look as if it did because it has no reference to 'I' in the actual words. It is misleading in this respect. Similarly, with 'Nero was a bad man' which seems to say something about Nero, as in 'Nero was a silent man'. But it does not tell us about the speaker, that he disapproves of Nero. It is to be noted that on this theory that moral proposition are still propositions; they are still true and false, there are still more moral facts, but they are propositions, truth, facts, about the speakers who enunciate them.

Hume's theory of moral judgements is that to consider a character trait or an act which springs from it as virtuous or vicious is to have a special sort of feeling of pleasure or displeasure towards it. The distinctive character of this feeling is that it is aroused only by human characters and action, that it is aroused only when the type of the character or action is considered in general neglecting any individual feature of a particular case, and that the feeling is affected by no features of the character or action other than its

pleasantness or unpleasantness, its usefulness or harmfulness, either to its possessor or to other affected by it.

The fullest working out of the emotive theory of ethics is to be found in the writings of C.L. Stevenson. He makes a number of useful points and an important addition to the theory as we have seen it in Hume. He distinguishes conflicts of belief from conflicts of attitude. Many disagreements about what we ought to do or about what is good or right are not really moral disagreements at all. One doctor says 'we ought to operate', the other says, 'No', we ought to try anti 'biotics', They are in complete moral argument (that the patient should be cured), they differ in belief about what will cure him. Sometimes such a quarrel may therefore be quickly settled 'He did wrong to leave his wife and children, and go off to, Peru like that', 'No he didn't' 'What?' Not wrong to desert his family and leave them unprovided for? 'He didn't. They are going out to join him on the next boat', 'Oh' I didn't know that'. Here from the beginning there was moral agreement between the disputants (wife-desertion is wrong) the question was one of fact and of conflicting beliefs about fact. Thus Hume's distinctions are brought out clearly. The point Stevenson makes is that the vast majority of disagreement about what is right or my duty turn out on examination to be disagreements in belief and

therefore in principle soluble by evidence. The moral is that, even if we accept Emotivism, it is wrong in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred to apply the theory simply in every case when I say 'X is right' and upon say 'X is wrong' it is almost always an error to say this just means that I approve of it and that you disapprove of it; and there is no more to be said, because morals are a matter of taste not argument. No doubt the first move is correct. When I say 'X is right' then I do approve of it. But we must ask 'why?' I may be afraid of that creature in the field. There is no doubt that I am afraid of it. But why? Because he thought it was desertion. When he found it was not, his disapproval vanished. For basically my of fear is of bulls and his disapproval is of wife-desertion.

Having emphasized this good point, Stevenson then makes a further equally good point. I have suggested that it is normally easy to find out whether a disagreement is one of belief (factual) or one of attitude (moral) by asking 'why?' But this is not always so easy – as in the case of the poet who did love Dr. Fell. An obvious recent example is Nuclear Disarmament. Some of the arguments are clearly one or the other. 'If we give up the bomb other states will follow our example'. This is a purely factual prediction, for which there can be evidence, and for which there could

in principle be verification. If giving up the bomb meant that our country would be overrun without resistance and annexed by the USSR, I don't care I'd rather die than live under communist rule than be a party to the use of such a weapon. This is a pure moral preference. There are no facts which could be brought against it (or to support it either).

Stevenson goes on to point out that language itself frequently helps to blur the distinction between moral and factual elements. Many terms appear to be factual but are also morally loaded and they can therefore be used to deceive. 'We can't give him a note he's a nigger', 'We can't give him a job, he is a Yid', 'We can't trust him, he's a Red'. In each case a reason seems to be given for the actions in questions and the reason seems to state a fact and to some extent it does. But it also expresses an attitude. In these cases the trick is obvious; no one could be misled, 'because words like 'nigger', 'yid' and 'red' stink. But it is not so easy. What is the non-stinking and purely factual alternative to each of these words, 'Negro', 'Jew', 'Communists'? But these too can function as contemporary, by tone of voice, by emphasis and by context. For a pleasant example we may recall A.E. Hoseman's obituary of Arthur Platt, which ends, 'He was addicted to tobacco, he was indifferent to wine and he would spend long afternoons watching the game of cricket'.

Houseman prefers this with the sentence, 'I must now enumerate his vices? But even without that, 'addicted' and 'indifferent' would give the clue; and, in that context it would be obvious what Houseman's own attitude to cricket was.[2] Stevenson does not note the difficulty of finding non-loaded terms as equivalent. But, in order to see this, let anyone take a strong controversial letter to a newspaper and underline the loaded word. And then let him try to substitute 'aseptic' words for them, words which give the same information, but without basis. I attended on enquiry on a Road Plan. The counsel attacking the road said to the expert witness who had devised it: 'you will agree, I take it, that the object of this is to inject another thousand cars, a day into St. Giles' Street'. With an eye open for this kind of thing I noticed the word 'inject'. The expert witness could not deny this suggestion. To my great delight the counsel defending the road arose at once to re-examine 'you will agree, I am sure, that the High Street cannot be relieved unless a large number of cars are led into an alternative route' – 'led' – 'lead kindly light' and so on of course the expert had to answer 'yes' to this question too. I said to myself 'what is the aseptic alternative to 'inject' and 'lead'? And I found there was

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2. A.E. Houseman, The Scholar Poet, Richard Perceval Graves, Oxford.

none. This is not surprising because language like other social institutions, is commonly used to win friends and influence people; so it is to be expected that little of it (except scientific terminology – here perhaps 're-route'!) is aseptic and non-loaded.[3]

The last point on which I think Stevenson makes an advance on Ayer is that he describes the state of mind concerned with moral approval as an 'attitude' rather than as an 'emotion'. There is an admission by Ayer which indeed takes us towards this change.

Stevenson's use of the term 'attitude' is too inconsistent. It is true that he explicitly prefers it to 'emotion' and for the right reason. Response is to a range of emotions or rather 'an attitude (which is itself a complicated conjunction' of dispositional properties) (Ethics and Language, p. 60). To say I have an attitude to a situation is to say that I am reacting to a certain feature of this situation 'And' that I should react similarly to any similar situation, yet, when Stevenson speaks of moral rules, he traces these to 'psychological economy', to 'the convenience of generalisation'. The hearer like the speaker will instinctively avail

3. C.L. Stevenson, Ethics and Language, Yale University Press, 1945, p. 60.

himself of the psychological economy that comes of ordering the objects of his attitudes in some rough sort of classification'. This suggests that reaction to particular cases could be independent of and prior to their classification. But in that case 'attitude' is not the right term. There are two possible alternatives, (a) I have feelings towards particular actions. These feelings are actually occurrent and not dispositional. I can then notice similarities between the events which arouse these feelings, and make rough classifications of them for convenience; or, without such explicit attentions, I can form a habit of having such feelings, or (b) I have an attitude to this particular action. This means that I approve of it in virtue of some general characteristics it has, and that I should approve of any other action which had this characteristics. But if so the rule 'actions of this kind are right is not the result of generalisation, but is essential to and implicit in the particular occurrence of approval.

There is another reason for the use of 'attitude', rather than 'feeling'. If I have an attitude of approval towards something it will express itself not only in a class of moral judgements but in all sorts of other ways: in decisions, choices, advice, praise, blame, remorse. This also accounts for what would otherwise be an argument against

the Emotive theory. It may be said that a historian can pass a moral judgement on a past action without any noticeable feelings, quite dispassionately. But this is because judgements of commendations or condemnation are just as adequate expression of a moral attitude as are feelings. Anything which can be introspectively recognised as a feeling of approval occurs usually in extreme cases or where other expressions are blocked. For, in a sense, the other expressions are both more natural and the best evidence of this attitude. Actions speak louder than words. A man may never expresses his feeling; about marriage or communism or slavery in moral judgements but you could discover what his attitude is in each case by observing his conduct.

There is one other amendment Stevenson makes to Ayer's type of theory; it is the one he himself regards as of the greatest importance; but, as we shall see, it is doubtful whether it is an improvement on the original theory. The reason for this amendment is a criticism regularly urged against Hume–Ayer theory (by G.E. Moore among others). Moore regards it as 'an absolutely fatal objection'.

If, when one man say, 'This action is right' and another answers 'No, it is not right' each of them is always merely making on assertion about his own feelings, it plainly follows that there is never really any difference of opinion

between them; the one of them is never really contradictory what the other is asserting.[4]

It would be like two people saying, 'I like sugar', 'No, I don't like sugar', where the word 'No' is obviously absurd. As Morre says elsewhere.

If two persons think they differ in opinion on a moral question 'and it certainly seems as if they sometimes think so' they are always on this view making a mistake, and a mistake so gross that it seems hardly possible that they should make it: a mistake as gross as that which would be involved in thinking that when you say 'I did not come from Cambridge today' you are denying what I say when I say 'I did'.[5]

Stevenson admits that the argument has great force and devises an addition to the Hume–Ayer theory to meet it. He maintains that a moral judgement has a double function. It describes the attitude of the speaker and it also attempts to impose this attitude on the hearer. This second feature, the 'persuasive' element is Stevenson's answer to Moore. 'This is right' and 'this is not right' (so far as they both describe the attitudes of the two speakers) are mutually compatible and are both true. But what about persuasion?

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4. G.E. Moore, Ethics, pp. 100-1.
5. Philosophical Studies, pp. 333-4.

I was asked by a Government Department to describe the political affiliations and psychological balance of an ex-pupil. I asked two colleagues what they thought about my doing this. One said: 'It would be right' and the other said 'No, it would be quite wrong'.

Now on Stevenson's view both of them are trying to persuade me and the result is a conflict. The word 'No' becomes quite appropriate. Compare 'shut the door', 'No, leave it open'. Not only is there conflict, but in a sense there is logical contradiction because it is logically impossible for me to be persuaded by both of them.

This persuasive element explains the reason why people go on conflicting about moral issues. When it is a matter of taste, we do not mind saying 'tastes differ' and leaving it at that. And indeed the results are sometimes satisfactory; 'Jach Sprat would eat no fat, his wife eat no lean'. But since moral judgements are intended to be persuasive we cannot agree to differ any more than rival missionaries can, when they both meet a possible convert. But there is still a fundamental difference between Moore and Stevenson and between this kind of conflict and the normal case of contradiction. When two ordinary statements contradict each other one must be true and the other false, 'Liverpool is bigger, than Manchester', 'No', it is not'. This conflict is resolved by

population statistics. But when two 'persuasives' conflict, neither is logically superior to the other. The solution of the Liverpool/Manchester conflict is the prevalence of truth. The solution of a conflict of 'persuasive' is simply victory (and the victory of either side, no matter which).

Nevertheless Moore admitted later in a letter that Stevenson's theory went a long way to meet his difficulty and that as a result he was uncertain whether, his original view or Stevenson's was correct.[6]

It has also to be remembered that the conflict is solved by the victory of either side no matter which and also. No matter how the weakness of dwelling as a way of settling problems of honour is that the best (most honourable) man need not win.

Truth is merely the ideas which are felt in a certain way and are felt to dominae in a mind or set of minds ... you may indeed ask psychologically, if you please, how they come to dominate, but however, they have come to dominate, their truth is the same. If you and I disagree... and if you argue with me and persuade me that in one way of agreement. But if you prefer to know me on the head, that, so far as truth goes, is the same thing except that there is now truth

6. The Philosophy of G.E. Moore, pp. 535-54.

not in two heads but in one. And so to there being any other truth about all this state of things, or in short any truth at all, except mere prevalence, the whole notion is ridiculous. And if you deny this you do but confirm it, since your denial (though of course true) must also be false since it is true only because in fact it has prevailed.[7]

Stevenson's insistence on the persuasive element in moral judgements certainly fits some instances of these very well. 'You ought to see it through's is such an example. And perhaps any moral judgement thought of as a communication between people can be represented as having this character. So far as moral judgements enter into history or biography they can be regarded as attempts by the author to persuade the reader to adopt the author's attitude to Nero or Nelson or Lloyed George.

But there seem to be equally clear example of moral judgements where the persuasive element is lacking. Stevenson admits this, when he says he has 'concentrated on the inter personal use of moral terms and treated the personal use by implication only'.[8] What is this 'personal use'? It occurs when I make 'a moral judgement without communicating it to any thought', or I may write in my diary (carefully locked

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7. F.H. Bradely, Essays on Truth and Reality, p. 112.
8. C.L. Stevenson, op.cit., p. 134.

away from huma eye): 'I treated Jones badly today' or Jones treated me badly today.

Now surely these are moral judgements, but how can Stevenson argue that they are persuasive as well as expressive? He tries to do this by treating them as self-persuasions. I am trying to persuade myself. He asks 'How do we come to a decision? How do we resolve a moral conflict?' and replies 'We imagine ourselves, to be one of our own heroes; we picture ourselves in conflict with a doughty opponent whom we finally convince. We personify the opposition within ourselves. We call it the devil within us, the old Adam; we exhort it to surrender'.

Now, what decision are we trying to reach, what conflict are we trying to resolve, in these cases? Not a conflict or a decision about what is right or wrong. We have already reached that decision; for, if we had not, we could not call the opposition the devil in us or the old Adam. The decision then is a decision what do do and the conflict is one between duty and desire (the devil, the old Adam). When I call my image of my heroes or picture myuself wrestling with the dragon, I am trying to get myself to do what I have already decided that I ought to do. But persuasion of this kind is irrelevant to Stevenson's analysis. His formula to explain 'X is good', is 'I approve of X'; do thou like wise. Do thou

what? Do thou approve. And indeed only such an analysis can deal with judgements about third parties or the past. When I say to you 'De Gaulle is behaving badly' I am trying to get you to disapprove of De Gaulle. I am not trying to get you (or De Gaulle) to do what you or he approve. When I say to you, 'The Treaty of Versailles was unjust'. I am getting you to disapprove of it and not trying to get you (or the treaty makers) to do what you or they approve. But when I say to myself or write in my diary 'Jones behaved badly', I am expressing disapproval of Jones and I cannot possibly be persuading myself to disapprove. For why should I? Either I do disapprove already and persuasion is pointless, or I don't and persuasion is groundless. The cases of genuine self persuasion well described by Stevenson are cases in which I am trying to persuade myself to do what I already approve. There is a story that the undergraduates of an Oxford College during 1914 War used to share their bath house with the Head of their college. And they used to hear him say, in his impressive deep voice: 'Come along now, Phelps. Be a man, Phelps. In you go Phelps'. This was obviously self persuasion. But the Provest was clearly not trying to persuade himself to approve of taking a cold bath. He already approved and was persuading himself to take it. So I conclude that Stevenson amendment of the expressive theory to meet Moore's criticism, by the addition of a persuasive element,

fails because, in some moral judgements, no such persuasive element occurs.

The truth is surely that moral judgements (like only other judgements) may be used to persuade as well as to do their proper jobs. The judgements that the earth goes around the sun is properly and primarily a statement in astronomy about planetary movements. But it would be used as it was 'unsuccessfully' by Galileo as an attempt to persuade his persecutors, to change their beliefs. And so 'Eppur Se mvove' takes its place not only in astronomy where it properly belongs but also in social history. So also 'that's nice', said meditatively (and this is the proper use) by the gourmet as he savours his caviare may also used by Nurse to persuade Tommy to eat his porridge.

This use of the moral judgement for persuasive purposes is another justification of the substitution of 'attitude' for 'emotion' which was discussed earlier. It means that one of the activities which I shall on appropriate occasions pursue, if I have an attitude of disapproval of something, will be to try to persuade others to share this attitude.

For A.J. Ayer moral judgements are not propositions at all, they are not true or false, they do not <u>describe</u> anything, not even the feelings of the speaker. They are

more like exclamations; they evince or show approval and disapproval. Ayer's argument for this is that:

> We can reject the view that a man who asserts that a certain action is right or a certain thing is good is saying that he himself approves of it on the ground that a man who confessed that he sometimes approved of what was bad or wrong would not be contradicting himself.9

This argument seems unsatisfactory. If the term 'bad', 'wrong' and 'approved' are all used morally then a man could not confess what Ayer suggests. He might morally approve of something which was legally wrong or bad for his purse or his health, or he might non-morally approve (aesthetically or as an object of desire) of something which he would describe as morally bad or wrong what he cannot do is say 'I feel moral approval of this action or thing but it is morally wrong or morally bad'. And indeed Ayer himself a few pages later makes this admission: If I say 'tolerance is a virtue' and someone answers 'you don't approve of it': he would on the ordinary subjectivist theory be contradicting me. It may also be that Ayer was misled by his word 'sometimes'. I can say 'Regulas did the right thing though I have sometimes morally disapproved of his action'. I can certainly say 'This is bad or wrong, though I used to approve of it morally when I was younger; or Ayer may mean (by 'sometimes') in some

9. A.J. Ayer, Language, Truth and Logic, Published by Victor Gollanz in Pelican Bk., 2nd ed., 1971, p. 104.

exceptional cases. But if he approved of X in this exceptional case he could not hold that in this case it was wrong. A similar point on which the subjectivists theory must be clear is that the approval which a moral judgement describes is present approval though the verb in the sentence concerned, is past or future. 'Nero was a bad man', you will do right if you tell him the truth must be analysed as 'I now disapprove of Nero's character though Nero is dead, and I now approve of your hypothetical future act of truth-telling'.

Though Ayer's argument for rejecting the view that moral judgements describe the speakers' feelings may be mistaken, it is still possible that the view itself may be right. A man who says 'That was a shocking thing to do, does not seem to be giving a calm and dispassionate account of his own feelings. Indeed 'How shocking of you', would often be an equivalent utterance. An exclamation is normally taken to be an expression of a feeling involuntarily forced from the utterance of it. A groan evinces pain as sweating evinces embarrassment or pallor evinces fear. The man who in The Hunting of the Shark shouted 'Hi' or some other loud cry was simply giving vent to his feelings. But some exclamations may be used to communicate my feelings. I am offered a glass of wine to taste and I say 'lovely'. But this means that I can use an exclamation to deceive. I can say 'lovely' when

I taste ouzo because my host is a Greek and I do not want to offend him. I can say 'Ow' at my dentist's before he hurts me because I think he is getting very near the nerve. It is to be noted that not all exclamations can be so used. If I see a man dancing about I have no way of knowing whether he is rejoicing or furious, or his feet are hurting or the bricks are hot. So he cannot deceive me – But exclamations which have a conventional attachment to certain feelings like 'Ow' and 'Boo' and 'lovely' and 'Hurrah' can be used to communicate feelings and therefore to mislead. Ayer says that a moral judgement expresses feeling 'by a suitable convention'. But it thereby communicates the fact that I have the feeling, as in Hume's theory. Indeed it would seem that the best line for a holder of the Emotive theory to take would be to say that moral judgements lie somewhere between pure descriptions and pure exclamations and have some of the characteristics of both.

Schlick's method of analysis is also applicable to the method of the analysis of knowledge to problems of Ethics and the theory of value. He concluded that the apriori arguments for absolute values do not fulfill the logical criteria of meaning. Only the value ascribing forms of behaviour actually found among people. Relative assignments of relative values, can be taken as the basis for ethical and other

value system. In Schlick's view this sort of value analysis leads to a new kind of empirical foundation for eudaemonism. In his Fragen der Ethik, he offered as the fundamental principal of an ethics so based the maxim "Increase your happiness" (Mehre deine Gluck - Selig Keit)..

Schlick's ethics has been widely criticized as superficial, on the ground that there can be morally objectionable happiness. To understand it correctly, one must take into account how he characterised the happiness which one should strive to increase. By happiness he meant the quiet, joyous absent that accompanies our action when we carry out for its own sake some activity springing from our talents. This is the kind of activity that is, to be evaluated as ethically worthwhile behaviour. The joy in such activity resembles the joy of a child at play, and it should be regarded generally as the criterion for emtoional and intellectual youthfulness. This youthfulness is not tied to physical age. Anyone who has found the activity proper to himself, and has thus experienced this quiet, joyous happiness, has realised the highest attainable ethical goal and will keep his youthfulness throughout his entire life. On this basis, Schlick rejected all varieties of ethical rigorism; including the Kantian system. No ethical worth can be attributed to action undertaken from a mere sense of duty when such actions inspire

only distaste and annoyance both before hand and afterwards. On the contrary, acting out of a sense of duty is ethically valuable only if a quite satisfaction accompanies the action. Moral value, Schlick used to emphasize, attaches only to vital action, the sign of life is youthfulness, but we are young only when we act from joy. When the quiet, inner joyous assent accompanies our action, we fulfill the requirements of the highest principles of ethical value.

In this introductory chapter, I have made a survey of the emotive theory. I have indicated the questions that emotivism raises. It is worth repating that emotivism deals with meta-ethics because of the fact that it deals with the problems of the epistemological and logical nature of ethical language.

The main contentions of emotive theory consist of a negative and a positive claim. The negative claim is directed against natural and intuitional theories. The positive claim, on the other hand, claims that ethical words function like interjections or optatives are performatives.

Emotivism is a 20th century phenomenon. It goes only as far as the early 1930s. The theories advocated by R. Carnap and A.J. Ayer are no longer acceptable to even the emotive theories of the present day. After 1950 the emotive theory

underwent many major changes. The emotive theories of today generally agree on certain contentions.

Any discussions about emotivism would be rendered without having a discussion about moral principles of David Hume. It is not an exaggeration to say that Hume is the precursor harbinger of emotivism. I have tried to show though Hume's theory can be considered as a kind of emotive theory, it is superior to emotive theory in a certain way.

It is generally agreed that C.L. Stevenson is a landmark in the history of emotivism. His book, Ethics and Language is a path-breaking work in the field of moral philosophy. He makes an important distinction between the conflicts of belief and the conflicts of attitudes. I have discussed these distinctions threadbare. In fact, I have discussed his whole moral philosophy in detail. I have also indicated that Stevenson's theory is better than Ayer's in certain respect. I have also discussed Moore's criticism of Stevenson's theory.

I have come to the conclusion that moral judgements are neither pure descriptions nor pure exclamations. Therefore, I have suggested that the best time for a holder of the emotive to take would be to say that moral judgements lie somewhere between pure descriptions and pure exclamation have some of the characteristics of both.

CHAPTER II

LANGUAGE AND ETHICS

LANGUAGE AND ETHICS

The purpose of this chapter is three-fold.

a) To bring out the distinction between 'Language and Ethics' as the title of my chapter indicates.
b) To raise certain questions regarding the current tendency to treat the various use of language or discourse as different modes of 'meaning', and
c) To consider the adequacy of the so-called 'Emotive Theory of Ethics' as an account of moral discourse.

While my primary concer is with ethics rather than semantics, I have introduced some preliminary remarks of a more general nature in the belief that, apart from the validity of my arguments against the emotive theory, there are sound reasons for questioning the adequacy of any ethical theory or politics which regards poetry or morals as essentially non-cognitive in their significance. In the succeeding sections I will be concerned more particularly with certain alleged requirements concerning ethical judgements and the meaning of ethical terms which have influenced certain writers to adopt the view that the latter possess only an emotive

but not a cognitive or connotative significance, and that the former are to be considered not primarily as descriptive assertions but rather as ways of inciting interest or as 'prods to actions'.

The terms which need some clarity are 'ethics', 'ethical language' and 'emotions'. Most of us make the general mistake of confusing the term Ethics with emotions of moral sentiments of human nature and also that ethical language has no distinction with the ordinary language. I will first examine what is actually meant by the word 'Ethics' and its historical background.

Ethics is one of the most ancient theoretical disciplines that studies morality. This branch of study appeared in the early stage of slave-owning society and singled out from the spontaneous moral consciousness of society as one of the principal integral parts of philosophy, and unlike purely theoretical knowledge of reality, gave practical recommendations on how to behave. Later ethics was divided into theoretical and practical, into philosophical and normative. In modern bourgeois ethics, this historically justified division has resulted in alienation between science and morality.

Linguistic Analysis in Ethics

Linguistic Analysis in Etchis is a trend in modern

bourgeois philosophy of morals, current in Britain and is, well shown, by P. Nowel Smith, R.M. Hare; while in the U.S.A. by H. Aiken.[1] The advocates of linguistic analysis in Ethics criticise the most nihilistic conclusion of emotivism and try to prove the possibility of substantiating moral judgements admitting that these contain special (prescriptive) shades of meaning. But in their conclusions, on matter of principle, they share the views of the emotivists, holding that moral judgements cannot be true or false, that they cannot be proved by theoretical or factual knowledge, that normative ethics is not scientific and scientific ethics is not normative, that is, cannot have practical moral significance. In other words, normative ethics studies only the ethical language, and it claims to be neutral to different moral views. Strictly speaking, there is nothing wrong in studying the logic of ethical judgements and in including methodological and logical problems of ethics into a special sphere, but the positivists understand it to be a purely formal study of ethical judgements regardless of their content. Such a study is not concerned with the questions as to what is good and what is evil, as to how morality depends on socio-historic conditions, and as to what importance morality has in man's life. However, unless these questions are

1. Murad Saifulin and Richard R. Dixon (Eds.), Dictionary of Philosphy.

solved such a theory (Naturalism) cannot become a philosophical theory and turns into a variety of modal logic. The logical positivists claim that they have created ethics as 'non-party', 'neutral' science is equally erroneous. The sociological, historical and philosophical problems of ethics are organically connected with questions that have a direct bearing on man's choice of his moral position and behaviour in practice. To understand this, let us examine the place of ethics in the logical positivists' mind. Ethics is an attempt to investigate moral judgements by means of formal logic and the methodology used by the neo-positivists in the natural and exact sciences. This led to an extremely formal treatment of moral phenomena to extreme simplification of their nature and to a number of scientifically inconsistent conclusions: such problems as the origin and historical development of morality was left uninvestigated, and its mechanism unexplained. The advocates of logical positivism in ethics ignored the fact that morality is a special form of social relations and consciousness, they made only the 'moral language' the object of their studies. Owing to this narrowing of the object of ethics, moral concepts and judgements themselves were falsely interpreted. For example, because good and evil are not perceived by the sense organs, susceptible of empirical observations and experiments, they inferred that these concepts had no meaning at all. As moral

judgements cannot be verified, the positivists deprived them of any sense, describing them as 'meaningless', 'pseudo-judgements' such methdology further led to a number of nihilistic conclusions on morality.

In contrast to the emotivists, who deal mainly with analysis of moral statements, the supporters of linguistic analysis in ethics consider the logic of moral language as a whole. Their research in their field is of certain interest. They admit that particular moral judgements can be substantiated by more general propositions, moral principles and ideals. But ideals and principles themselves they hold, cannot be substantiated by any means. This conclusion results from the use of false methodology in research, into phenomena of moral consciousness from considering morals as a field of specifically everyday language. This method is purely empirically descriptive. As a result, the logic of moral consciousness with its objective laws remain unexplained. Such a method leads to the assertions that the choice of a moral position is a matter for each individual and is carried out at will depending on individual inclinations or preference. The supporters of logical analysis in ethics hold that ethics cannot provide ideological and moral orientation and confine its social and practical function to teaching people, the formal rules of moral language. Such forma-

lism condemns man to ideological impotence in matters of morality.

In the history of ethics, theory was traditionally set off against practice, and this caused certain difficulties to the solution of its key problem – what the source and basis of moral idea is. Attempts were often made to find the source of moral ideas in 'extra historical' principle, god, nature of man and cosmic laws which are better understood in ethical naturalism which includes hedonism, eudaemonism, utilitarianism, evolutionary ethics and others. The majority of trends of the modern bourgeois ethics continue to drive moral concepts from various notions and data of anthropology and psychology. Among these trends are ethics of cosmic teleology, theories of moral sense, theory of interest and others. Moore was the first among the bourgeois theorists of morality to criticise Naturalistic ethics. According to Moore and his followers, moral standards cannot be derived from 'natural conepts' (they considered this a 'Naturalistic mistake'). Meanwhile, having a broader understanding of the 'natural', they placed within this category everything that is outside morality, including social phenomena. As a result, both morality and ethics are separated from the social sciences, and the actual knowledge of man. This is the drawback typical of the whole formalistic trend of the

modern bourgeois ethics. In the 1940s and 1950s the authors of a number of studies conducted in western countries, defended the principle of Naturalism against Formalism and Neo-positivism. This criticism levelled by Naturalists against Formalism and Idealism in ethics, and the elements of Materialism contained in their theories are by and large progressive. Their drawback is the lack of a clear understanding of the basic differences between the socio-historical laws of the development of morality and those of anthropology and psychology. Marxism has proved that Morality is a specific social phenomenon, whose essence cannot be grasped with complete abandonment of the survival of Naturalism in ethics. The other 'extra-historical' principal 'God', is the source of morals in ethics. Theological God is the embodiment of moral good and virtue, while evil and a morality in society are due to the 'original sin'. Moreover, good is the only criterion of what is moral. An action is either good or bad depending on whether it conforms or does not conform to the will of God. And finally, God gives a moral sanction, i.e., is the only authority is evaluating the morality of an action. Theological ethics is anti-social in its aim, since it negates the right of society to produce moral evaluations. A great place in it is taken up by the doctrine of the reward of the righteous and the punishment of sinners, which theologians, associate with the end of the world which is explained

thoroughly by a religious doctrine termed 'Eschatology'.

Eschatology upholds the ultimate fate of the world, mankind, the end of the world and doomsday. It is based on the ancient notions of occult, active powers in natures, the struggle between the good and the evil, the punishment of sinners and the reward of righteous after death. The Eschatological ideas are to be found in their developed form in Christianity (Apocalypse and in Judaism). Eschatologic moods were widely spread during social and political crises as in Judea in the first century A.D. in Germany in the 15th and 16th centuries in England in the 16th and 17th centuries, and in Russia at the turn of the 17th century. Even today clergyman and sectarians make use of Eschatology. Contemporary theologians falsify data obtained by natural science to strengthen the position of Eschatology.

Some apriori principle or self-developing absolute ideas are found in Kant's philosophy. According to Kant, an irripressible striving for absolute knowledge is inherent in reason. Under the pressure of this striving, man's reason seeks to solve the problems of the finity or infinity of the world in time and space, the possibility of the existence of indivisible elements of the world, the nature of the process taking place in the world, and of God as the absolute essential being. Kant held that opposite solutions can be

equally demonstrable: the world is finite and is infinite; indivisible particles (atoms) exist and there are no such particles; all processes are causally conditioned, and there are processes (actions) that occur freely: an absolutely essential being exists and does not exist. Thus reason is by its nature antimonic, that is, is divided by contradictions. But these contradictions, according to Kant, are merely seeming. A solution of the enigma lies in limiting knowledge in favour of faith, in differentiating between 'things-in-themselves' and phenomena in recognizing that 'things-in-themselves' are unknowable. Thus, man is simultaneously not free (as a subject of the unknowable pretersensual world) the existence of God is undemonstrable (for knowledge), and at the same time it is the necessary postulate of faith, on which our conviction of the existence of moral order in the world rests. This teaching on the anti-monic nature of reason, which served Kant as the basis for the dualism of the 'things-in-themselves' and 'phenomena' and for agnosticism, gave an impetus to the development of positive dialestics in classical German idealism. On the other hand, in the understanding of knowledge, behaviour, and creative effort this teaching remained a captive of dualism agnosticism and formalism. For example, in ethics, Kant proclaimed as the basic law the categorical imperative which demands that man be guided by a rule which being absolutely indepen-

dent of the moral content of an action, could become a universal rule of behaviour. In ethics, contrary to the formal rule of behaviour. In ethics, contrary to the formal nature of categorical imperative, he put forward the principle of the self-value of each individual, which must not be sacrificed even for the good of society as a whole.

Extra-historical principles such as God, nature of man, cosmic laws also play a vital role in Hegelian philosophy. As a point of departure for his philosophy, Hegel chose the identity of being and thinking, that is, the conception of the real word as a manifestation of an idea, a concept, or spirit. This identity he regarded as the historically developing process of the absolute ideas cognizing itself. When developed the content of Hegel's objective idealism is that all phenomena in nature and society are based on the absolute – the spiritual and rational principle the 'absolute idea', 'world reason', or 'world spirit'.[2] This principle is active, and its activity consists in thinking or, more precisely, in self-cognition. The absolute idea passes through three stages:

1) Development of the idea in its own bossom, in the 'element of pure thinking' – logic, wherein the idea reveals its contents in a system of logical categories which are related and grow out of one another.

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2. Knzykhopadie Der Philosophischen Wissenchaften in GRUNDRISSE 1817.

2) Development of the idea in the form of 'other-being', that is, in the form of nature – philosophy of Nature. Nature, Hegel averred, does not develop. It is merely the external manifestation of the self-development of the logical categories, that constitute its spiritual essence.

3) Development of the idea in thought and history (in the 'spirit') i.e., philosophy of Mind.

At this stage the absolute idea withdraws within itself and conceives its content in the different forms of human consciousness and activity. However, the idealistic principle of identity of thought and being serves to substantiate the unity of the laws governing the external world and thinking it is directed against Kant's agnosticism.

Idealistic theories of morality in which good is defined as that which someone has approved or ordered. According to who does the approving (God, man's moral sense, society) Approbative Ethics is sub-divided into theological, psychological, and social approbative theories. An example of the first, is the ethical doctrine of neo-protestantism which considers God's absolute will the supreme law of morality, conceptions of the second type were called theories of moral sense. Social approbative ethics was founded by

French sociologists Durkheim and Levi-Breihl. According to their theory of 'Collective notions', moral evaluations and instructions are deprived of any objective and cognitive meaning whatsoever, and based solely on having been sanctioned by society. It is therefore supposedly useless to try to prove their truth scientifically. The psychological and social approbative conception of the phenomena of morality brought them subsequently to their sceptical and nihilistic interpretation. On the whole approbative ethics denies objective assessment criteria in morality, which results in renunciations of man's rationally critical attitude to his own or society's moral notions and in their adoption through blind faith or subjective bias.

In the 20th century, the crisis of these traditional theories has found its reflection in the statement on the impossibility of theoretical substantiation of moral ideas made by bourgeois ethics and in the latter's split into two opposing trends (Irrationalism and Formalism). Marxism alone bridges the antithesis between theory and practice by explaining their social and historical nature and proves scientifically that the sources of moral ideas are the historically developing modes of production, the structures of social life logically replacing one another and progress made by material and spiritual culture of society. Marxism alone

shed light upon the nature of morality, its place in social life and the specific reflection of social being in moral consciousness.

Accordingly, Marxists solve the question of the subject matter and the tasks of Marxists. Ethics which embraces a number of spheres of investigation one of the tasks is to study the development of human morality that takes the form of a struggle between moral ideas of different socio-economic formations and classes with their subsequent change, and also the form that reflects this process – the history of ethical doctrine. Today the task of ethics is to substantiate historically the highest form of human morality, communist morality to criticise bourgeois morality and ethics. Thus, conclusions made in the historical theory of ethics, find their natural development in normative ethics, and the latter ceases to be a self-sufficient teaching opposed to theoretical ethics. Moral principles are not established by individual philosophers, proponents of one or another trend, but are elaborated in the process of social practice, reflecting the experience of many generations of the whole people as well as that of individual classes.

Marxist Ethics also analyses the nature and mechanism of morality, studies it as one of the forms of man's social activity and a special form of social relations and con-

sciousness. In the period of communists construction both the theoretical tasks and significance of Marxist Ethics grow immensely. It generalises and systematises the principle of communists. Morality formulated by working people in the process of building a new society and puts them on a scientific foundation; it serves as a scientific basis for the moral education of working people, helps them to adhere to a firm stand on key problem of today and to take on uncompromising attitude to any violation of the normas of communist morality.

Language and ethical language to my opinion is highly confusing. To the general man, language is only the way of communicating with one individual and another. Then what is this ethical language? Before we consider what we mean by ethical language, let us examine what we mean by language.

Language is a sign system fulfilling the cognitive and communicative functions in the process of human activity. Language can be either Natural or artificial. Natural language is the language of everyday life, a means by which human being conveys thoughts and communicates with each other. Artificial language is created by people for some narrow needs as mathematics, symbols, systems of signalisation etc. Language is a social phenomenon arising in the course of development of social production and is its indispensable aspect – a means of coordination of human activity.

Wittgenstein is well-known for his views of language. In the Tractatus[3] he argued that philosophy attempts to construct an 'ideal language', a language the terms of which are all of them precisely defined and the sentences of which unambiguously reveal the logical form of the facts to which they refer; such a perfect language must rest upon atomic propositions; the fundamental philosophical problem is to describe the structure of these atomic propositions. His subsequent writings are in large part a reaction against this Russellian 'philosophy of logical atomism'. Russell's philosophy moves in an atmosphere thick with science. Philosophy for him is continuous with social, psychological, physical, and mathematical investigations. His free uses of mathematical symbols produces in the ordinary reader the feeling that if this is incomprehensible, it is for only two familiar reasons. For Russell, there is the theory of reality and the theory of truth from which both G.E. Moore and Russell set out, and against which, in certain respects although not in others, they were strongly to react. The world is composed of external and immutable concepts, propositions relate concepts one to another; a true proposition predicates truth of such a relation of concepts, and is 'a fact' or 'a reality'.

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3. L. Wittgenstein, Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1921, New Trans. 1961).

Russell, in his Autobiography, has made it clear what Moore's earlier theory meant for Moore and for himself. It was above all a liberation from Bradleys 'Absolute and Bradleys' relegation from the standpoint of the Absolute, of the world of everyday life to the realm of appearance. 'With a sense of escaping from prison' Russell wrote,

> We allowed ourselves to think that grass is green, that the sun and the stars would exist if no one was aware of them, and also that there is a pluralistic timeless world of platonic ideas. The world, which had been then and logical, suddenly became rich and varied and solid.4

Russell had from the beginning special views about philosophy which closely associate it with logic and with mathematics. That all sound philosophy should begin with an analysis of proposition is, he writes, "a truth too obvious, perhaps, to demand a proof."[5] Thus, whereas for most previous commentators, Leibniz had been pre-eminently the creator of an imaginative world view which 'reconciled science and religion', for Russell the clue to the understanding of Leibniz's philosophy – as distinct from the fairy tales he concocted for the delectation of his royal correspondents lies in his belief that all propositions can be reduced to the subject-predicate from, i.e. that relations are reducible to properties

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4. Russell Bertrand, A History of Philosophy, London, Sydney, Wellington, Published by Unwin.
5. Ibid.

of the terms between which they hold.[6]

Russell's account of 'analysis' provided by his Theory of Types encouraged the view that linguistic enquiries, of one sort or another, are of special importance to the philosopher. The same effect, even more obviously, flowed from Russell's Theory of Denoting.

'On fundamental questions of philosophy', he wrote in The Principles of Mathematics,

> My position, in all its chief features, is derived from Mr. G.E. Moore. I have accepted from him the non-existential nature of propositions (except such as happen to assert existence) and their independence of any knowing mind also the pluralism which regards the world, both that of existents and that of entities as composed of an infinite number of mutually independent entities, with relations which are ultimate and not reducible to adjectives of their terms or of the whole which these concepts.7

These entities are the 'terms' in propositions. With this ontology is associated a theory of language. 'It must be admitted', he wrote,

> That every word occurring in a sentence must have some meaning ... the correctness of our philosophical analysis of a proposition may therefore be usefully checked by the

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6. By the 'subject-predicate form' Russell and most of his successors mean what could be less misleadingly described as 'the substance-attribute form'.

7. Bertrand Russell, The Principles of Mathematics, London, George Allen and Unwin, 1903.

> exercise of assigning the meaning of each word in the sentence expressing the proposition.8

Every word a meaning, every meaning an entity — these are the principles on which Russell at first worked.

To continue with the ordinary view of language, Dictionary of Philosophy's view of physiology language is the second signal system. As a form of existence and conveying thoughts, language plays an essential role in forming consciousness. The language sign, conventional in relation to what it designates by virtue of its physical nature, is nevertheless in the final count conditioned by the process of cognition of reality. Information is accumulated, preserved and passed on from generation to generation with the help of language. Language is instrumental in the development of abstract thought and its generalisation. However, language and thought are not identical. Once it has arisen, language is relatively independent and obeys its own specific laws, the laws that differ from the laws of thought. Therefore, there is no identity between word and concept, sentence and judgement. Furthermore, language is an organized system of signs with its own peculiar structure, outside of which the nature and meaning of a language sign cannot be understood. Due to the growing scope of theoretical research in recent

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8. Ibid.

decades more interest is shown in the study of artificial, formalised language of their logical syntax and logical semantics. For this reason language has become the object of study of linguistic, logic and semantic contemporary neo-positivism absolutises the role and significance of these studies and tries, uncorrectly; to reduce the problems involved in philosophical studies to a logical analysis of language.

For A.J. Ayer, one may say, philosophy consists of British empiricism restated in linguistic terms which becomes crystal clear in his The Foundation of Empirical Knowledge[9] since, he considers, we can talk sensibly and consistently about the world in either 'the sense-datum language' or the material object language. We have only to decide which language flows most easily from our lips.[10] Ayer's own preference is for 'the sense-datum language'. The Foundations of Empirical Knowledge has been widely read as a defence of phenomenalism. 'The British empiricists went astray', Ayer argues, because they thought that, 'sense-datum', 'idea', and the like, were names of entities, whose properties can be considered in precisely the same manner as any other entity – so that we can sensibly ask, for example, whether sense-data have properties which we do not perceive them to have. To proceed thus, he considers, is to lose the whole advantage

9. A.J. Ayer, The Foundations of Empirical Knowledge, 1940.
10. C.D. Broad, Five Types of Ethical Theory.

of the sense-datum terminology: the classical problems of illusion will break out all over again in regard to sense-data. If someone asks us, for example, how many stars a person sees when he 'sees stars', we must, Ayer thinks, refuse to answer this question, on the ground that it makes no sense, from the fact that the person who sees the stars could not tell us how many he saw, we are not to infer that his 'sense-data'[11] had properties he did not notice but only that 'sense-data stars', unlike real stars, are not denumerable. 'A sentence', Ayer defines, as a grammatically significant set of words, a 'statement' as what such symbols express, a 'proposition' as a sub-class of 'statements' containing only such statements as are expressed by 'literally meaningful' sentences. Thus, the phrase 'meaningless proposition' is, according to Ayer, a contradiction in terms; it is sentences which are 'literally meaningful' and statements, it would seem, that are verifiable.

To understand more of what is called 'orindary language', Wittgenstein's conception of the term cannot be overlooked. Wittgenstein exhorts us, to see how word uses can be linked without being describable in a single comprehensive formula. Consider the word 'game' for example. Board-games

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11. Controversy on this point is found in Ayer's The Terminology of Sense-Data, in Mind, 1945 (Reprinted in Philosophical Essays, 1954).

have many points in common with card-games, but share only some of these similarities (rigidly defined rules, for example) with football; ring-a ring-a roses has something in common with football, but what with chess? The result of our survey, Wittgenstein argues that 'we see a complicated network of similarities overlapping and criss-crossing sometimes: overall similarities, sometimes similarities of detail'. Such a network he calls a 'family'.[12] The 'essence' of a game will consist in these complex, interlacing ways of using the word 'game' – a conclusion Wittgenstein sums up in an epigrah: 'essence is expressed by grammar: grammar tells us what kind of object anything is'. 'Grammar' is here a technical expression, there are others in the Philosophical Investigations, like 'language-game' and 'criterion'. Every word for him sa a name. 'Understanding a word' learning a word's meaning', is some sort of mental process, involving the contemplation of what Locke called an 'idea' or Schlick a 'content' – an analysis of which meaning leads inevitably to the puzzle Schlick's writings so abundantly exemplify.

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12. (a) H. Khatchadourian, "Common Names and Family Resemblances" (PRR, 1958): J.R. Banbrough.

    (b) "Universal and Family Resemblances" (PAS 1961); H. Hervey: "The Problem of the Model Language-Game" (Phil 1961); R.J. Richman, "Something Common", Jp, 1962) M. Mandetball.

    "Family Resemblances and Generalization Concerning the Arts" and K. Campbell: "Family Resemblances Predicates" (APQ, 1965).

If we keep calm and look without prejudice at the way words are actually used, Wittgenstein considers the 'mystery of meaning' will evaporate. We can more easily preserve our balance; he also thinks, if we begin by considering possible, rather than actual language. Now this is Carnap's view too, but whereas Carnap's 'possible' languages, as he describes them in The Logical Syntax of Language, are complex artificial formulae, Calculi, which we could not possibly use in the ordinary affair, of life, Wittgenstein describes a mode of social behaviour – although sometimes the behaviour of an imaginary tribe rather than of a real community – and asks us to consider the sort of language which would be particularly useful within such a 'form of life'. Suppose for example, a builder is working with a labourer, he teaches his labourer to bring him a slab when he says 'slab', a brick when he says 'Brick' and so on. Then this, Wittgenstein thinks, is the kind of language philosophers must have had in mind – he quotes Augustine – when they wrote of language as if it wholly consists of names.

Such a language, he points out, is obviously very much simpler than the English language; it is of use, in fewer social situations.

But yet the question what is ethical language still remains unexplained. Ethical language is not a language about

what people ought to do. It is about what they are doing when they talk about what they ought to do. Ethical or moral language must not be confused with moralizing. A moralist is someone who uses moral language in what may be called a first order way. He, qua moralist engages in relfection, argument, or discussion about what is morally right or wrong, good or evil. He talks about what people ought to do. Qua Moral Philosopher, he thinks and speaks about the ways in which moral terms like 'right' or 'good', are used by moralists when they are delivering their moral judgements. What are the defining characteristics of Ethical language as such? How is it like, and how unlike, language used for other purposes such as for stating empirical facts or uttering commands? What are people doing when they talk about, what they ought to do. Before I try to find answers to these question, I would like to bring out the major distinction between "judgements in ordinary usage and judgement in Ethical usage".

Judgements in ordinary language is an idea, as defined by the Dictionary of Philosophy, expressed in the form of a declarative sentence, which makes some assertion about objects and which is objectively either true or false. A hypothesis is also a judgement and may be objectively either true jor false, although it is not proved or disapproved.

Ethical judgements, says C.L. Stevenson, are descriptions of existing state of interest for instance, that the

speaker approves or that people in general approve (whatever is under discussion). The Emotive theory recognises that the major use of ethical judgements is to create an interest. It is the emphasis upon description, he says which renders all the traditional theories irrelevant as analyses of the word 'good'. All this is familiar. There is nothing here, except the air of caution and moderation, which is not in language, truth and logic.[13] But Stevenson goes on to raise two further questions of considerable importance. The first is the question how an ethical sentence acquires its power, and the second is, what this influence has to do with the meaning of the sentence. It is of this second question that he goes on to address himself. Stevenson starts by distinguishing the descriptive from the dynamic use of words. It is important that he is so far saying nothing about the meaning of words, but only about the serious uses to which they may be put. Thus, if I know that any companion has a horror of moths, I may say 'moth' not to describe what I see, nor even to inform him that there is a moth in the railway carriage, but specifically in order to get him to leave. Stevenson does not deny that in such a case the word 'moth' does not also describe or inform; in fact its dynamic purpose would fail if its ordinary meaning were not understood. His point is simply that we may use the very same words either to

13. A.J. Ayer, Language, Truth and Logic, First published by Victor Gollanez, 1936 and then by Pelican Book, 1971.

inform, or to arouse sympathy, or to drop hints, and so on. He defines the meaning of a word as the psychological causes and effect with which its utterance tends to be associated. The meaning, he says is causal or dispositional property of the word. There is then, on this interpretation of meaning, a kind of meaning particularly associated with dynamic uses. This is to be called Emotive Meaning. (The term, as we have seen, was originally used by Ogden and Richards in The Meaning of Meaning,[14] but it soon passed into current philosophical language). 'The motive meaning of a word is the tendency if a word, arising through the history of its usage, to produce (result from) affective responses in people', and again. Certain words, because of their emotive meaning, are suited to a certain kind of dynamic use - so well suited, in fact, that the hearer is likely to be misled if we use them in any other way. The more pronounced a word's emotive meaning is, the less likely people are to use its purely descriptive.

The relation between dynamic use and emotive meaning is contingent, not necessary. But it is a very important relation. If in defining a word with emotive meaning, such as the word 'good', the emotive element of the meaning is left out, people are deceived into thinking that the word is most often used descriptively, while in fact it is most

14. I.A. Richards and C.K. Ogden, The Meaning of Meaning, London, 1923.

often used dynamically Stevenson goes on to apply this general principle to the particular question of defining 'good'. He concludes that it is impossible to define it exactly; for in any proposed analysis of its meaning the emotive element, though it may not be left out, will be distorted. thus he suggests that the meaning of 'This is good' is more or less the same as the meaning of 'I like this like it as well'. But in the latter phrase the element of command is explicit, whereas in 'This is good' it is implicit. The emotive force of 'This is good' it is implicit. The emotive force of 'This is good' is therefore, subtle white in the supposed analysis it is crude. Nevertheless, Stevenson, is not worried by the ultimate failure to find an exact equivalent for 'good'.

It is possible (he says) to say that 'this is good' is about the favourable interest of the speaker and the hearer ... and that it has a pleasing emotive meaning which fits the words for use in suggestion. This is a rough description of meaning not a definition. But it serves the same clarifying function that a definition ordinarily does: and that, after all, is enough. All the requirements with which he started are satisfied by this account of the meaning of 'good'. It is possible for people to disagree about whether something is good, since it is clear that people can have

divergent interests. Obviously the requirement that 'good' should have magnetic force is satisfied, for this is precisely what the emotive parts of its meaning is. The last requirement was that the presence or absence of goodness in a thing should not be able to be settled by purely scientific methods and this too is plainly satisfied. If I am commanding you to like something by letting you that it is good, the question how I get to know that it is good need not arise. On the other hand, empirical investigations are not wholly ruled out by this analysis since I may offer reasons for issuing the command, and what I give as reasons may be checked by empirical kmeans. Thus if I say 'This book is good, because it will make you laugh', while you cannot verify the command aspect of my statement, you can find out whether or not the book does make you laugh. Finally, Stevenson like Ayer, insists that the function of moral philosophy is precisely to do what he has embarked on in this article to analyse the meaning of ethical terms.

If 'X is good' is essentially a vehicle for suggestion, it is scarcely a statement which philosophers, any more than many other men, are called upon to make. To the extent that ethics predicates the ethical term of anything, rather than explains their meaning, it ceases to be a reflective study. The alternative envisaged for moral philosophy

are either to tell people what things are good, which it has no right to do, or to tell people what 'good' means, which Stevenson has done.

In general knowledge, Ethical judgements are To To Genere different from judgements as to matters of empirical fact, but they do not differ, as the non-naturalists holds, in asserting something which is not an empirical fact but some other kind of fact; they differ in that either they do not assert facts at all or that, if they do, this is only a relatively unimportant part of their function. Ethical or moral judgements, says Ayer, do not function ordinarily in the same way as the class of indicative sentences marked out by his verification – criterion. Moral language is frequently emotive, simply because the situations in which it is typically used are situations about which are often felt deeply. One of the chief comparisons between non-moral value language is to make it clear that the essential logical features of value-words can be present where the emotions are not markedly involved.

Moral judgements that we make, and hold to, deeply affect the lives of our neighbours; and this is itself is enough to explain the peculiar place that we assign to them. Moral judgements also always have a possible bearing on our own conduct. We may further add that the 'Emotive' of much

moral utterance, which some have thought to be of the essence of evaluative language, is only a symptom and a most unreliable one – of an evaluative use of words. Moral judgements are frequently thought to be true or false, and not merely reasonable or unreasonable in particular circumstances.

Nature of Ethical Judgements

The term judgement, says A.C. Ewing,[15] has been used by philosophers as a convenient term to cover cases both of knowledge and of belief. A judgement should be distinguishable from the words used to express it and still more from the outward expression to other people of what is judged, being a mental thought or act; which may be carried out in silence, though hardly without using words to ourself, and consist in using that something is true or in deciding to accept something as true. What is thus affirmed as true as distinguishable from the words in which it is expressed, is called by contemporary philosophers a proposition. But we have now to deal with a view which, paradoxically enough, denies that there are any ethical proposition at all.

Certain philosophers who are naturally inclined, meet the objection's to naturalism by admitting that a naturalistic analysis cannot give an adequate account of our ethical judgements, but insists that what is left over is

15. A.C. Ewing, The Definition of Good, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1947.

not anything that could be true or false but a mere expression of the attitude of the speaker.[16] This view has attached a very important aspect to the ethical judgement which is not a purely theoretical or intellectual matter. It is practical, and its main function is to urge others as well as ourselves to do or abstain from doing something which it occurs to us might be done. There are some philosophers who would stop here and say that it communicates no truth at all but only expresses an emotional and practical attitude, or limit the truth it communicates to empirical psychological truths about our own and other people's attitudes and at the same time, insisting that what is ethical is not the communication of these truths but only the ways in which the emotions of ourselves and others are stimulated such a theory explains the inadequacy of naturalistic account, which at best, gives only that element in ethical judgement which can be true or false and this leaves aside the main part of the moral attitude altogether, which is not cognitive at all but emotional and practical.

Ethical judgements are not judgements of natural science without accepting a non-naturalist view, for we can say, they are not really judgements at all or not primarily so, to assert what can be true or false. If they are not

16. The best known exposition's of this view are given by Ayer in Language, Truth and Logic (1936) Chap. VI, and in much greater detail by C.L. Stevenson in Ethics and Language (1944).

judgements then what are they? This is a question which presents a great difficulty. They have sometimes been described as 'commands' but I would refrain from defining them as so. Ethical judgements if at all a command can never have any element of morality in it. When I command someone to do something, I can never be assured that someone will comply with my command. At the same time there must be an additional specially ethical reason before. I can say that anybody morally ought to obey a command.

A.J. Ayer's view in his Language, Truth and Logic is that any statement be it statements of ordinary language or moral must fall into one of two categories: Either it must be analytic, that is necessarily true but not concerned with empirical matters of fact; or it must be empirical. If it is empirical, it can never be mere than probable, it is in fact, a hypothesis. Both the meaning and the probability of the hypothesis are established by empirical verification. That is to say, if a statement is to qualify for the second category; it must be capable of verification by sense-experience. According to this theory, then, no statement can be said to have any meaning which is not either analytic, or verifiable by observation of the world. The position of logic and mathematics, and all definitions of symbols, fall into the first category. There are no other categories. It

can be seen at once, that this creates a problem for ethics. Ethical propositions, such as that theft is wrong or that generosity is to be encouraged do not come under either of the possible headings. No one would must to say that theft is wrong, or that generosity is to be encouraged, do not come under either of the possible headings. No one would to say that such statements were analytic they do not in Ayer's words 'simply record determinations to use symbols in a certain fashion'. But it would be equally implausible to suggest that they were capable of verification by ordinary sense-experience. Even the most enthusiastic intuitionists would never maintain that one literally saw or heard the goodness of an action or motive. In Chapter 6 of Language, Truth and Logic, Ayer sets out to deal with this problem. 'It is our business', he says, 'to give an account of 'judgements of value' which is both satisfactory in itself and consistent with our general empiricists principle.

Ayer first considers the suggestion that, while ethical propositions cannot be directly verified by appeal to sense-experience yet they can be translated without loss into propositions which can be so verified. If this suggestions were accepted value judgements would be saved, since they could fit ultimately, though not immediately into the second class of meaningful statements. Ayer considers two

versions of this view, which he calls respectively, subjectivism and utilitarianism. Subjectivism holds that to say a thing is right is to say that it is generally approved of, or alternatively that it is approved of by the speaker. Ayer rejects this view, on the grouns that it cannot mean the same to say the one as to say the other, since it is possible without contradiction to say of something that is both generally approved of and wrong. And even if the extreme subjectivists' view is taken still it is not actually contradictory to say 'I approve of this and it is wrong'. Ayer therefore, rejects the contention that ethical predicates such as 'right' or 'good' can be translated into the empirical predicates 'approved of by everybody' or 'approved of by me' on exactly the same grounds he rejects utilitarianism. Since it is not actually a contradiction to say that it is sometimes wrong to perform the action which would cause the greatest happiness 'right action' and action causing the 'greatest happiness' cannot mean the same. For it would be contradictory to say 'It is sometimes wrong to perform the right action'. It is therefore, shown, Ayer thinks, that no translation of ethical terms into empirical term is possible.

The last term which need some discussion is 'Emotion'. 'Emotion' is not the same as 'Emotive'. Emotions are cogni-

tions with a certain kind of psychical quality. The detailed discussion of Emotions deviates us from philosophy and brings us to the realm of psychological ethics. Cognitions are a subclass of experiences. To understand emotions we ought to first classify our experiences and feelings. Experience may be divided into those which do not and those which do have an epistemological object. The former may be called pure feelings. The natural question to ask with regard to a feeling is: 'How are you feeling? And the natural answer is to utter some adjective (or, more properly, adverbs), such as 'hot' or 'tired' or 'cross'. To feel tired is to be feeling in a certain way, it is not to be aware of a certain object, real or fictitious. On the other hand, there are many experiences about which it is natural to ask, 'What is the object of your experience?' or 'what is it about?' If a person says that he is seeing or hearing or thinking, it is natural to ask: 'what are you seeing?' or 'what are you hearing?' or 'whar are you thinking about?' And the answer one expects is the utterance of some substantive or phrase equivalent to a substantive, e.g. 'a red flash', 'a squeaky noise', 'the square root of minus'. I shall say that experience of the latter kind have an epistemological object or are epistemologically intentional'. All such experience, may be called cognitions.

Every emotion is an epistemologically objective or intentional experience, that is, it is always a cognition, either veridical or wholly or partly delusive. But every emotion is something more than a mere cognition. An emotion is a cognition which has one or more of the specific forms of a certain generic kind of psychical quality which we will call emotional tone. To be fearing a snake, for example, is to be cognising something correctly or incorrectly – as a snake, and for that the cognition to be toned with fearfulness. In general, to be fearing X is to be cognising X fearingly to be admiring X is to be cognising X admiringly and so on.

An emotion always has an epistemological object. But, corresponding to the various kinds of emotion; there are certain experiences called emotional moods, for example, the mood which corresponds to the emotion of anger is crossness. One may feel cross without being angry with anyone or anything, and one may feel alarmed without being frightened at anyone or anything. I think that an emotional mood is either pure feeling or else an emotionally toned cognition with an extremely indeterminate object. It might, for example, be one's cognition of things in general or of one's present total environment. The connection between an emotional mood and the corresponding correction is this. The pure feeling

or the extremely vague cognition, which is the emotional mood, has the same kind of emotional tone as the determinate cognition which is the motion. Thus attitudes of approval and of disapproval is based more or less on our emotions or sentiments. When we approve of X, by saying 'X is good', we are in fact admiring X, a feeling of emotional approval arises in us which promotes us to say ... is good do so as well' whereas adverse emotions (disapproval arises in us which is taken as cognition of disapproval).

Emotion has been talked by various philosophers let us consider in brief Aquinas' account of emotion. Aquinas asserts, where there is a specific object there is a specific emotion[17] (41.2.29). This statement is prima facie implausible, for it seems that a person can love and hate the same object simultaneously. Aquinas' theory might be considered implausible if it did not allow for this possibility. At another point Aquinas says that the 'object determines both the identity and the very nature of an emotion' (46.6.101). This second statement seems implausible in light of the fact that we sometimes we hate the good or love the bad. But these statements are plausible if the object referred to is the intentional object.

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17. Mark P. Drost, "Intentionality on Aquinas' Theory of Emotion", International Phil. Quarterly, Vol. XXXI, No. 4 Issue No. 124, Dec. 1991.

On Aquinas' view, the intellect knows things 'by means of representation' (22.211). The things as known are known through the intellect acting under its own activity, whereas the theoretic faculties of the soul are "drawn towards things as they are in themselves" (22,2,11). An object known is known according to the nature of the knower, whereas an object loved inclines the lower to the state of the beloved. The outward inclination of theoretic faculty, viz., being drawn to the things as they are, presupposes that "good and bad (the objects of theoretic faculty) are in the things themselves ... so passions, and therefore emotion, is sealed in the creative rather than the cognitive part of the soul" (22,2,11). The emotions are a part of theoretic faculty. They are attitudential components of a subject who is 'drawn towards things as they are in themselves' (By saying that good and bad are in the things themselves Aquinas is expressing his view that the world is not motivationally merit).[18] But the fact that the emotions are undergone or suffered

18. The outward inclination of the sensory orescis, according to Aquinas, rests on the fact that "good and bad (the object of theoretic faculty) are in the things themselves" (22,2,11). This is part of Aquinas teleological view of the relationship of that exists between man and his environment. On Aquinas' view the world is met motivationally merit: things in the environment are objectively good & the sensory orescis is naturally fitted to respond to these sensed good.

by a subject in a passive way does not imply that they are non-intentional criticism. Language of ethics is such that it lacks scientific clarity. The statements of emotions deal with feeling and sentiments and can never be said on the solid ground of numerical knowledge. Such knowledge can never be testified as true or false by the falsification theory.

Emotive theory depends on a sharp line between the cognitive and the evaluative. It is closely related to analytic-synthetic and therefore subject to severe criticism. Attempts to elucidate the distinction in terms of the difference between beliefs and attitudes yields the result that the distinction is at most one of degree not of kind.

As I have already mentioned in the beginning that my purpose of this chapter is three-fold, namely:

1) To draw a distinction between language and ethics.
2) To raise certain questions regarding the current tendency to treat the various uses of language or discourse as different modes of meaning.
3) To consider whether emotive theory is satisfactory account of moral discourse or not.

I have clarified the meanings of certain crucial terms such as ethics, ethical language and emotions. I have examined the historical background of the term 'ethics' so

as to explicate its meaning. In this connection, I have discussed the moral philosophies of Norwell Smith, R.M. Hare and H. Aiken. I have also highlighted the view of the positivists. The positivists believe that ethic is purely a formal study of ethical judgements. I have criticised this view. My criticism is as follows. Given such a view ethic is not concerned with the important questions such as 'what is good?' and 'what is evil?' It also does not take into account socio-historical conditions as well as the important role morality plays in a person's life. I am of the opinion that bereft of these concerns ethics would be reduced to a kind of modal logic. The advocates of logical positivism ignore the fact that morality is a special form of social relations and consciousness by making only the moral language as the object of their studies.

In contrast to the emotivists the supporters of linguistic analysis in ethics consider the logic of moral language as a whole though they hold that particular moral judgements can be substantiated by more general propositions, moral principles and ideals. They deny the possibility of substantiating such judgements, principles and ideas. I am of the opinion that this sort of conclusion is a result of false methodology, which is purely empirically descriptive. Owing to this fact the linguistic analysts fail to explain

the logic of moral consciousness. Linguistic Analysis, in my opinion leads to pure formalism which makes a person ideologically impotent in matters of morality.

I have discussed Kant's moral philosophy. It is well known that according to Kant certain apriori principles are found in every person. Kant puts forward the principle of self-value of each individual. I have also discussed Hegel's position with regard to morality. The idealistic theories of morality including that of Hegel define 'good' as that which 'someone has approved or ordered'. This may be called as Approbative Ethics which is sub-divided into theological, psychological and sociological approbative ethics.

I have also discussed the views of Marxists and their criticism of bourgeois morality and ethics. Marxists ethics analysis the nature and mechanism of morality, and studies it as one of the forms of person's social activity as well as a special form of social relations and consciousness.

According to my own limited understanding the relation between language and ethical language is a case of confusion confounded. I have examined in details what is actually meant by language. In this connection, I have discussed the views of Wittgenstein and Russell, G.E. Moore and A.J. Ayer.

What is ethical language? I have tried to answer this perplexing question. Ethical language is not a language 'what people ought to do'. It is about what they are doing when they talk about what they are doing when they ought to do. I have discussed elaborately Stevenson's distinctions between descriptive use of words and the dynamic use of words.

Ethical judgements are entirely different from judgements regarding matters of fact. Both Stevenson and Ayer hold the view that a naturalistic analysis cannot give an adequate account of ethical judgements, and that moral judgements are mere expressions of the attitudes of the speaker.

If ethical judgements are not judgements what are they? I have tried to answer this question. Language of ethics is such that it lacks scientific clarity. Emotive theory depends on the cleaveage between the cognitive and evaluative. It is closely related to analytic synthetic dichotomy and therefore open to secure criticism. I am of the opinion that the distinction is at most one of degree and not of kind.

CHAPTER III

ATTITUDES AND ETHICAL CONVENTIONS

ATTITUDES AND ETHICAL CONVENTIONS

The first main contention of the emotive theory is that an attitude towards something is either all there is to, or is a necessary constituent of, an ethical convention (or convention about the value of something). This does not mean, however, that every sort of attitude is a constituent of some ethical convention: for example, the attitude of being an Anglophile would not necessarily be a part of much less constitute an ethical convention. Furthermore, the existence of conflicting attitudes is a necessary element in every ethical disagreement. Some writers (for example, C.L. Stevenson) appear to think that this alleged relation between attitude and ethical convention can be confirmed by observation: they assume that an ethical convention is whatever state of mind is expressed by characteristic use of ethical language ('is wrong', 'is a good thing') and that what is expressed by ethical utterances clearly includes some kind of attitudes. In this case it is assumed that an instance of 'ethical language' can be identified without knowing what specific state of mind it expresses. Other writers (A. Duncan Jones, R.M. Hare) think the relation is logically necessary,

for they think an utterance would not be counted as 'ethical' or as expressing an ethical convention unless it expresses an attitude.

The Dictionary of Philosophy defines 'attitude' as a habitual positing or neutral intending by the ego. The 'natural attitude' is the fundamental protodoxic attitude of the transcendental ego towards the world. The natural attitude underlies and enters into all other positings except those of the transcendental ego in the transcendental phenomenological attitude.

The word 'convention' means that the truth is determined not by fact but by social agreement or usage. In Democritus 'sweet is sweet', 'bitter is bitter', 'colour is colour' by convention (nomoi). The sophists regarded all laws and ethical principles as conventions.

To understand what is meant by ethical conventions and attitudes, we cannot afford to overlook the language of morals which has already been discussed in the previous chapter and meaning and uses of such ethical terms which ethical attitudes and conventions involve (value, which in its own way involved the question of what one ought to do and what one can do). The language of morals may mean by 'I ought to go and see' as a matter of sociological fact

or a moral convention. What actually I mean by this is that people in my circumstances should go and see the man in question; or I may be thinking simply that I have, or shall have, as a matter of psychological fact, feelings of guilt, remorse etc. for not seeing him. So used, 'ought' by no means implies 'can'; for in many cases people are unable to do what moral convention requires, and in many cases they feel guilt or remorse for their failure to do actions which they know have been impossible. To understand clearly what moral conventions imply, I shall attempt to bring about a clarification of the terms 'ought' and 'can', and also try to find an answer to the question whether 'ought' implies 'can'.

Convention usually mean 'promise and that, in this sense of the word convention, it is absurd to suggest that justice and language arise from human convention.

Is Ought Dilemma?

To understand this question of 'Is and ought', I cannot but take the help of Hume's famous passage in A Treatise of Human Nature.

> I cannot forbear adding to these reasonings an observation which may, perhaps, be found of some importance. In every system of morality, which I have hitherto met with, I have always remarked, that the author proceeds for some time in the ordinary ways of reasoning, and establishes the being of a god, or makes observations concerning human affairs,

> when of a sudden I am surprised to find, that instead of the usual copulations of propositions is and is not, I meet with no proposition that is not connected with an ought, or an ought not. This change is imperceptible, but is however, of the last consequence. For as this ought, or ought not, expresses some new relations or affirmation, this necessary that it should be observ'd and explain'd; and at the same time that a reason should be given, for what seems altogether inconceivable, how this new relation can be a deduction from others, which are entirely different from it. But as authors do not commonly use this precaution. I shall presume to recommend it to the readers; and am persuaded that this small attention wou'd subvert all the vulgar systems of morality, and let us see, that the distinction of vice and virtue is not founded merely on the relations of object, nor is perceiv'd by reason.1

The question of is and ought will be followed by the question: can moral ought judgement be grounded logically in what men want? In the discussion of an attempt to 'derive ought from 'is', I shall bring the story right upto date by outlining the debate currently in progress between prescriptivists like Hare, and descriptivists, or neo-naturalists as they are sometimes, called such as G.J. Warnock and Mrs. Tool. Throughout this particular discussion of ought my aim will be two-fold.

i) To make it clear, within the terms of reference, precisely what contemporary philosophers are saying on the point at view; and

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1. David Hume, A Treatise of Human Nature, (ed.) J.A. Selby Bigge and Second edition by P.H. Nidditch, Bk. III of Morals Part I, Sec I, pp. 469-70.

ii) To form a critical judgement of their views.

Can 'ought' be drived from 'Is'?

In Sec I, Part I Book III of A Treatise of Human Nature, Hume argues at length to establish that moral distinctions are not derived from reason. He ends the section with a paragraph which undoubtedly has fueled an ongoing debate, a debate which probably will continue for as long as Morality and Moral values occupy a central position in society.

The paragraph deals with his famous utterance on is and is not an ought or an ought not. He points out that the change from 'is' to 'ought' is imperceptible and the arrival from one to the other seems to him 'altogether inconceivable' – in other words, he is of the opinion, that one cannot derive 'ought' from 'is' as no explanation was ever given of this 'new relation' of how it could be a deduction from others were entirely different from it.

Those who affirm that virtue is nothing but a conformity to reason; that there are internal fitnesses and unfitnesses of things, which are the same to every rational being that considers them, that the immutable measures of right and wrong impose an obligation, not only on human creatures, but also the Deity himself: All these systems concur in the opinion, that Morality, like truth is discern'd merely by

ideas and by their juxtaposition and comparison. In order, therefore, to judge of these systems, we need only counter, whether it be possible from reason alone, to distinguish betwist moral good and evil, or whether there must concur some other principles to enable us to make that distinction.

Hume seems to hold that all moral judgements unlike judgements of facts are ultimately grounded in human sentiment 'Actions may be laudable or blameable: but they cannot be reasonable or unreasonable'. But the central question is: how so grounded? A.G.N. Flew says that if we take Hume's answer to be that moral judgements 'report' human sentiment then we 'get the emphasis wrong' rather we should say that his 'central insight' was that Moral judgements 'express' feelings of praise or blame.[2]

Reason, only in a strict and philsophical sense influences out conduct in two ways: (1) When it excites a passion by informing us of the existence of something which is a proper object of it. (2) When it discovers the connection of cause and effect so as to afford us means of exerting any passion.

If Morality had naturally no influence on human passions and actions, 'there in main to take such pains

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2. Flew Antony, On the Interpretations of Hume, PXXXVIII, 1963 (80).

to inculcate it; and nothing would be more fruitless than that multitude of rules and precepts, with which all moralists abound': simple logic would then permit us to do and commit all moral turpitudes and deformity for all men become non-rational, like animals. We are permitted to make such an utterance – all men become irrational like animals by simple syllogism –

All animals are irrational
All men are animals
∴ All men are irrational

such actions are innocent in animals. Therefore, men can and also ought to be excused for all such acts of innocence and all the 'oughts forming ethical codes of conduct, restraining men to his duty falls apart. Thus even committing an act of adultery with a neighbour's wife for instance does not stand as one in the eyes of someone who does not known the adulterer as well as the wife, whom he thinks to be the legal wife of the adulterer.

Hume aptly ends the section by saying, ... that this small attentions would subvert all the vulgar system of morality and let us see, that the distinction of vice and virtue is not founded merely on the relation of objects

nor is perceived by reason. In other words, all "the vulgar systems of morality would be overthrown for he would see that moral distinctions are not founded merely on the relation on the relation of objects, nor perceived by reason".[3]

After talking about all these thoughts, Hume's point is that – Value judgements are irrational and all ideas are of two types:

1) Real

2) Emotive

Everything has to be derived from perception. The extension of his thesis leads us to the conclusion that love and hatred, actions of seeing, hearing, judging, thinking are all emotive and cannot be explained through rationality. Most of these are based on premises which are more than reason. They are based on perceptions which give rise to emotions and they are not consequences of direct perceptions but include more than that. He ends the whole section by pronouncing morality as irrational and observes that suddenly there is a transition from 'ought' to 'Is' which is vague or imperceptible. In other words, Hume tries to observe that the transition from is to ought cannot be arrived at when a rational point of view is taken and there is a covert suggestion that this

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3. David Hume, A Treatise of Human Nature, Book III "of Morals" Part I Section I.

can be arrived at only intuitively. I have already discussed Hume's position of ought – Is question. Now I turn my attention to R.M. Hare, who says that the so used, 'ought' by no means implies 'can', for in many cases people are unable to do what moral convention requires, and in many cases they feel guilt or remorse for their failure to do actions which they know to have been impossible. That it is irrational to have these feelings is besides the point; Jocasta was not stopped from hanging herself by the thought that her 'crime' was fated. Neither is it true that if one has been unable to observe a moral convention, one has not broken it; Jocasta had certainly broken Greek moral conventions by marrying her son Oedipus.

In these cases, 'ought' fails to imply 'can' because it is not prescriptive in meaning at all; that is to say, it is consistent with its meaning, as used in this context, not to be intended to serve as a guide to anybody's actions. But these are not, perhaps, the most interesting or the commonest cases, commoner are instances in which a man who says 'I ought but I can't' is, indeed, prescribing and seeking to guide conduct, but falls short of intending a universal prescription which would apply to his own case. He is, that is to say, prescribing, in general terms, but exempting himself because of the impossibility, in his case, of obeying

this general prescription. This kind of quasi-universal prescription is, as we shall see, very characteristic of our actual moral language. (Here, however, it is necessary to qualify somewhat the expression "different senses of 'ought'".[4] The impression may have been given by certain passages in The Language of Morals words are somehow ambiguous in that they have a series of distinct senses, so that one could ask a man in which sense he was using them – for example, the 'inverted commas', the 'ironic', the 'conventional', and so on. It is wrong to say this. Fortunately, Professor Norwell Smith has now provided us with a terminology for saying much better what I was trying to say. He has invented the expression 'James - word' to describe words of the sort we are considering, which have two or more aspects to their meaning, one of which may on occasion be emphasized to the neglect of the others.[5] We cannot say that such a word is ambiguous; it is indeed an inseparable element in its meaning that it can shift in this way. The human word

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4. 'Ought' will, however, even in this case retain its descriptive meaning, and thus remain universalizable, though the prescription implied in it is not universal; hence these remarks are consistent with 3.3. The word 'general' is used here, not as in (3.4) in the sense opposite to 'specific', but in that in which we say that a rule holds in general, but not universally: i.e., it has exceptions see P.H. Norwell Smith, Ethics, Index S.V.

5. See, P.H. Norwell Smith, Ethics, Index S.V.

'ought', unlike its counterpart in an angelic moral language, not only faces both ways in the sense of having both descriptive and prescriptive meaning – for the angelic word does that – but can sometimes look in the direction that suits its user's interest, and bury its other face in the sand. Even if we are at our most moral when we say that we ought to doing such and such a thing (getting up for example), and fully intend to set about doing it there and then, we know only too well that if our moral strength were to fail us at the last moment, and we did get up we could still go on saying that we thought, that we ought to be getting up - and saying it, though in a way in an attentuated sense, without in another way of departing from the meaning of the words as we were using it all along for all along the meaning of the word was such that we could backslide in this way.

There are many different methods of backsliding without appearing to. The commonest, perhaps, of these artifices is that known as special pleading. We start off as if we were prepared to accept a certain moral principle as binding on everybody, and we start off by accepting it as prescriptive, and therefore as committing us in a particular to acting in accordance with the principle. But when we consider how contrary to our interest it is for us to

act in accordance with the principle, we weaken. While continuing to prescribe that everyone else (or at any rate everyone whose interests do not especially, concern us) should act in accordance with the principle, we do not so prescribe to ourselves (for to do this fully and in earnest would commit us to acting). The word 'ought' can remain universal in that it retains all the descriptive meaning that it ever had, but it ceases to express a universal prescription – the prescription is not universal and the universality is only descriptive. To restore the appearance of prescriptive universality, we substitute, in our own case, for genuine prescriptiveness, a mere feeling, varying in strength, that we are not playing our part in the scheme which we claim to be accepting (that we are, as it were, leading our regiment from behind). This feeling is called a guilty conscience. It is essential to the success of this manoeuvre that the feeling should not, at the time, be too strong. The man who wishes to act against his conscience must make sure that his conscience is less powerful than the desires which oppose it, for if conscience pricks us too hard it will prick us into doing the action and genuine prescriptive universality will be restored.

Suppose, however, that this does not happen, and that we fail to do the required action, and merely feel

uncomfortable, about it. Has the expression 'think that I ought' changed its meaning for us? We have, indeed, accepted as exemplifying the state of mind called 'thinking that I ought', something less robust than formerly; but than from the start the expression 'think that I ought' had the potentiality of such a decline – it is an expression of human language and humans are always doing this sort of thing. There are, indeed, many ways in which it can lose its robustness without, in a sense, departing from its original meaning; we shall notice some other later.

I have argued that moral judgements, when intended seriously and with their full force, must be taken as committing the speaker to some universal judgement applying to anyone in a relevantly similar situation. As we shall see, there are various deteriorations which, to match the human weakness of their users moral judgements commonly undergo; and the most important of there is where a corner of the net is, as it were, lifted to allow the speaker himself to escape. I prescribe, that is to say, for everyone in such and such a situation, except myself; in my own case, I substitute for the prescription something weaker.

We have here an example of such a declension. When I say 'I ought but I can't', I am prescribing in general for cases like mine; I certainly think that a man in my

situation ought, if he can, to do the act in question, but the prescription fails to apply in my case because of the impossibility of acting on it. It is as if I said 'If I were able, it would be the case that I ought (full force); but since I am not able, that lets me out'.

The sense of 'imply' in which 'ought' implies 'can' is not that of logical entailment. It is a weaker relation, analogous to that which Mr. Strawson has claimed to exist between the statement that the king of France is wise, and the statement that there is a king of France.[6]

If there is no king of France, than the question whether the king of France is wise does not arise. And so, by saying that the king of France is wise, we give our hearers to understand that we think, at least, that the question arises to which this is one possible answer, and that, accordingly, there is a King of France. And similarly, if we say that somebody ought to do a certain thing, and 'ought' has its full (i.e., universally prescriptive) force, then we give our hearers to understand that we think that the question arises to which this is a possible answer, which it would not, unless the person in question were able to do the acts referred to. Now it must be noticed that

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6. P.F. Strawson, Mind, Tix (1950), 330 (also in Essays in Conceptual Analysis, ed.

imperatives also imply 'can' in the same way as 'ought' does when used with its full force. If I tell or ask someone to do something (whether by way of advice, request, instruction, order, or even prayer does not matter), I give him to understand that I think that the question to which I have given him an answer arises – i.e. that a decision is open to him. It would not do to tell a soldier to pick up his rifle if it were fixed to the ground. And the question which has to arise, if either a decision or the utterance of an imperative is to be put in point is the question which a man is asking himself when he is wondering what to do – the question that is answered, either when one tells someone else what to do, or when he decides for himself.[7]

Let us call this kind of question a PRACTICAL question.[8]

The answer to the question 'what shall I do?' is not normally expressed in words when the agent answers it by way of instruction, advice etc. Instead, the agent just acts (hence Aristotle's doctrine that the conclusion of a practical syllogism is an action) (Movement of Animals 701, 7ff). But in order to discuss, metalinguistically,

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7. A. Flew, p. 34. See also Colling Wood, Essay on Metaphysics, pp. 38 if.

8. The phrase 'wondering what do do' is a translation of Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics, 1113'5; and 'practical' is derived from the word there used to 'do'.

the logic of the answer that the agent gives (without which it is impossible to give a satisfactory account of moral reasoning). We shall require an expression in words of what he leaves unuttered. I shall later use for this purpose the form 'let me do a' – though this has also other and commoner uses. A man who is wondering, in a game of chess, what move to make, may say to himself let me try moving Q to KB4', and act accordingly. It is in this sense that I shall be using this form of expression – in the sense, that is, in which it is the first person analogue of the second person "Try moving ... and the first-person-plural 'lets' try moving ....", and not in that in which it is the equivalent of 'Allow me to try ....' The uncommoness of this use is explained by the fact that, as Aristotle implies, we usually act without saying anything to ourselves. This is not the only case in which a thought's logical character and relations can be made clearer by expressing in words, though normally it is not so expressed – enthymemes provide another example. We may, then, give the following account of the reason why decisions and imperatives 'imply' 'can'. They are both answers to practical questions – and sometimes (though not always) the fact that a man cannot but do what he is going to do stops any practical questions arising for him, and therefore there is no place for a decision or an imperative. We shall have later to discuss the

difficult question, just when this is so and when it is not. This is one of the central issues in the 'problem of free will'. But for the moment I am content to have established this important analogy between 'ought' and imperatives and decisions; they all imply 'can' for the same reason, that without 'can' a practical question cannot arise.

Here ought is not meant to be used in giving answers to practical questions, in the narrow sense just explained. The question to which 'ought' gives an answer is not that asked by a man who is wondering what he ought to do. There are different questions; and to keep them distinct I shall confine the term 'practical question' to the former, and use the wider term 'prescriptive question' to cover both it and the 'ought' - question, when that is prescriptive. The two questions are nevertheless related, in the following way: unless the practical question arises, the 'ought' question cannot arise, if 'ought' has its full force (as it must have, if it is to imply 'can'). And the reason for this is that when the word is being used in this way, its function is to offer help and guidance.

The emotivism would be vacant and incomplete theory without Stevenson's clarifications of the theory. In his attempt to provide a clarification of the meaning of ethical term leads us to the recognition of these features of moral

discourse.[9] Among these features includes 'Attitudes and also moral conventions' I will arrange my exposition of his ethical theory in three subsections corresponding to these three features, though of necessity, there will be some overlap between one subsection and another.

The first feature of moral discourse which Stevenson wished to explain was the possibility of genuine agreement and disagreement within it. In order to do so he drew a distinction between beliefs and attitudes. There are Stevenson, says, two sorts of agreement or disagreement in moral argument. The one is in belief; the other in attitude. Only by differentiating them and recognizing the presence of both can 'a full picture' of 'the varied functions' of ethical language, which is 'in touch with practice' be drawn.

The difference is obvious enough. For existence in his highly controversial encyclical human ae vitae (1968),[10] Pople Paul gave, as one reason for his refusion to declare the use of contraceptives illicit, the fact that, were he to do so governments might apply "to the solution

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9. "The Emotive Meaning of Ethical Terms" MXLVI (1937) reprinted in C.L. Stevenson, Facts and Values (New Haven (1963), p. 15.

10. W.D. Hudson, Modern Moral Philosophy, Macmillan Co. Ltd., 1970.

of the problems of the community those means acknowledged to be illicit for married couples in the solution of a family problems". Presumably, this means compulsory sterilization. He takes it for granted that, if this consequence occurred, it would constitute a 'lowering of morality'. We can disagree with the Pope here in either, or both, of two counts:

(i) His belief that his declaring illicit the use of contraceptives might have had such a consequence may not be one which we share.

(ii) His attitude of total disapproval towards compulsory sterilization may not be one with which we sympathize.

Stevenson argued that, whenever a moral judgement is voiced, it is possible to draw this kind of distinction between,

(i) What is said, or assumed, to be the factual state of affairs under judgement, and

(ii) The positive or negative evaluation which is placed upon that state of affairs.

Concerning agreement and disagreement in attitude, it is important to emphasize that Stevenson took moral judgements to Express - not to Report - attitude. He compared two simple 'working models' of the analysis of 'This is

good', insisting that the former, not the latter, corresponded to his own theory. They were,

(i) 'I approve of this, do so as well', and

(ii) 'I approve of this and I want you to do so as well' (where the last clause is taken to have simple descriptive not any imperative, force).

If moral disagreements are to be genuine, the former analysis is required for the following reason. When A says, 'This is good' and B says 'It is not' then, on the first analysis, there is a disagreement between them: one is saying 'Approve of this' the other is saying 'Don't!'. By contrast, on the second analysis, there is no necessary disagreement between them: One is saying 'I want you to approve of this' and the other, 'I don't' and each of them could acknowledge both these statements to be true without self-contradictions.[11]

It is of course customary for persons who share the same beliefs to share the same attitudes, or vice versa, and a great of moral argument is concerned to secure agreement in belief concerning the fact of the case. Opponents of the Pope, the revert to our example, have spent a lot of time, arguing that he is mistaken about the probable effect of his making contraceptives illicit. Even though

11. Ethics and Language, Chapter II.

it is undesirable that two disputants may be at one in their beliefs concerning the object of moral judgement, while remaining divided in their attitudes to it, we can never be quite certain that further discussion would not reveal that there are relevant factual beliefs which one of them holds while the other does not. For example, those who do not sympathize with the Pope's abhorrence of compulsory sterilization, while arguing with thim that it would have been a probable effect of permitting contraception, might well be found, if a more exhaustive investigation, might well be found, if a more exhaustive investigation were conducted, to differ significantly from the Pope in their beliefs concerning what is unsolved in or consequent upon, compulsory sterilization Stevenson nowhere denied that, in practice, certain beliefs and attitudes to go so closely together that frequently perhaps invariably, if you bring anyone to accept the beliefs, you bring him to adopt the attitudes, and vice versa. But, nevertheless, he insisted that the connection between agreement or disagreement in belief and in attitude "is always factual never logical". It is always logically possible that the belief concerned should be adopted and the attitudes rejected or vice versa. In moral judgement, every attitude is no doubt, accompanied by some belief about its object, but the beliefs which attend opposed attitudes, or the attitudes which attend opposed beliefs, need

not be incompatible. "Since it may ... happen that both sorts of disagreement occur conjointly, or that neither should occur, the logical possibilities arre all open.[12]

This logical distinction between disagreement in belief and in attitude, if it really exists, implies that, whenever a moral disagreement occurs, the disagreement in belief (if any) can (logically) always be stated without any reference to attitudes. But is this so? Take, for example, the Pope's words in the encyclical to which we have already referred. "It is also to be feared that the man, growing used to the employment of anti-contraceptive practices, may finally lose respect for the women and, no longer caring for her physical and psychological equilibrium, may come to the point of considering her as a mere instrument of selfish enjoyment and no longer his respected and beloved companion". This purports to be simply a statement of belief about one probable consequence of permitting the use of contraceptives; but such expressions as 'respect', 'equilibrium', 'mere instrument', 'selfish enjoyment', are clearly attitude - impregnated. However, on Stevenson's view, it should be possible to rewrite the above passage in attitude - free terms, thereby stating the precise factual belief which the Pope affirms and those who disagree with him

12. Ethics and Language, p. 6.

(i.e., those who differ from him at this point not only in attitude but also in belief) can that be done? Let us try, "It is probable that the man will have sexual intercourse with the women more frequently than she desires". This, we may say, is the Pope's facutal belief which those who disagree with him deny. But it is important to remember that there are two ways at least in which people may disagree as to the facts:

(i) They may make two factual statements, the only difference between them being that one is the affirmation of X and the other denial of X.

(ii) They may be unable to accept any common statement of fact (X) which one wishes to affirm and the other to deny. Confronted by ourr rewitting of the Pope's belief, his defenders, for example, may well say, "you haven't adequately stated his belief" and perhaps add, "If only you appreciated what he is saying, you would be more ready to agree with him" so let us suppose that we try again and rewrite the Pope's words thus:

"It is probable that the man will have sexual intercourse with the woman more frequently than she desires and this will cause her nervous distress and will make the man insensitive to her feelings". Is that what the Pope means? 'No',

his defenders may say again, "he means more than that". Now, how long can this go in? We want to get at the Pope's precise factual belief so that we can test it for truth or falsity; we want to know whether or not, on the available evidence, there is a significant degree of probability that permitting the use of contraceptives will have the effects which he thinks likely. His defenders may go on blocking all our attempts to state these effects in attitude-free terms, declaring any statements which we propose to be in adequate to state the full content of the Pope's belief. The interesting question is: could they conceivably be right? Stevenson says very confidently that the connection between belief and attitude is always factual, never logical, but what if this is simply dogmatism on his part? Is it conceivable that in order to agree with the Pope about the facts of the case, you must agree to some degree with his attitudes? Are then some statements of facts which cannot be made in what Stevenson would have called attitude-free terms? Here I simply point out that the question can be raised.

The next question is how did Stevenson conceive of the logical structure of the argument by which agreement is reached and disagreement resolved, in ethics? It seemed to him beyond question that the 'reasons' given for moral

judgements do not support them in the way that scientific hypothesis of mathematical theories are supported. He is left with the questions whether or not there is, as he phrases it, "a different sort of proof", "whether there is some substitute for proof in ethics, some support or reasoned argument which, although different from a proof in science, will be equally serviceable in removing hesitations that usually prompt people to ask for a proof".[13] He thinks that there is and we shall go into his account of its methodology more fully below. At the moment, notice, the main feature of this 'support' or 'reasoned argument' which Stevenson had in mind. He said that it 'describes the situation' which the moral judgement concerned seeks to alter or preserve, or the new situation which it seeks to bring about, and if something in this description promises to satisfy "a preponderance of the hearers' desires", he will hesitate to agree no longer.[14] That is to say, in ethics, "a reasoned agreement ... is theoretically possible only to the extent that agreement in belief will cause people to agree in attitude.[15] It will be seen at once that this is indeed "a substitute for proof". There is the world of difference between providing one's hearer with reasons for

13. Ethics and Language, p. 27.
14. Ibid.
15. Ibid.

adopting an attitude (or for anything else) and saying things which will cause him to do so. This is the feature which characterizes, and vitiates, Stevenson's whole ethical theory subtle and, in many ways, illuminating as that theory is, in the last analysis it falls because it reduces logical to psychological considerations.

Let us now consider the terms which are involved by these ethical conventions and attitudes. Even to the ordinary man attitudes would involve value or rather value judgement. In every ordinary language, our attitude towards anything involving the question of good and bad (basic question of ethics) is value loaded. What we considered to be 'good' we have an attitude of approval towards it which Stevenson says, 'I approve of this do so as well ....' On the other hand, what we think to be evil, our attitude toward it is one of disapproval and therefore we condemn what it is.

There are some conflicting views on value and its involvement with attitudes and moral conventions. Let us first consider the Humean theory of Value, with Kantian account of justification. The argument is complex and the depth of analysis extra-ordinarily imprressive. Gaus, like man subjectivists befoe him, argues that all values are agent-relative because they must be grounded in emotion.

But his theory of the emotions is vastly more sophisticated than an emotivists one, informed as it is by a careful reconstruction of the philosophically relevant empirical work on the subject. In brief; valuing is an emotional activity, emotion have an effective Kennel – a distinctive 'raw feel' – but also a cognitive component. For example, fear must have the content that its object is dangerous, and if the belief that there is danger is epistemically defective (e.g., if it is false), then the motion is, open to rational criticism). Gaus calls the theory of value the "Affective-Cognitive Theory" or in short, ACT.[16]

What makes ACT Human, is the priority Gaus gives to valuing as against value. Thus, against overly objectivists' theory of value, Gaus argues that the primary way of recognizing the value of something is to value it. It is possible to believe something to be valuable without oneself having an emotional response, but only by recognizing the potential of rational agents like oneself to respond effectively. Talk of value gets its only point from the human emotional activity and capacity of valuing.

Gaus' hope is to provide a foundation for liberal principles of political morality. The ACT seems to generate

16. G. Gaus, "Ethics", Oct. 1991. Value and Justification: The Foundation of Liberal Theory, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990, p. 540.

a deep problem though, since justification as he plausibly maintains, must be addressed to agents in terms the importance of which is rationally available to them, and ACT threatens the possibility, even the likelihood 'that citizen's values will be too diversed for any single set of principles to find a perch, of course, we have encountered this problem too, in Hobbes and Hume, and recently in Gauthier, and seen attempted solutions in each compromise forms the centerpiece of those solutions as it does in Rawl's theory but no utilitarian view which are notoriously uncompromising. But Gaus tried a different tack. In the second part of the book, he rejects what he calls, the orthodox view, that each person's reasons must appeal ultimately to her values. Instead he prefers a band of rationalism which delivers reason that does not appeal to pursuits of values. The account is called "Value-Grounded Rationalism" or in short VGR, a kind of transcendental invocation of principles which must be presupposed by (almost) any system of values available to human beings.

Gaus argues that such values as friendship, which all of us except perhaps the Nietzchean (whom Gaus calls a psychopath) hold, presuppose a framework of shared principles without which the bonds of trust and commitment could not engage. A Strawsonian idea of resentment figures indeed

of our rights, but resentment finds a rational place only when we can properly believe that violators are 'doing wrong' and are subject to rational criticism. We cannot regard others or ourselves as 'mere valuer-agents' without sufferings the literal collapse of our personality. This transcendental approach fits nicely with the Kantian thesis about justification that Gaus wants to defend.

The VGR points straight towards a contractualist theory of morality. In "Contractualism and Utilitarianism" (in utilitarianism and beyond ed. A. Sen and B. Wettians (Cambridge: Cambridge University Prress, 1982, pp.103-28), T.M. Scanlon sought to build a moral theory on what he called the basic moral motivation: to be able to justify our actions to others on grounds they could not reasonably reject. If Gaus is right, he has established that Scanlon's basic motivation is more than first another one of our values. It is a motivation, value or not, to which we are (nearly) all committed in virtue of whatever values we already have. Thus, Gauthier's "Compliance Problem" is no problem for Gaus, once we identify the rules that would be generated by a rational contract we need not wonder whether it is rational to comply with them. Still, the question remains what substance such rules would have, and here Gaus (by his own admission) has only sketchy technical remarks about

overall structures along with suggestions about what emerges if we plug in fairly strong assumptions. In the end, he believes, a recognizably liberal set of rights must show its face.

The question which might fleet across one's mind after reading through the provocative arguments regarding value are 'Does friendship really require a commitment to shared overriding principles, or might it rather be grounded in the agent-relative value each places in the person of the other?' Can the content of the principles really be filled in by transcendental arguments, or must it await investigations of the local character of values in a given community? These questions will seem airy inchoate complaints in the face of the fruitful and constructure layers of argumentation that Gaus serves up.

The human understanding of convention and value is related to virtues which is of two kinds – natural and artificial. Hume's account of virtues enables us to see what kind of justification can be given for believing in a continuously and independently existing external world, and also for believing that it is in some sense reasonable to rely on past experiences in the planning of our future actions. Tendencies to hold these beliefs are virtues, although their truth cannot be established by reason. Respect

for property rrights, chastity, faithfulness to promises and allegiance to government are such virtues. Although these are the, only artificial virtues, Hume discusses, he nowhere suggests that there are not other such virtues. All artificial virtues are intelligible only in the light of certain conventions entered into by members of a society, and their value depends upon general continuance of behaviour confirmable to the conventions adopted. What has not been appreciated is that the concept of artificial virtue is crucial for understanding virtue and the part it played in morals. Hume stresses that, comparred with other animates, man seems ill-endowed by nature to satisfy his many needs. Although society tends to increase these needs the power and security cooperation provides leaves man '... in every respect more satisfied and happy, than, tis possible for him, in his savage and solitary condition, ever to become (ibid., p. 485). The artificial virtues are essential if man is to achieve (the benefits of society) Hume also, in discussing these virtues, distinguishes the question of their origin from the reasons why we approve of people who possess them. Let us begin by considering the question of origin. He tells is that '... the sense of justice and injustice not deriv'd from nature, but arises artificially, the 'necessarily from education, and human conventions (ibid., p. 483).

In looking for the origin of justice, Hume is not pursuing history in any ordinary sense. He wants to show that without postulating a special innate or God given faculty of justice it is wholly intelligible, and not the least bit surprising, that man in society, should have established conventional rules governing the possession and use of material goods.

It is worthwhile to agree with Hume, in my opinion, for man in society should have established conventional rules governing the possession and use of material goods. So far the origin of property from being surprising that the known motives of self-interest and confined benevolence can be seen to lead naturally to the establishment of the rules governing, property, independently of moral considerations. Of course, the rules governing property may vary from one society to another, but human nature is such that some such rules are bound to be developed in any society, gives the scarcity of material goods. That such rules will be established can thus be thought of as a law of nature. Similarly, languages may vary, but no human society will be found without some languages, for human nature is such that men will necessarily come to have language, and the usefulness of the convention that give rise to language will not escape man's society, seeking to augment his power

to satisfy his own and society's desires and needs. Hume, in discussing how the comparative weakness of man as an individual can be overrcome by social cooperation, stresses that communication is indispensable for the success of this enterprise.

The 'artificial convention' that give rise to justice is not to be understood as a promise, for promise themselves are made possible only be a similar human convention. These conventions are 'a general sense of common interest', expressed by all the members of society to each other. Each individual sees it to be in his own interest, and in the interest of those for whom he is naturally concerned, to follow certain rules of behaviourr with regard to transferable good people are left to possess and enjoy certain goods on the understanding that others will follow the same rule in their conduct. This, Hume says, "... may properly enough be call'd a convention or agreement between us, though without the interposition of a promise, since the action of each of us have a reference to those of the other, and are perform'd upon the supposition that something is to be performed on the other part (ibid., p. 499). The example is given of two men rowing a boat in harmony without having given a promise to each other. The regularity of behaviour in accordance with rules of justice arises gradually people discover

how derivations from the regularity are disadvantageous, and confidence is in the continuation of the regularily is gradually built up. The sense of common interest will make it reasonable for us to base our conduct on the assumption that others will follow the rules as well.

In Hume's own words,

> ... Nor is the rule concerning the stability of possession the less deriv'd from human conventions, that it arises gradually, and acquired force by a slow progression, and by our repeated experience of the inconveniences of transgressing it. On the contrary, this experience assures us still more, that the sense of interest has become common to all our follows, and gives us a confidence of the future regularity of their conduct and 'tis only on the expectation of this, that our moderation and abstinence are founded. In like manner are language gradually established by human conventions without any promise.17

In the Treatise, Hume argues that promises are intelligible only if a human convention is prresupposed. But the sense in which 'convention' is used in that account differs in important respects from convention as promise, or mutual explicit agreement. Not only Hume. But Bertrand Russell and William Alston have taken convention to naturally mean 'explicit agreement' or 'mutual promise' and both these deny with considerable justification, that language can have had such an origin.

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17. Ibid., p. 490.

Agreeing whole-heartedly with Hume one cannot but give an example. Take for instance, a murder of a rapist by a woman who has been assaulted, and is caught redhanded. Though she is guilt of murder in the eyes of law and society or the social conventions, which we human build and join our society with, would not hold the woman guilt of any crime. Her attitude towards the rapist is one of disapproval, indeed hatred and thus to wipe out his future crimes, she kills him in cold blood. The attitudes of mankind in such a case should not be one of condemnation but approval. It is worthwhile to kill all these wrong doers of the society and do away with them. But it only depends on the attitudes and conventions of mankind which varies from person to person. Say person 'A' may gree to the view given above and condemn all rapist but person 'B' may not do so instead condemn the woman of being vulgar in her manners and dressing and thus inducing the man to assault her.

Attitudes and conventions involve (i) a purpose or intentions which define the ultimate use or end of the discourse; (ii) the meaning of each speaker in making each of his assertions; (iii) the meanings of such assertions to the listener; (iv) the motor-affective response of the listener to the meaning which he apprehends which may be different from that meant by the speaker.

Now, in the first place, it seems clear that the purpose of a speaker in making an assertion need have nothing whatever to do, with the meaning of what is asserted. Suppose, for instance, that I say, "It is a cloudy day". Neither the meaning of this statement, nor its truth or falsity is necessarily affected by my purpose in uttering it. The latter may be, and probably is, wholly irrelevant to the former. I may say "it is a cloudy day" to a friend, in the hope that he will take the necessary precautions to dress properly for the occasion, or I may say, "it is a cloudy day", simply as a means of passing the time of day. My intentions in the two instances are quite different, though my meaning, and its truth or falsity unless, in the meantime the weather has changed remain precisely what they were. Indeed, the supposition that the meaning of what I assert is affected by my intentions, so that "it is a cloudy day" varies in meaning with each successive variation in intention which impels us to announce the fact, would, if it were seriously envisaged, render worthless any possibility of state conventional meanings whatever.

Secondly, the emotional attitude which accompanies the assertions "it is a cloudy day" is usually distinguishable from both the speakers' intentions and his/her meaning. On one occasion when one observes that "it is a cloudy day",

the observer may feel a vague irritation or frustration, on another occasion, the observer may announce it joyously; and on still another, may have no feeling about the matter at all, without in the least having uttered my purpose or my meaning. Thus neither the intention which provokes nor the emotions which accompany an assertion need be confused or identified with its meaning or descriptive significance.

Turning to the side of the respondent, we here observe a corresponding distinction between meaning, or understanding of it, and the motor affective reaction which ensues. Indeed, if the reaction is to be, as we say, 'appropriate', it is essential that the respondent first understand what is meant should a friend misunderstand me when I assert "it is a cloudy day", both his verbal response and his motor-affective reaction will very likely to be quite in appropriate.

Even when no deliberate descriptive assertion, but merely an exclamation; is uttered by the speaker, however, it is still usually construed by an intelligent observer, as a sign of some state of affairs within the speaker. In this way it functions as a meaning quite as explicitly as would a verbal description. Thus "Ouch!" may inform a listener concerning the feelings of a friend nearly as adequately as an elaborate description of them. It would seem, then,

that motor-affective reactions usually depend upon and arise from some perception of meaning, some interpretation of a situation, verbal or otherwise which, because it is construed to mean something subsequently functions as a "prod to action" or as a modifier of behaviour. Thus, even if "X is good" should not be intended as a description of some actual state of affairs, it could still be taken by a listener to mean that the speaker values X.

Granted that the meaning of a term is in general to be distinguished from its purpose and emotional association, why specifically should we suppose that ethical terms have no meaning but only purpose and emotional associations? Stevenson takes his departure from three requirements which, he asserts, any satisfactory definition or explanation of ethical terms must satisfy. (a) We must be able to account for disagreement, in some sense still to be determined, about 'good'. According to Stevenson, this rules out psychological egoism at the outset. (b) 'Goodness' must ipso facto result in a stronger tendency in its favour than has previously existed. Thus, Stevenson alleges, Hume's type of definition is ruled out, since, "A man may see that a majority approves of X without himself having a stronger feeling or a tendency to favour it". (c) The 'goodness' of anything must not be verifiable solely by the use of the scientific

method. This qualification, in Stevenson's opinion, is so sweeping as to rule out "all traditional interest theories without exception."[18]

What is to be said of these criteria? Stevenson does not tell us explicitly why these, and not also some others which comes to mind, are necessary requirements of a sound explanation of ethical terms.

Concerning the first requirement, however, than can be little doubt. It is this requirement which Hume had in mind when he said, "Those who have derived the reality of moral distinctions may be ranked among the disengenuous disputants".[19] Ethical distinctions, in some sense, and ethical disagreements, in some sense obviously do exist, and any ethical theory which would render them unintelligible is, I agree, disqualified at the outset. As Stevenson is aware, of course, the important question remains as to the correct analysis of these distinctions and this disagreement. We shall return to this question presently.

The second requirement is more questionable. Stevenson's analysis is concerned primarily with the term 'good'. It is, however, important to consider the present requirement

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18. Stevenson, op.cit., p. 16.

19. Hume, Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals, Open Court ed., p. 1.

both in relation to good", and in relation to 'ought' or 'right', since the latter terms are commonly understood to have a different meaning in ethical discourse from the former. Now, it seems evident to me that one often recognises that X is 'good' without in the least desiring it, or at any rate, without desiring or being moved by it morre than one was previously one may recognize for instance, that the music of Bhimsen Joshi is 'good' for instance, since many honest and discriminating people have affirmed its power to move and to please, and yet not in the least be impelled to listen to it. Many such judgements of value, aesthetic, economic or even moral arre pronounced or acknowledged, which carry no motor-affective overtones whatever. Indeed, if at each moment that we were reminded of a 'good', we were ipso facto impelled towards it, our lives would be so hopelessly distraught that it would be difficult if not impossible to act consecutively at all. Moreover, during periods of weariness or satiety, especially 'goods' which we believe and gladly acknowledge to have the profoundest import to ourselves often leave us quite cold, and our judgements that they are 'good' has no mangneticism or persuasive power whatever. Thus, I think that there is such a thing as the acknowledgement of the truth or falsity of an ethical judgement when no 'magneticism' is involved. It is the recognition of this fact, and of its profound importance to

human affairs, that makes Christian ethics deeper in this regard than Socratic ethics, according to which 'to know the good' is to desire it.

The third chapter deals primarily with ethical conventions. There is no gain saying that one of the main theses of the emotive theory is that an attitude is a constituent of some ethical conventions. I have questioned the validity of this contention. I am of the opinion that every attitude is not a constituent of ethical convention. Some writers think that the relation between attitudes and ethical conventions can be confirmed by observation. On the other hand, some writers like Duncan Jones and R.M. Hare are of the opinion that the said relation is logically necessary. What does the term convention mean? This term means that the truth is determined not by facts but by social agreements or usage. It may be noted here that the sophists regard all laws and ethical principles as conventions. In order to understand what is meant by ethical conventions and attitudes, we need to understand the nature and function of language of morals. This means that to understand clearly what moral conventions mean I need to clarify the terms 'ought' and 'can' and also try to find an answer to the question whether 'ought' implies 'can'. This is what I have tried to do in this chapter.

I have discussed what has come to be known as Is-Ought dilemma. To the best of my ability I cannot but discuss the question of Hume in this connection since in my opinion he is the originator of this dilemma. Therefore, I have discussed the views of hume elaborately in this chapter.

I have argued in this chapter that moral judgements, when intended seriously and with their full force, must be taken as committing the speaker to some universal judgements applying to anyone in a irrelevantly similar situation. However, there are situations where a position deteriorates. For example, I may prescribe something for every one in a particular situation except myself. In my own case, I may substitute for the said prescription something weaker.

I have argued that there is an important analogy between 'ought' and 'imperatives' and 'decisions'. I have argued that imperatives and decisions imply 'can' for the reason that without 'can' a practical question cannot arise. 'Ought' is not meant to be used in giving answers to practical questions. I have discussed two questions which are distinct from each other namely, 'practical question' and 'the prescriptive question'. The practical question does not cover the 'ought' question while the prescriptive question covers both 'practical' and 'ought' question. However, these two questions are related in the following way; unless

the 'practical' questions arrise the 'ought' question cannot arise, if 'ought' has its full force as it must have if it is to imply 'can'.

I have also discussed Stevenson's defence of the emotive theory by means of the clarification of certain ethical terms especially attitudes and moral conventions while clarifying Stevenson admits the possibility of genuine agreement and disagreement in any moral discourse. Stevenson is very confident that the connection between belief and attitude is always factual and not logical. This position of his borders on dogmatism. Because, I think there is a logical connection between belief and attitude. Moreover, he fails to take into account the difference between providing one's hearer with reasons for adopting an attitude and saying things which will cause him to do so. I have also discussed Affective-Cognitive Theory or A.C.T. of Gaus. Gaus prefers a kind of rationalism which delivers reason that does not appeal to pursuits or reason. This account is called Value-Grounded-Rationalism or in short V.G.R. V.G.R. is a kind of transcendental invocation or principles which must be presupposed by nearly all systems of value available to human beings. I am of the opinion that ethical judgements are paramount to human affairs. This is the major part of my conclusion.

CHAPTER IV

EMOTIVISM AND LOGICAL POSITIVISM

EMOTIVISM AND LOGICAL POSITIVISM

Logical positivism has often been confused with analytic philosophy as a whole. It shares certain ancestors with analysis and the two have some aims in common, but they are not identical. Although the work of Russell and the earlier Wittgenstein influenced the positivists heavily, the positivists set out in different and moral radical directions. In the heavily logic mathematical turns of phrase of the positivists logical positivism forms a proper subject of analytic philosophy. All logical positivists are analysts, but not all analysts are logical positivists.

Like the names of other philosophic movements, the name 'logical positivism' is used to designate a group of men who share certain aims and common interests, and who perhaps share these to a greater degree than other men in other philosophic groups, but who also differ with each other on major points of doctrine. Despite the fact that their work was so very technical, they became more well known in a popular way than many other philosophic movements because their aims with respect to classical philosophy were so easily popularized, clear, direct, and radical:

eliminate all metaphysics - metaphysical statements do not *assert anything higher or more fundamental than science.* They assert nothing at all. They are neither true nor false, but meaningless. They ought not even to be called statements (i.e., assertions which may properly be called true or false). And out the window with metaphysical statements went the conceptions of religious, ethical and aesthetic discourses as assertions in function.

The logical positivists derive its inspiration from the positivists and empiricist traditions and draws its sustenance from the 20th century developments of non-Aristotelian logic. There are two very important reasons why logical positivism should be described as a group of allied schools of 'philosophy'. First, logical positivism is a movement – and an international one – promoted by philosophers in Germany, Australia, Holland, England and the United States. The early development of this philosophy goes to the 'Vienna Circle' and the 'Cambridge School'. There are a number of professors and philosophers who agree on what may be called and what will be presently analysed as the core of Logical Positivists, but who would not like to be labelled as Logical Positivists. For, they have their own peculiarities and preferences relating to the approach, terminology and aims of the 'philosophy'. Bertrand Russell

has a preference for logical Atomism.[1] A.J. Ayer for Logical Empiricism,[2] while Rudolph and Otto Neurath for 'Physicalism', and yet, in a broad sense, these four can be called Logical Positivists. Even G.E. Moore (of Cambridge) can be called a Logical Positivist. For though he did not participate in the logical positivist movement, he did adopt a technique and achieved results similar to those of Ludwig Wittgenstein who can be said to be the most important founder of this 'philosophy'. Second, though Logical Positivism sounds like an 'ism', it is not one. Though we have been using the term 'philosophy', in our above discussion as synonymous with Logical Positivism the two are not the same. Logical Positivism is not a philosophy or philosophical system as understood in the conventional sense. It is a logico-linguistic approach to natural and social sciences. It is an attitude rather than a creed, a method rather than

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1. "I hold that logic is what is fundamental in philosophy and that school should be characterized rather by their logic than by their metaphysics. My own logic is atomic, and it is this respect upon which I should wish to lay stress. Therefore, I prefer to describe my philosophy as Logical atomism, rather than as realism whether with or without some prefixed adjective. Logical Atomism: Russell Bertrand, the essay is include in Ayer A.J. Logical Positivism, 1959, The Free Press, Glencor, Illinois.

2. Ayer, A.J. Language, Truth and Logic, edition 1946, Victor Gallenz Ltd., London, pp. 31-32, Preface to the First Edition, and p. 135.

a dogma. It is very much technically conscious and action-minded. That is to say, the Logical Positivism adopt a logico-linguistic approach to knowledge (or natural and social sciences) and promote knowledge through analysis and specification, elucidation and specification of written and spoken word or indeed, whenever the use of language in the widest sense is involved. They are not interested in theorizing in the sense of a priori system building or philosophizing in the sense of engaging inwardly windy duels. In short, we may say that the logical positivists are interested in the promotion of knowledge through promotion of communication. Some of them (Wittgenstein, for instance) may not like to theorize even what they do. And whenever they write or speak in the way of theorizing what they are likely to do is to focus their enquiry on a particular subject, seek to unravel some tangled issues, chisel a particular problem into details or illuminate some facets of it, draw subtle but important distinction between the different meanings of a word or a phrase, bring out the meaning of some obscure statements, or elucidate the possible meanings of one elliptical propositions. It is inconceivable that a Logical Positivists will come out with 'tones' or 'volumes' of his philosophy unlike the traditional system building philosopher.

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3. Rudolph Carnap, Philosophy and Logical Syntax, Kegan Paul, Trench Trubner and Co. Ltd., London, 1935, pp. 88-89.

What he is likely to come out with is papers, articles, monographs, questions and answers comments rejoinders, explanations and modifications.[4] Thus, a Logical Positivist Philosopher will be generally disinclined to theorize his logico-linguistic approach and practice. He is like a musician who sings but does not sit down to write a treatise on music or like a builder who builds but does not propound his thesis on construction engineering. It is in this sense that the Logical Positivists are techniques – conscious and action minded. It is in this limited and particular sense that logical positivism can be called a philosophy and a Logical Positivist a philosopher.

The positivists had the prestige of science on their side, or many of them were scientists or trained in sciences and it was a motion of science which they elaborated. Then too, in its popular form as expounded by A.J. Ayer in Language, Truth and Logic.[5] The radical doctrines of LP reached a wide audience because of the forcefulness and clarity of Ayer's exposition. Literary critics like I.A. Richards

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4. It is significant (or symbolic?) that in the preface to Philosophical Investigation in the (Basil Blackwell, Oxford). 1953. Wittgenstein describes his work as "a number of sketches of landscapes which were made in the course of these long and involved journeying (study and writing)" and as an album rather than a monumental picture.

5. London, 1936, rev. ed. 1946. Hereafter referred to as Ayer 1936, 1946.

were moved to respond to the movement (see his Science and Poetry)[6] as were intelligent laymen.

The movement itself grow about a group of men who became known as the Vienna Circle. In 1922, the chair of philosophy at the University of Vienna was offered to Moritz Schlick, who attracted a group of men to him. Among these were F. Waismann, O. Neurath, F. Zisel, H. Feigl, R. Carnap, V. Kraft, H. Hahn and K. Godel.[7] This group met frequently to discuss philosophical problems. They were in contact with Wittgenstein who lived nearby, and with a similar group in Berlin. They found journals, held congresses, published manifestoes and, most important, produced results difficult to ignore.

If logical positivism is dead today, its death is due to the scrupulous honesty and immense logical powers of the positivists themselves, for it was they who, in attempting to refine their formulations in order to make their concepts rigorous finally discovered that some of their main notions were unworkable. In passing, it should be noted that although in their popular work the positivists

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6. I.A. Richards, Science and Poetry, (New York, 1926).
7. For a full acount of the circle and its early members see V. Kraft, The Vienna Circle (New York, 1935, rev. 1968) and J. Jorgensen, The Development of Logical Empiricism, (Chicago, 1951).

often attacked classical metaphysics as providing example of meaningless statements, it was the very handy example of the metaphysics of Moore, Russell, and the early Wittgenstein which as often as not they were interested in attacking.[8] For example, we find Schlick writing that physics is concerned with lawas and not with sensations; therefore, bodies cannot be constructed as complexes of sensations rather, what should have been said that propositions concerning bodies are transformable into equivalent propositions about the occurrences of sensations according with laws. The consistent expiricists can neither deny nor affirm the existence of a transcendental world, for to do either of these is to make an equally metaphysical statement and, hence, an equally meaningless one. So much, then for the problem of the external world and the metaphysics of logical atomism.[9]

One of the main programmes of logical positivists understood as the attempt to derive a logical wedge between what was on the one hand, verifiable and scientific, and hence meaningful, and what on the other was not verifiable and meaningful. In the first instance this can be seen as

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8. See M. White, Toward Reunion in Philosophy, (Cambridge, Mass, 1956), pp. 19f.
9. See Schlik, "Positivism and Realism" (1932) in A.J. Ayer, ed. Logical Positivism, (New York, 1959), p. 107, Book hereafter referred to as Ayer 1959.

an attempt to eliminate metaphysics. This attempt is not all that new in the history of philosophy. The sceptics of ancient Greece and the nominalists of the middle ages stand out as examples of anti-metaphysicians in great periods of classical philosophy, Kant himself at least in one phrase of critical work, attempted to show that metaphysics of a certain sort was impossible and that knowledge must have sensory content. In the early nineteenth century Auguste Comte attempted to show that metaphysics belonged to an intellectually darrker period in man's history than science, which superseeded it. Even Leibnitz, with his attempt to use logical analysis to solve philosophic disputes, may be counted as forerunner of the positivists although he was a metaphysician. Empiricists like Mill and Pragmatists like James and Peirce may be counted here as well.[10] But most of all it was to Hume that the positivists owe a debt, as do all analytic philosophers. His attempt at thorough going empiricism and his rejection of metaphysics is characteristic of the positivists. What they added was a logical rigour which replaced Hume's psychological analysis, and a passion for dealing with formalized languages. In one

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10. For a complete table of those whom the positivists counted as their intellectual forefathers as Jorgensen, p.6. For a brief account of the contributions of Peirce and Einstein see W.A. Abton and G. Nakhnikian, eds. Readings in Twentieth Century Philosophy, (New York, 1963), pp. 385-86; and M. Schlick, "Positivism and Realism" in Ayer, 1959, pp. 89-90.

of the most famous passages in philosophy Hume writes,

> When we run over libraries; persuaded of these principles, what havoc must we make? If we take in our hand any volume of divinity or school metaphysics, for instance, let us ask,
>
> "Does it contain any abstract reasoning concerning quantity or number? No. Does it contain any experimental reasoning concerning matter of fact and existence No. commit it then to the flames: for it can contain nothing but sophistry and illusion."11

Let us now throw some ray of light on moral judgements or judgements of value from the point of view of the logical positivists. Moral judgements, in general are concerned with what is right of wrong, good or evil. Since they are judgements of value, they are only concerned with what people ought to do. They are statements not of facts but statements of influence. According to Stevenson, moral statements EXPRESS. Not REPORT attitudes. They are a combination of two species viz. descriptive and emotive meaning, the former corresponding to the express of belief, the latter of attitude.

Moral judgements, unlike ordinary judgements or everyday judgements of fact are neither synthetic nor analytic, if we try to weigh moral judgement along with everyday

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11. David Hume, An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding, (See, XII, III). Reprinted from the 1777 edition with Introduction and Analytical Index by L.A. Selby-Bigge and P.H. Nidditch.

judgements. Moral judgement are never analytic in the sense that they can never by necessarily true or necessarily false. For instance, "X is good" can either be true or false and it would be an impossible task to test the validity of such a statement by experience or verification as X could just give us the impression of being a good person. On the contrary, X may be a vice-ridden person. Thus, we see that to label moral judgements as analytic involves us in self-contradiction. Moral judgements, also can never be synthetic as synthetic judgements depend on experiences. Their truth and falsity is verified by experience to see whether the connection asserted actually holds. Moral judgement such as 'God is the creator of universe' cannot be verified by experience. Thus value judgements are neither analytic nor synthetic. What are they then? Moral judgement are only emotive and prescriptive. It is devoid of cognitive meaning.

The positivist does not lead us to a dead one as regards statement of value. They have tried to take account of the point by constructing their criterion as a criterion of a certain kind of meaningfulness, variously, called 'cognitive meaning', 'factual meaning' and 'literal meaning' which is then distinguished from something called 'emotive meaning' or 'expressive meaning'. But apart from the absurdity of lumping the indefinitely various uses of sentences other

than the assertive under the heading 'emotive' or 'expressive' one can question the significance of distinguishing different kinds of meaning in this way. If we are to say that an imperative sentence has a different kind of meaning from a declarative sentence on the ground that it is used for a different kind if illocutionary act, how far are we going to carry this? Are we going to say that 'shut the door', has a different kind of meaning from 'please shut the door' on the ground that one is used to issue an order and the other to make a request. And would we want to say that 'I was out late last night' has two different kinds of meaning on the grounds that it can be used to make an admission as well as to simply inform someone of a fact? If one is undeterred by this indefinite multiplication of 'kinds of meanings', he may still well consider the fact that there is no reason to think that sentences of these different sorts have meaning, or get their meanings in different ways. In each case, to have certain meaning is to be usuable for the performance of a certain illocutionary acts involved. In each case, what it is to have a certain meaning is the same. However, it does clearly make sense to speak of different kinds of meaning for sentences on the one hand, and sentence components like words on the other, for the account of what it is to have a certain meaning is different in the two cases. And still more can we distinguish the

kind of meaning that a sentence and a knock in an engine have.

Whether or not one can properly speak of 'cognitive meaning', the existing formulations of the empiricists meaning criteria are restricted to only one segment of language. This may not disturb those who are interested only in finding ways of ruling out supposed assertions they find objectionable and in restricting scientific and philosophical discussion to question that can be settled empirically. But to someone who is interested in the philosophy of language for its own sake the restriction is disappointing. After all, it does seem that experience is and must be crucial for the way one attaches meaning to words, not just in making assertions, but in linguistic activity of all sorts; and it ought to be possible to find a criterion of meaningfulness that would adequately reflect this fact.

Among the positivists, A.J. Ayer holds such branches of knowledge as, metaphysics, ethics, aesthetics and even the whole of philosophy (in the traditional sense, to be of 'unverifiable' (Ayer) or 'meaningless' (Wittgenstein) so that they are disqualified from being worthy or fruitful subjects of study. Hume's position has been asserted by the Logical Positivists. It is as follows: prescriptive propositions cannot be deduced from descriptive proposition.

On this view, therefore, the traditional sciences of metaphysics ethics, aesthetics and so on turn out to be unscientific (or pseudo scientific) because they are found to contain meaningless sentences. Morality is not discerned by reasoning at all, whether deductive or inductive. If one argument would be valid, says Hume, would show that there were no moral judgements to be established, whether by reasoning or in some other way.

Moral judgements are not inferred from other propositions, which we use as premises, but are known non-inferentially from our impressions in some manner analogous to perceiving. For example, we do not infer that grass is green; but our impressions enable us to perceive that it is. The second of these two views is that moral judgements are inferred from premises established 'by means of our impressions'. On both these two views impressions would be needed in order for us to distinguish between virtues and vices. On the first view, impressions would enable us to know what actions were virtuous in the way in which having impression enables us know that this crow which I see before me is

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12. A.J. Ayer, Language, Truth and Logic, Victor Gollanez Ltd., Second Edition, 1946, p. 34. Ayer is more outspoken and direct on this point. He declares that the traditional disciplines engaged in the pursuit of reality as transcending the limits of possible sense of experience are devoted to the 'production of consense'.

black. On the second view, having impressions would enable us to know what was virtuous in the way in which they enable us to know that all crows are black. On the former view, no reasoning at all is necessary in order for us to apprehend the morality of something. On the latter, reasoning is necessary, but is not sufficient, and is in any case not deductive reasoning but inductive.

If morality is discerned by deductive reasoning, then morality is 'eternal and immutable' in that the sentences which express the truth of morals, like the sentences which express the truth of mathematics or of logic, will, if they once express a truth always express a truth. The sentence 'two plus two are four' provided that the words it contains do not change their meanings, cannot express something true at one time but false at another. The same will be true, if moral truths are discerned by deductive reasoning, of sentences such as 'promise-breaking is wrong'. But though, if moral distinctions are discerned by deductive reasoning, it follows that morality is immutable, if moral distinction are not arrived at by deductive reasnoning, it does not follow that morality is not immutable. More accurately, all that follows is that the sentences which at one time express moral truths could, at another time, express moral falsehoods. It does not follow that they do

this. That gases expand when heated is immutable truth in that gases could change in this respect, but not in the sense that sometimes they do. Perhaps it would be better to say that, if moral distinctions are not discerned by deductive reasoning, it follows that morality is immutable, in one sense, but not in another. It follows that morality is not immutable, in that it follows that it would be logically possible for it to change, but it does not follow that morality is immutable in the sense that from time to time it does change.

In a puzzling passage Hume suggests that morality, unlike truth, is not discerned merely by the juxtaposition and comparison of ideas.[13] This passage is puzzling for two reasons. Firstly, it is not Hume's view that all truths are discerned merrely by the juxtaposition and comparison of ideas (and if it were Hume's view, it would be a silly one) Hume thought that it is only those truths which can be established by deductive reasoning which are established by the comparison of ideas, probable reasoning and perception enable us to establish truths. We shall see that one of the arguments which he later uses would, if it were valid, establishes that there were no moral truths. If there were

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13. David Hume, A Treatise of Human Nature, by L.A. Selby-Bigge & P.H. Nidditch, Bk II of Morals. See I (p.456-7) ed. L.H. Selby-Bigge, Second edition.

no such things as moral truths it would a fortiori that moral truths were not 'deriv'd' from reason, as there would be no moral truth to be discovered. This conclusion, however, is much more extreme than the view that moral truths are not established deductively. And it would, unfortunately be incompatible with the view that Hume sometimes says in his own, that moral truths are discovered by a moral sense.

The position of the logical positivists is incomplete without A.J. Ayer. Ayer is of the view that statements of value are genuine synthetic propositions, but that they cannot with any show of justice be represented as hypothesis, which are used to predict the course of our sensations; and accordingly, that the existence of ethics and aesthetics as branches of speculative knowledge presents an inseparable objection to our radical empiricist thesis.

In face of this objection, it is our business to give an account of 'judgement of value' which is both satisfactory in itself and consistent with our general empiricists principles. We shall set ourselves to show that in so far as statements of value are significant, they are ordinary. 'Scientific' statements; and that in so far as they are not scientific, they are not in the literal sense significant, but are simply expressions of emotion which can be neither true or false. In maintaining this view, we may

confine ourselves for the present to the case of ethical statements. What is said about them will be found to apply, mutatis mutandis, to the case of aesthetic statements also.

The ordinary system of ethics, as elaborated in the works of ethical philosophers, is very far from being a homogeneous whole. Not only is it apt to contain pieces of metaphysics and analyses of non-ethical concepts; its actual ethical contents are themselves of very different kinds. We may divide them, indeed into four main classes. These are, first of all, propositions which express definitions of ethical terms, or judgements about the legitimacy or possibility of certain definitions. Secondly, there are propositions describing, the phenomenon of moral experience, and their causes. Thirdly, there are exhortations to moral virtue. And, lastly, there are actual ethical judgements.[14] It is unfortunately the case that the distinction between these four classes, plain as it is, commonly ignored by ethical philosophers; with the result that it is often very difficult to tell from their works what it is that they are seeking to discover or prove.

It is easy to see that only the first of our four classes, namely that which comprises the propositions relating

14. The argument that follows should be read in conjunction with the introduction of 'Language, Truth and Logic', pp. 25-8.

to the definitions of ethical terms, can be said to constitute ethical philosophy. The propositions which describe the phenomena of moral experience and their causes, must be assigned to the science of psychology or sociology. The exhortations to moral virtue are not propositions at all, but ejaculations or commands which are designed to provoke the ruler to action of certain sort. Accordingly they do not belong to any branch of philosophy or science. As for the expressions of ethical judgements, we have not yet determined how they should be classified. But in as much as they are certainly neither definitions nor comments upon definitions nor quotations we may say decisively that they do not belong to ethical philosophy. A strictly philosophical treatise on ethics should therefore make no ethical pronouncements. But it should, by giving an analysis of ethical terms, show what is the category to which all such pronouncements belong.

The question which concerns us here, is that whether statements of ethical value can be translated into statements of empirical fact. That they can be so translated is the contention of those ethical philosophers who are commonly called subjectivists and of those who are known as utilitarians. For the utilitarians define the rightness of actions, and the goodness of ends, in terms of the pleasure, or happi-

ness, or satisfaction to which they give rise, the subjectivists in terms of the feeling of approval which a certain person, or group of people, has towards them. Each of these types of definition makes moral judgements into a sub-class of psychological or sociological judgements; and for this reason they are very attractive to us. For if, either was correct, it would follow that ethical assertions were not generally different from the factual assertions which are ordinarily contrasted with them; and the account which we have already given of empirical hypothesis would apply also to them.

Nevertheless we shall not adopt a subjectivists or a utilitarian analysis of ethical terms. We reject the subjectivist's view that to call an action right, or a thing good is to say that it is generally approved of, because it is not self-contradictory to assert that some actions which are generally approved of are not right, or that somethings which are generally approved of are not good. A man who asserts that a certain action is right, or that a certain thing is good, is saying that he himself approves of it, on the ground that a man who confesses that he sometimes approved of what was bad or wrong would not be contradicting himself. And a similar argument is fatal to utilitarianism. We cannot agree that to call an action right is to say that

of all the actions possible in the circumstances it would cause, or be likely to cause, the greatest happiness, or the greatest balance of pleasure over pain, or the greatest balance of satisfied over unsatisfied desire, because we find that it is not self contradictory to say that it is sometimes wrong to perform the action which would actually or probably cause the greatest happiness or the greatest balance of pleasure over pain, or of satisfied over unsatisfied desire. And since it is not self contradictory to say that some pleasant things are not good, or that some bad things are desired, it cannot be the case that the sentence X is good is equivalent to X is pleasant or to X is desired. And to every other variant of utilitarianism which we are acquainted the same objection can be made. And therefore, we should conclude that the validity of ethical judgements is determined by the felicific tendencies of actions, any more than by the nature of peoples' feelings, but that it must be regarded as 'absolute' or 'intrinsic' and not empirically calculable.

Here we are not denying that it is possible to invent a language in which all ethical symbols are definable in non-ethical terms, or even that it is desirable to invent such a language and adopt it in place of our own; what we are denying is that the suggested reduction of ethical to

non-ethical statements is consistent with the conventions of our actual language. That is, we reject utilitarianism and subjectivism, not as proposals to replace our existing ethical notions by new ones, but as analyses of our existing ethical notions. Our contention is simply that, in our language, sentences which contain normative ethical symbols are not equivalent to sentences which express psychological propositions, or indeed empirical propositions of any kind.

The fundamental ethical concepts are unanalysable is a well known fact as there is no criterion by which one can test the validity of the judgements in which they occur. The reason why they are unanalysable is that they were pseudo-concepts. The presence of ethical symbol in a proposition adds nothing to its factual content. Example, if I say to some 'you acted wrongly in stealing that money', I am not stating anything more than if I simply said 'you stole that money'. In adding that this action is wrong I am not making any further statement about it. I am simply conveying my moral disapproval of it. It is as if I had said 'you stole that money' in a peculiar tone of horror, or written it with the addition of some special exclamation marks. The tone, or the exclamation marks, adds nothing to the literal meaning of the sentence. It merely serves to show that the expression of it is attended by certain feeling in the speaker.

It is worth mentioning that eithical terms do not serve only to express feelings. They are calculated also to arose feeling, and so to stimulate action. Indeed some of them are used in such a way as to give the sentences in which they occur the effects of commands. Hume seems also be in the same view for he says in his First argument Morality moves us to action, while Reason does not (457-8)[15] (Hume's first premise: Reason cannot alone move us to action (413-7) Treatise of Hume Nature Bk II, p. III Sc. III). Hume thinks that 'reason is, and ought only to be the slave of the passions' and can never pretend to any other office than to serve and obey them .(415). Thus the sentence 'It is your duty to tell the truth' may be regarded both as the expression of a certain sort of ethical feeling about truthfulness and as the expression of the command 'Tell the truth'. The sentence 'you ought to tell the truth' also involves the command 'tell the truth', but here the tone of the command is less emphatic. In the sentence 'It is good to tell the truth' the command has become little more than a suggestion. And thus the 'meaning' of the word 'good' in its ethical usage, is differentiated from that of the word 'duty' or the word 'ought'. In fact, we may define the meaning of the various ethical words in terms both of the different feelings they are ordinarily taken to express

15. David Hume, A Treatise of Human Nature.

and also the different responses which they are calculated to provoke.

We can now see why it is impossible to find a criterion for determining the validity of ethical judgements. It is not because they have an 'absolute' validity which is mysteriously independent of ordinary sense-experience, but because they have no objective validity whatsoever. If a sentence makes no statement at all, there is obviously no sense at all in asking whether what it says is true or false. And we have seen that sentences which simply express moral judugements do not say anything. They are pure expressions of feeling and as such do not come uunder the category of truth and falsehood. They are unverifiable for the same reason as a cry of pain or a word of command is unverifiable because they do not express genuine propositions.

We find that argument is possible on moral question only if some system of values is presupposed. If our opponent concurs with us in expressing moral disapproval of all actions of a given type t, then we may get him to condemn a particular action A, by bringing forward arguments to show that A is of type t. For the question whether A does or does not belong to that type is a plain question of fact. Given that a man has certain moral principles, we argue that he must, in order to be consistent, react morally to certain

things in a certain way. What we do not and cannot argue about is the validity of these moral principles. We merely praise or condemn them in the light of our own feelings.

So far we were concerned with the general features of logical positivism. Now we turn to the task of stating the general features of one particular school of Logical positivism - Wittgenstein school. The treatment of this school consists in the study of meaning of 'meaning', its declaration that metaphysics and ethics contain emotive proposition or meaningless sentences and therefore, cannot be placed at par with the natural and social sciences.

Wittgenstein rejected ethics on the whole as a body of meaningless propositions. This is the core of LP position which we find well developed and well illustrated in the writings of other LP philosphers like Ayer* and Carnap. According to these philosophers, ethics stand condemned as a body of meaningless proposition in as much as metaphysical stands condemned. Ethics has always been a departmental enquiry of metaphysics or the traditional philosophical system; it would be, therefore, liable to the same defects

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* A.J. Ayer, Language, Truth and Logic, Golancz, London, Second Ed. 1946, pp. 120-

Rudolph Carnap, Philosophy of Logical Syntax, Kegan Paul, London, 1936, pp. 23-26.

Both Ayer and Carnap are more radical and uncompromising than Wittgenstein regarding their stand on ethics. Both of them hold that:

and deficiencies to which metaphysics or the traditional philosophical system has been.

An adequate account of the meaning of ethical utterances must emphasize their imperative or prescriptive forces and descriptive force as well (nor every statement with imperative or prescriptive force need to be ethical of course). Accordingly to some writers (for example, Stevenson) this force consists in a capacity, causally dependent on the auditors language training to mould the attitudes of auditors after the pattern of the attitude expressed, independently of any beliefs the utterances may produce in the mind of the auditor. This "Adultery is wrong' is supposed to make one tend to disapprove of adultery. Without mustering

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1) Ethics which is traditionally claimed to be a science consist of 2 parts, the positive and normative or descriptive and prescriptive.

2) The positivists or descriptive part which is capable of scientific treatment should be comprehended into one or more natural or social sciences.

3) The normative or prescriptive part which consists partly of commands is not capable of scientific treatment and therefore, to this extent ethics cannot be called a science. It is neither scientific nor unscientific it simply pseudo scientific or extra-scientific.

4) Ethical propositions are questions belonging to this normative or prescriptive part do remain valuable and useful in their own way since their value and use are not derived from being scientific or unscientific.

5) The propositions or arguments from religious or mystical experience are treated in the same way as those from normative or prescriptive part of the ethics.

any reason such as the probable consequences. Others for example, R.M. Hare, says that ethical utterances prescribe or tell what to do (something common to advising, requesting exhorting and commanding, and that prescribing is a basic form of discourse which can hardly analysed further. By way of partial explanation it is sometimes said that to accept a prescription is to be or become ready to behave as prescribed (one can understand a prescription, however, without accepting it) since people will presumably prescribe only what likely favour in some way or to some degree a person's prescription are due to his attitudes and perhaps necessarily express them in the sense of 'express' just indicated.

According to R.M. Hare, there are three most important truths about moral judgements. Of these, two are that moral judgements are a kind of prescriptive judgements, and they are distinguishable from other judgements of this class by being universalizable .... It is, most fundamental, because moral judgements are universalizable that we can speak of moral thoughts as rational (to universalize is to give the reason); and their prescriptivity is very intimately connected with our freedom to form our own moral opinions (only those who are free to think and act need a prescriptive language).

From these vague introductory remarks - perhaps, as they, incomprehensible - we must now turn to something more concrete. And I think it is best to begin with a point on which most moral philosophers from Professor Stevenson to Ewing, would probably agree - namely, the fact that moral judgements, whatever else they may do, have as one element in their meaning, what has been called 'descriptive meaning'. It is hard to deny that this is so, but still harder to say what it means; and this is what we now have to attempt.

What is it for a term to have descriptive meaning? Without attempting to give a complete account of meaning in general, we may perhaps be allowed to say that meaning in my kind (so far as it is words that are said to have meaning) is or involves the use of an expression in accordance with certain rules, the kind of meaning is determined by the kind of rules. It must be noted that in speaking of 'rules' determining the meaning of expressing we are not making our language to be more inflexible that it is. The terms 'open texture'[16] 'family resemblance'[17] and the

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16. See Waismann, Aristotelian Society, Supp Vol. xix (1945), 123, and his series of articles 'Analytic-Synthetic' in Analysis X-Xiii (1949-53).

17. See Wittgenstein, Philosophical Investigation 66f. and other passages referred to by R. Bambrough, Aristotelian Society, ix (1960/1) 207, in a useful exposition of some of the lessons to be learnt from Wittgenstein's doctrine.

like (striving and illuminating when first introduced) were not long in becoming part of the pattern of the up-to-date philosophical conjecture. They express the undoubted truth that the expressions of our language (especially its descriptive term) are used very tolerantly; not only is their use subject to change, but at any one time there will be many border-tine cases in which there is a certain liberty of use; and there are many other linguistic liberties also. This point has some importance for ethics. For our present purpose, it is sufficient to say that by 'rules', we do not mean very simple general rules which can be formulated in words but, rather, that consistency of practice in the use of an expression which is the condition of practice in the use of an expression which is the condition of its intelligibility. The distinction between different kinds of meaning-rules is to ask what, in the case of terms of different kinds, would constitute misuse of them. Let us therefore, try this method with the word 'red' which shall constitute a typical example of a descriptive term. How should we be sure that a person had misused the word 'red'? We should be entitled to accuse him of doing this if he said that an object was red when what he meant was that it was of some other kind. The sense of mean which I am using here is that in which we can mean something different from what our words mean in their correct acceptation (as

when a Khasiman would say 'Kem Cha' meaning 'how are you' in Gujrati). In the first sense what we mean is what we intend to convey, in the second sense what our words mean is what they would normally convey to somebody who understood the language while we are speaking.

In general, a person is misusing a descriptive term, according to Hare, if in using it he breaks the descriptive rule attaching the term to a certain kind of objects, and he does this if he says that an object is of one kind, meaning, or intending to convey, that it is of another kind. A descriptive term may thus be defined as one, to misuse which is to do this.

In order to know that a person has misused a descriptive term we have to know what he meant, or intended to convey. In practice we normally get over this difficulty by making an assumption, that he intends to convey what is in fact true. This in turns splits up into two assumptions. We have to assume both that he is not honestly mistaken about what kind of things the object actually is; and that he is not deliberately speaking falsely. If either of these assumptions cannot be made, it is very difficult to distinguish incorrect uses of descriptive terms from deliberate or unintentional false statements. For support that he says, of a blue object, that it is red. Unless we make these assump-

tions, we cannot conclude that he is misusing the word 'red' i.e., expressing incorrectly what he intends to convey. He may be using it quite correctly to express a false statement which he either thinks true or wishes to deceive us into thinking true. Fortunately, these complications (which are in fact even more complicated than there is here room to indicate, need not concern us. If the two assumptions be granted, as they usually can be, we can detect a misuse of a term by observing that the term is used of an object of a certain kind, when the descriptive rule which determines the meaning of the term excludes its use of objects of that kind. Normally if a man said that an object was ultramarine, when it was not, and when the object was in plain view and he had normal eyesight, and was a straight forward person, we should conclude that he did not know the meaning of 'ultramarine'.

It might be thought that the same sort of thing can be said about all words; but, as I have said, to think this is to make one of the commonest of philosophical mistakes. In order to see that it is a mistake, it is necessary only to examine some expressions which do not follow this sort of meaning-rule. Take, for example, the word 'it'. The rules for the use of this word permit us to apply it to any kind of object or thing. If, therefore, it were a

descriptive term, it would be so vague and general as to be altogether useless, be describing a thing as 'it' we should not be describing it at all. But in fact 'it' has an entirely different use from that of describing, it is used to refer to (not describe) something whose identity is already established by the context. If, for example, we say "that's it" we are not describing that as it, we are, rather, saying that is the thing referred to what this thing is has to be clear from the context. For this reason it is not possible to misuse the word 'it' by using it of an object of a kind to which it is not correctly applied (for it can be used of any kind of object). Fortunately, it is irrelevant to our purpose to inquire into the very difficult question of what would constitute a misuse of the word 'it'.

We have only got a clear picture of descriptive terms. To understand what are descriptive judgements, let us refer to R.M. Hare. In the "Language of Morals", Hare says I have used the term 'judgement' in an artifically general sense, in order to avoid subscribing to the fiction that all indicative, sentences express statements, and in order to leave some questions unbegged. A judgement is descriptive if in it the predicate or predicates are descriptive terms and the mood is indicative. The latter restriction

is required because imperative sentences also normally contain descriptive terms (for instance in 'be quiet' the expression 'quiet' is a descriptive term); and we do not want to have to call imperatives descriptive judgements. The word 'predicates' used here, is meant to cover not only what are sometimes called 'one-place' predicates but also predicates (such as relational terms) which can take more than one subject. Thus my account is intended not only to cover subject-predicate propositions in the narrow sense, but also relational one. For example, 'hit' is a two-place predicate, expressing a relation, the sentence 'John hit James' expresses a descriptive judgement because in it this two-place predicate, which is a descriptive term, is predicated in the indicative, of the ordered pair of subjects John and James.

Some judgements are descriptive and at the same time has universalizability. Moral judgements share this feature with descriptive judgements, although the difference between in other respects are, sufficient to make it misleading to say that moral judgements are descriptive. Nevertheless, in so far as moral judgements do have descriptive meaning in addition to the other kind of meaning which they have, they share this characteristic, which is common to all judgements which carry descriptive meaning. For example,

A says that a thing is red, he is committed to the view that anything which was like it in the relevant respect would likewise be red. The relevant respects are those which, he thought entitled him to call the first thing red, in this particular case, they amount to one respect: its red colour. This follows, according to the definitions given above, from the fact that 'This is red', is a descriptive judgement. 'This is red', entails 'Everything like this in the relevant respect is red' simply because to say that something is red while denying that some other thing which resembles it in the relevant respect is red is to misuse the word 'red', and this is because 'red' is a descriptive term, and because therefore, to say that something is red is to say that it is of a certain kind, and so to imply that anything which is of that same kind is red.

The standard of goodness, like the meaning of 'red', is normally something which is public and commonly accepted. When I explain to someone the meaning of 'red motor car', he expects, unless I am known to be very eccentric, that he will find other people using it in the same way. And similarly, at any rate with objects like motor cars where there is a commonly accepted standard, he will expect having learnt from mewhat is the standard of goodness in motor cars, to be able, by using the expression 'good motor car',

to give information to other people and get it from them, without confusion.

The phrase 'good motor-car' resembles 'red motor-car'. Both 'good' and 'red' can vary as regards the exactitude or vagueness of the information which they do or can convey. We normally use the expression 'red motor-car' very loosely. Any motor-car that lies somewhere between the unmistakably orange could without use of language be called a red motor-car. And similarly, the standard for calling motor-cars good is commonly very loose. There are certain characteristics, such as inability to exceed 30 mph which to anyone but an eccentric would be sufficient condition for refusing to call it a good motor-car; but there is no precise set of accepted criteria such that we can say 'If a motor-car satisfies these conditions, it is a good one; if not, not'. And in both cases we could be precise if we wanted to. We could, for certain purposes, agree not to say that a motor car was 'really red' unless the redness of its paint reached a certain measurable degree of purity and saturation; and similarly, we adopt a very exact standard of goodness in motor-cars. We might refuse the name 'good motor-car' to any car that would not go round a certain race-track without mishap in a certain limited time, that did not conform to certain other rigid specifications as regards accommodation

etc. This sort of thing has not been done for the expression 'good motor-car', but as Urmson has pointed out, it has been done by the Ministry of Agriculture for the expression 'super apple'.

It is important to notice that the exactness or looseness of their criteria does absolutely nothing to distinguish words like 'good' from words like 'red' words in both classes may be descriptive loose or exact, according to how rigidly the criteria have been laid down by customs and convention. It certainly is not true that value-words are distinguished from descriptive words in that the former are looser. Descriptively, than the latter. There are loose and rigid examples of both sorts of words. Words like 'red' can be extremely loose, without becoming to the least degree evaluative, and expressions like good sewage efficient can be the subject of very rigid criteria, without in the least ceasing to be evaluative.

The descriptive meaning of 'good' is secondary to the evaluative meaning. The evaluative meaning is constant for every class of object for which the word is used. When we call a motor car a theronometer or a book good, we are commending all of them. The knowledge of evaluative meaning of 'good' is very much ancient; but now we use it in new descriptive meanings, as the classes of objects whose virtues

we learn to distinguish grow more numerous. Sometimes we learn to use 'good' in a new descriptive meaning though being taught it by an expert in a particular field – for example, a horseman might teach me how to recognize a good hunter. Sometimes on the other hand, we make up a new descriptive meaning for ourselves. This happens when we start having a standard for a class of objects, certain members of which we have started needing to place in order of merit, but for which there has hitherto been no standard.

The second reason for calling the evaluative meaning primary is, that we can use the evaluative force of the word in order to change the descriptive meaning for any class of objects. This is what the moral reformer often does in morals, but the process occurs outside morals. It may happen that motor-cars will in the near future change considerably in design (e.g. by our seeking economy at the expense of size). It may be that then we shall cease giving the name 'a good motor-car' to a car that now would rightly and with the concurrence of all be allowed that name. How, linguistically speaking, would this have happened? At present, we are agreeing only a certain criteria sufficient enough for getting a mator-car a good one. If it so happens that cars have the quality sufficient enough to satisfy the criteria 'good' really happens, we may begin to say No cars of

the early century were far better, in fact, really good. Here we cannot be using 'good' with the same descriptive meaning as it is now generally used with, for some of the cars of 1964s (for instance Fiat) do indubitably have those characteristics which entitled them to the name 'good motor-car' in the 67's descriptive sense of that word. What is happening is that the evaluative meaning of the word is being used in order to shift the descriptive meaning, we are doing what would be called, if 'good' were a purely descriptive word, redefining, it. But we cannot call it that, for the evaluative meaning remains constant; we are rather altering the standard. This is similar to the process called by Stevenson 'Persuasive definition'[18] the process is not necessarily, however, highly coloured with emotion.

We may notice here that there are two chief ways in which in change in standard may be reflected in, and indeed partly effected by, a change in language. The first is the one which is illustrated in the paragraphs, above; the evaluative meaning of 'good' is retained and is used in order to alter the descriptive meaning and so establish a new standard. The second does not often occur with the word 'good'; for that word is so well established as a value word that the procedure would be practically impossible.

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18. Ethics and Language, Ch. ix.

This procedure is for the word to be gradually emptied of its evaluative meaning through being used more and more in Hare's conventional or 'inverted commas' way, when it has lost all its evaluative meaning it comes to be used as a purely descriptive word for designating certain characteristics of the object, and, when it is required to command or condemn objects in this class, some quite different value-word is imported for the purpose. Let us take Hare's example to eligible bachelor here and illustrates the point by the same. 'Eligible' started off as a value-word, meaning 'such as should be chosen as a husband for one's daughter'. Then, because the criteria of eligibility comes to be fairly rigid, it acquired a descriptive meaning too; a person, if said to be eligible might in the eighteenth century have been excepted to have a landed estates and perhaps a title. By the nineteenth century, however, the criteria of eligibility have changed, what makes bachelor eligible is no longer necessarily landed property or a title; it is substantial wealth of any kind provided that it is well secured. We might imagine a nineteenth century mother saying, I know he is not of noble birth, but he's eligible all the same, because he has ten thousand a month in the funds, and much, more besides when his father dies. This would be an example of the first method on the other hand, in the twentieth century, partly as a reaction from the over-rigid standards

of the nineteenth; which resulted in the world 'eligible' lapsing into a conventional use, the second method has been adopted. It now someone said, 'He is an eligible bachelor', we could almost feel the inverted commas round the word, and even the ironi: we should feel that if that was all that could be said if him, there must be something wrong with him. For commending bacherlors on the other hand, we now use quite different words: we say 'He is likely to make a very good husband for Jane', or she was very sensible to say 'yes'.

Although with 'good' the evaluative meaning is primary, there are other words in which the evaluative meaning is secondary to the descriptive. Such words are 'tidy' and 'industrious'. These two words are always used to commend. It is the descriptive meaning of these words that is most firmly attached to them; and therefore, although we must for certain purposes class them as value-words (for if we treat them as purely descriptive, logical errors result) they are so in a less full sense than 'good'.

Though the evaluative meaning of 'good' is primary, the secondary descriptive meaning is never wholly absent. Even when we are using the word 'good' evaluative in order to set up a new standard, the word still has a descriptive meaning, not in the sense that it is used to convey informa-

tion, but in the sense that its use is setting up the new standard is an essential preliminary – like definition in the case of a purely descriptive word – to its subsequent use with a new descriptive meaning. It is also to be noticed that the relative prominence of the descriptive and evaluative meanings of 'good' varies according to the class of objects within which commendation is being given. The logical phenomena is that 'good' normally has the both (descriptive and evaluative) meaning; it normally has sufficient of both sorts taken together to make it worth uttering and provided that the first two conditions are satisfied the amounts of the two sort meaning vary independently. There are, however, cases in which we use the word 'good' with no commendatory meaning at all. The first of such meanings (commendatory) has been called the inverted commas use.

There are only one of the many ways in which we use the word 'good'. A logician cannot do justice to the infinite subtlety of language, all he can do is to point out one of the main features of our use of a word, and thereby put people on their guards against the main dangers. A full understanding of the logic of value-terms can only be achieved by continual and sensitive attention to the way we use them.

Being concerned as we are, with the view that the

meaning of language is to be looked for in the use to which it is put, we now turn to the second type of ethical theory – prescriptivism. The foremost exponent of this theory is R.M. Hare. Hare's moral philosophy has some affinities with emotivism and this is the main reason why prescriptivism has found its way in my thesis as otherwise the thesis remains incomplete and meaningless.

There are three most important truths of moral judgements: (i) They are a kind of prescriptive judgements, (ii) They are distinguishable from other prescriptive judgements by being universalizable, (iii) There can be rational procedure in moral thinking and arguments because logical relations between prescriptive judgements are possible.

Supervenience = Value-words, i.e. words such as 'good', 'right', and 'ought' have, according to Hare, a 'supervenient character'. He arrived at this conclusion by reflecting upon certain features of their ordinary use. It is, for instance, always logically legitimate to ask for a reason when value judgements have been delivered.[19] Take these examples: 'This is a good book', 'This is the right road', you ought to pay your tailor's bill'. In every case it would be in order for the person so addressed to

19. Language of Morals, p. 176, 7RPP 36-37.

ask 'why?' And the answer to the question typically would be some naturalistic description of the thing concerned, e.g., 'The characters of this book are very funny'. This road will take us to our destination', 'your tailor made you a suit on the understanding that you would pay for it'. The justification, or ground, of goodness, rightness, or oughtness respectively lies in certain non-evaluative characteristics of the things or action being judged. To take another, closely related, feature, of the ordinary use of 'good', 'right', and 'ought', there is something which it is never logically legitimate to say.[20] You would puzzle your hearers if you said that two things A and B, are alike in every respect except A is good and B is not; or if you said that two action C and D, were exactly the same except that C was right, or obligatory, and D was not. They would insist that there must be some other difference to account for this one. But if you said, for instance, "This book is exactly like that one except that this has a red cover", no such insistence would be forthcoming. Differences in value have to be accounted for by differences of another kind as other sorts of difference do not.

Why then do value words have this supervenient character? Here rejected two ways of explaining it: those of

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20. Language of Morals, pp. 81, 153.

the ethical naturalist and the ethical intuitionist respectively. According to the naturalist, there are certain natural properties – call them P – which acts or states of affairs may have, such that the statement "X has P" entails "X is good" (or 'right' or 'obligatory'). This is so because 'having P' is what 'being good' means. We are all well acquainted with Moore's famous refutation of any such naturalistic theory. It is a mistake to suppose that 'good' means 'producing happiness' or whatever, because, in ordinary use, 'Is what produces happiness etc. 'good'?' is always an open question and "what produces happiness etc. is good' is never an insignificant tautology. Hare thinks that this argument of Moore's rests albeit insecurely, upon a secure foundation."[21] Hare goes along with Moore in the view that the relationship between value judgements and the naturalistic descriptions upon which they are supervenient is not one of entailment due to equivalence of meaning.

Neither – and here we come to the insecurity in Moore's view and the second account of supervenience which Hare rejects – is it an entailment apprehended by intuition. According to Moore, and more explicitly to Ross, the relationship between, for example, "giving aesthetic enjoying"

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21. Language of Morals, p. 83.

and "being good" or between "fulfilling a promise" and "being right", respectively, is a self-evident one of which all rational beings, as such, are aware. The natural properties are, to be sure logically distinct from the non-natural. The former statement in each of the pairs just quoted does not mean the same as the latter. Nevertheless, the former in each case entails the latter in the sense that if anything is describable as "giving aesthetic enjoyment" all rational beings as such will see that it is also describable as "being good", or if as "fulfilling a promise", also as "being right". This view – that words like 'good' and 'right' describe non-natural properties untuitively perceived to be entailed by natural ones – Hare finds just as unacceptable as the naturalists view that value judgements have the same meaning as certain naturalistic descriptions. The 'insecurity' which he detects in Moore's view is Moore's failure to perceive that value words, in their typical primary use, do not describe at all.

Whereas Moore and Ross had asked to what value-words refer, Hare asked what jobs they are used to do reflection upon their ordinary use convinced him that they "are used primarily for giving advice or instruction, or in general for guiding choice".[22] In a word, their use is prescriptive.

22. Ibid., p. 155.

Says Hare:

> Let us generatize, if 'P is a good picture' is held to mean the same as 'P is a picture and P is C' then it will become impossible to commend pictures for being C, it will be possible only to say that they are C. It is important to realize that this difficulty has nothing to do with the particular example that I have chosen. It is not because we have chosen the wrong defining characteristics; it is because, whatever defining charecteristics we chose, this objection arises, that we can no longer commend an object for possessing those characteristics.23

Given then the prescriptive character of value words, how does Hare account for their supervenience? He says that the reason for the latter is that value-words are used in order to teach or affirm, or otherwise draw attention to, standards, rules or principles for choosing between actions or states of affairs.[24] To find out how this explains it, we must anticipate the next section so far as to notice on further feature of the ordinary use of words like 'good', 'right' and 'ought'. We have already noted that logical legitimacy of asking why, for instance, a certain book is said to be good. Suppose the answer is "Because the characters in it are very funny'. Anyone who then wishes to refute the judgement that the book is good could – and typically would – challenge this reason for thinking it good by taking

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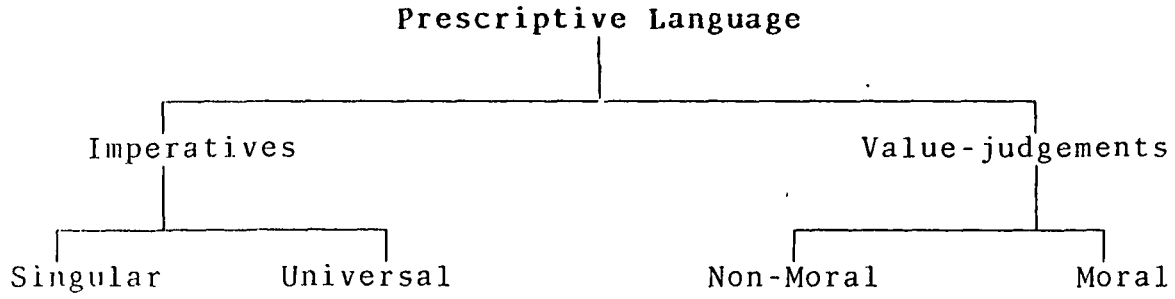
23. Ibid., p. 85.
24. Ibid., p. 159.

either of the two steps. He might dispute the factual claim that the characters in the book are amusing. Alternatively, he might have attention, to another book which also has amusing characters but which he hopes those with whom he is arguing would not consider a good book. In making this latter move, he would, be universalizing the reason which had been given. He would treat it as setting up a standard of goodness and challenge it accordingly. This shows us what constitutes the relationship of supervenience between 'This is a good book' and the characters in this book are very funny. Prescriptive Language: We must now book a little more closely at the notion of prescriptivity to see precisely what Hare meant by it. If we were to ask of a person "What are his moral principles?" The way in which we could be most sure of a true answer would be by studying what he did. He might, to be sure, profess in his conversation all sorts of principles, which in his actions he completely disregarded; but it would be when, knowing all the relevant facts of a situation, he was faced with choices or decisions between alternative course of action, between alternative answers, to the question 'what shall I do?' that he would reveal in what principles of conduct he really believed. The reason why actions are in a peculiar way revelatory of moral principles is that the functions of moral principles is to guide conduct. The language of morals is one sort

of prescriptive language. And this is what makes ethics worth studying: for the question "what shall I do?" is one that we cannot for long evade; the problems of conduct, though sometimes less diverting than crossword puzzles, have to be solved in a way that crossword puzzles do not. We cannot wait to see the solution in the next issue, because on the solution of the problems depends on what happens in the next issue. An old-fashioned, but still useful anything is per genus "prescriptive language". We shall most easily understand its nature if we compare and contrast first of all prescriptive language with other sorts of prescriptive language. That, in brief, is the what I intend to do. Our first dealings shall be with the simplest form of prescriptive language, the ordinary imperative sentence. The logical behaviour of this type of sentences is of great interest to the student of moral language because, in spite of its comparative simplicity, it raises in an easily discernible form many of the problems which have beset ethical theory. Therefore, although it is no part of my purpose to 'reduce' moral languages to imperatives, the study of imperatives is by for the best introduction to the study of ethics; and if the reader does not at once see the relevance to ethics of the earlier part of the discussion. I must ask khim to be patient neglect of the principles enunciated in the first part of this book is the source of many of the most insidious confusion in ethics.

The prescriptive language more nearly related to the language of morals than is the simple imperative, is the language of non-moral value-judgements — all those sentences containing words like 'ought', 'right' and 'good' which are not moral judgements.

The classification of prescriptive language is as follows:



This classification is rough only; it will be made more precise in the course of the discussion; for example, it will be seen that the so-called 'universal imperatives' of ordinary language are not proper universal. Nor is the classification exhaustive; there are, for example, many different kings of singular imperatives, and of non-moral value-judgements; and these are other kinds of imperatives besides singular and universal. But the classification is good enough to begin with, and explains the plan of the discussion.

The writers of elementary grammar books sometimes

classify sentences according as they express statements, commands, or questions. This classification is not exhaustive or rigorous enough for the logicians. For example, logicians have denoted much labour to showing that sentences in the indicative mood may be of various logical characters, and that the classification of them all under the one name 'statements' may lead to serious error if it makes us ignore the important differences between them.

Imperatives likewise, are a mixed bunch. Even if we exclude sentences like "would I were in Pakistan!" which are dealt with by some grammarian in the same division of their books as imperatives, we still have, among sentences that are in the imperative mood proper, many different kinds of utterances. We have military orders (parade ground and otherwise) architects specifications, instructions for cooking ommelets or operating vacuum cleaners, pieces of advice requests, entreaties, and countless other sorts of sentence, many of whose functions shade into one another. The distinction between these various kinds of sentences would provide a nice logician with material for many articles in the philosophical periodicals; but in a work of this character it is necessary to be bold. I shall therefore follow the grammarians and use the single term 'command' to cover all these sorts of things that sentences in the imperative mood express,

and within the class of commands make only some very broad distinctions. The justification for this procedure is that I hope to interest the reader in features that are common to all, or nearly all, these types of sentences;; with their differences he is no doubt familiar enough. For the same reason I shall use the word 'statements' to cover whatever is expressed by typical indicative sentences, if there be such. I shall be drawing a contrast, that is to say, between sentences like 'shut the door' and sentences like 'you are going to shut the door'.

It is difficult to deny that there is a difference between statements and commands; but it is for harder to say just what the difference is. It is not merely one of grammatical form, for if we had to study a newly discovered language we should be able to identify those grammatical forms which were used for expressing statements and commands respectively, and should call these forms 'indicative' and 'imperative' (if language were constructed in such a way as to make this distinction useful). The distinction lies between the meanings which the different grammatical forms convey. Both are used for talking about a subject-matter, but they are used for talking about it in different ways. The two sentences 'you are going to shut the door' and 'shut the door' are both about your shutting the door in the imme-

diate future, but what they say about it is quite different. An indicative sentence is used for telling someone that something is the case, an imperative is not – it is used for telling someone to make something the case.

A.J. Ayer, in the course of expounding the most valuable researches into the logical nature of moral judgements, to make incidental remakrs which have raised needless storms of protest.[25] The substance of Ayer's theory is that moral judgements do not function ordinarily in the same way as the class of indication sentences marked out by his verification criterion. But by his way of stating his view, and his assimilation of moral judgements to other (quite distinct) type of sentences which are also marked off from typical indicatives by this criterion, he stirred up dust which has not yet done. All this might be closely paralleled by a similar treatment of imperatives and it seems that writers of the same general line of thought as Ayer would have said the same sort of thing about imperatives as they did about moral judgements. Suppose that we recognize the obvious fact that imperatives are not like typical indicatives. Suppose, further, that we regard only typical indicates as above suspicion. It will be natural then to say 'Imperatives do not state anything, they only express wishes'.

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25. See A.J. Ayer's Article, "Imperative Sentences", Mind, viii (1949) 21, from which some materials are used here.

Now to say that imperatives express wishes is, like the first theory which we considered, unexceptionals on the colloquial place; we would indeed say, if some one said 'keep my name out of this', 'that he had expressed a wish to have his name kept out it. But nevertheless the extreme ambiguity of the word 'express' may generate philosophical confusion. We speak of expressing statements opinions, beliefs, mathematical relations, and so on; and if it is also used in ways which are unlike these; and Ayer's use (in speaking of moral judgement) of the word 'evince' as its rough synonym was dangerous. Artists and composers and poets are said to express their own and our feelings; oaths are said to express anger; and dancing upon the table may express joy. Thus to say that imperatives express wishes may lead the unwary to suppose that what happens when we use one, is this we have willing up inside us a kind of longing, to which, when the pressure gets too great for us to bear, we give vent by saying an imperative sentence. Such an interpretation when applied to such sentences as 'supply and fit to door mortise dead latch and plastic knob furniture; in unplausible. And it would seem that value judgements also may fail to satisfy the verification criterion, and indeed be in some sense, like imperatives, prescriptive without having this sort of things said about them. It is perfectly unexceptionable, on the colloquial plane, to say

that the sentence 'A is good' is used to express approval of A (The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary says: "Approve to pronounce to be good"), but it is philosophically misleading if we think that the approval which is expressed is a peculiar warm feeling inside us, if the Ministry of local Government expresses approval of my town plan by getting his underlying to write to me saying 'The Minister approves of your plan' or 'The Minister thinks that your plan is the best one', I shall in no circumstances confirm the letter by getting a private detective to observe the Minister for signs of emotion. In this case, to have such a letter sent is to approve.

The role of attitudes in this theory of prescriptivity is similar to the emotive. This is where they seem to be brothers of same blood. Emotivism also agrees with this theory that it is possible to construct a theory about universal imperative sentences. If someone said 'never hit a man when he is down', it would be natural to say that he had expressed a certain attitude towards such a conduct. What do emotive words do? They too, express attitudes. Emotivism has this famous saying – I approve of do so as well. Similarly, we find that though attitudes are difficult to define exactly, yet it is no more than what moral approval are. It is your attitude towards something good or bad.

Approval is no more than attitudes of affirmation or negation. To maintain an attitude of 'moral approval' towards a certain practice is to have a disposition to think, on the appropriate occasions, that it is right; or, if 'think' itself is a dispositional word, it is imply to think that it is right; and our thinking that it is right may be betrayed or exhibited – behaviourists would say constituted – by our acting in certain ways (above all, doing acts of the sort in question. When the occasion arises; next, saying that they are right; applauding them in other ways, and so on). But there is in all this nothing to explain just what one thinks when one thinks that a certain sort of act is right. Similarly, if we say that 'Never hit a man when he is down'. Expressed an attitude that one should not hit etc. (or an attitude of aversion from hitting or a 'contra-attitude' towards hitting), we should not have said anything that would be intelligible to someone who did not understand the sentence which we were trying to explain.

Sentences containing the word 'approve' are so difficult of analysis that it seems perverse to use this notion to explain the meaning of moral judgements which we learn to make years before we learn the word 'approve', and similarly, it would be perverse to explain the meaning of the imperative mood in terms of wishing or any other feeling

or attitude; for we learn how to respond to and use commands long before we learn the comparative complex notions of 'wish', 'desire', 'aversion' etc.

R. Carnap writes: But actually a value-statement is nothing else than a command in a misleading grammatical form. It may have effects upon the action of men and these effects may either be in accordance with our wishes or not; but it is neither true nor false[26] and Ayer writes,

> Ethical terms do not serve only to express feeling. They are calculated also to arouse feelings and so to stimulate action indeed some of them are used in such a way as to give the sentences in which they occur the effect of commands.27

More recently this sort of view has been elaborated by Stevenson.[28] Here again, we have a type of theory which may be on the colloquial plane harmless, but which suggests philosophical errors by seeming to assimilate the process of using a command or a moral judgement to other processes which are in fact markedly dissimilar.

Function of command is to affect the hearer causally, or get him to do something, and to say this may be misleading. In ordinary parlance there is no harm in saying that in using a command our intention is to get someone to do some-

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26. Philosophy and Logical Syntax, p. 24.
27. Language, Truth and Logic, 2nd ed. p.
28. Ibid., p. 21.

thing, and getting him to do it, are quite distinct logically, from each other.[29] The distinction may be elucidated by considering a parallel one in the case of statements. To tell someone that something is the case is logically distinct from getting (or trying to get) him to believe it. Having told that someone that something is the case we may, if he is not disposed to believe what we say, start on a quite different process of trying to get him to believe it (trying to persuade or convince him that what we have said is true). No one, in seeking to explain the function of indicative sentences, would say that they were attempts to persuade someone that something is the case. And there is no more reason for saying that commands are attempts to persuade or get someone to do something; here too, we first tell someone what he is to do, and then, if he is not disposed to do what we say, we may start on the wholly different process of trying to get him to do it. Thus the instruction already quoted, 'Supply and fit to door mortise dead latch and plastic knob furniture' is not intended to galvanize joiners into activity, for such a purpose other means are employed.

This distinction is of vital importance to moral philosophy; for in the fact the suggestion, that the function

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29. For a fuller treatment of this question: See Hare's artile, "Freedom of the Well", Aristotelian society supplementary Vol. xxv (1951), 201, from which I have used some material here.

of moral judgements was to persuade, lead to a difficulty in distinguishing their functions from that of propaganda.[30] Since I am going to draw attention to some similarities between commands and moral judgements and to classify them both as prescriptions, I require most emphatically to dissociate myself from the confusion of either of these things with propaganda. We have here, as often in philosophy, a mixture of two distinctions. The first is that between the language of statements and prescriptive language. The second is that between telling someone something and getting him to believe or do what one has told him. That these two distinctions are quite different, and overlap each other, should be clear after a moment's consideration. For we may tell someone, either that something is the case, or to do something; here there is no attempt at persuasion (or influencing or inducing or getting to). If the person is not disposed to assent to what we tell him, we may then resort to rhetoric propaganda, marshalling of additional facts, psychological tricks, threats, bribes, torture, mockery, promises of protection, and a variety of other expedients. All of these are ways of inducing him or getting him to do something, the first four are also way of getting him to believe something, none of them are ways of telling him something; though

30. C.L. Stevenson, Ethics and Language, Ch. xi.

those of them which involve the employment of language may include telling him all sorts of things. Regarded as inducements or expedients for persuasion, their success is judged solely by their effects – by whether the person believes or does what are we are trying to get him to believe or do. It does not matter whether the means used to persuade him are fair or foul, so long as they do persuade him. And therefore, the natural reaction to the realization that someone is trying to persuade us is 'He's trying to get at me; I must be on my guard; I mustn't let him said my decision unfairly; I must be careful to make up my own mind in the matter and remains a free responsible agent. Such a reaction to moral judgement should not be encouraged by philosophers. On the other hand, these are not natural reactions either to someone's telling us that something is the case, or to his telling us to do something (for example, to fit a latch to the door). Telling someon to do something or that something is the case, is answering the question 'what shall I do?' or 'what are the facts?' When we have answered these questions the hearer knows what to do or what the facts are – if what we have told him is right. He is not necessarily thereby influenced on way or the other, nor have we failed if he is not; for he may decide to disbelieve or disobey us, and the mere telling him does nothing – and seeks to do nothing – to prevent him doing this. But

persuasion is not directed to a person as a rational agent, who is asking himself (or us). What shall I do? It is not an answer to this or to any other question; it is an attempt to make him answer it in a particular way.

It is easy to see, therefore, why the so-called 'imperative theory' of moral judgements raised the protests that it did. Because based on a misconception of the function, not only of moral judgements but also of the commands to which they were being assimilated, it seemed to impugn the rationality of moral discourse.

In this chapter, I have discussed Logical Positivism vis-a-vis Emotivism. It must be noted that though all the logical positivists are analysts, all analysts are not logical positivists. Logical positivism is a very powerful movement which had a theraputic effect on philosophy in general. It tries to determine a type of questions that should be raised in philosophy and the type of questions that should not be asked in philosophy. Many philosophers are of the opinion that Logical Positivism has died a natural death. But, I am of the view that it is still alive and that it is very much for us philosophers to learn and re-learn certain lessons from it.

Logical positivism rejects metaphysics. It holds

view that metaphysical statements do not assert anything higher or more fundamental than science. In fact, it goes to the extent of claiming that metaphysical statements do not assert anything at all. Because they think that there are neither true nor false, thus meaningless. Logical positivism not only consider the metaphysical statements meaningless but also religious statements, ethical statements and aesthetic statements as meaningless.

Some of the well known positivists are Schlich, Carnap, Neurath, A.J. Ayer and Waismann. Ayer's Logic, Truth and Language is considered to be the manifesto of logical positivism in English. Logical positivism is not a philosophy or philosophical system as understood in the conventional sense. It is a logico-linguistic approach to natural and social sciences. It is an attitude rather than a creed, a method rather than a dogma. It is very much technically conscious and action-minded. It may be said that logical positivism is interested in the promotion of knowledge through promotion of communication.

The logical positivists attempted to define their formulations in order to make their concepts rigorous so much so that they finally discovered that some of their notions were unworkable. Moreover, they seem to end up in a paradoxical situation, which is as follows – the logical

positivists reject metaphysics but they have their own metaphysics. The logical positivists work with the dichotomy between verifiable and scientific and hence meaningful and unverifiable and unscientific and hence meaningless.

Moral judgements in general are concerned with what is right or wrong, good or evil. Since they are judgements of value they are concerned with what people ought to do. According to the logical positivists, only significant statements are synthetic and analytic statements. They point out that moral judgements are neither synthetic nor analysis. Therefore, they come to conclusion that moral judgements are meaningless. They talk of two kinds of meanings namely, emotive meaning and cognitive meaning. Logical positivists are convinced that moral judgements are bereft of any cognitive meaning.

I have discussed Descriptivism and Prescriptivism; judgement is descriptive if in it the predicate or predicates are descriptive terms and the mood is indicative on the other hand, prescriptiveness claims that moral judgements prescribe primarily and describe only secondarily.

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