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A VINDICATION OF MORAL LAW
AS THE FOUNDATION OF ETHICS.

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PREFACE.

Any enquiry into Ethics must presuppose at least three very important and possibly awkward assumptions, awkward from the point of view of the methodological and even metaphysical problems raised. It must presuppose that it enquires into something, that what it enquires into has a certain definite and circumscribed meaning of its own and that this meaning though not necessarily definable in exact terms is describable and communicable.

The first assumption expanded postulates that in the course of our general experience we come upon certain particulars which may be termed moral experience. That is, some judgments (which at least at first blush and prior to any further analysis which might reduce them to other categories) appear to be specifically moral are in fact and habitually pronounced by men. The prototype of these judgments are propositions of the type: "this is good", "this is right", "this is bad", "this is wrong".

The second assumption demands that these propositions are not meaningless, that in pronouncing "this is right", "this is good" men do refer to and try to imply something. The exact nature of this something and its degree of reality and objectivity are not defined by the assumption.

The third assumption demands that such judgments besides referring to something be communicable. That is, that one man may understand in the most general way what another man wishes to signify when pronouncing "this is good", "this is right", whether he agree to it or not, whether

assumption have been employed, it was used unconsciously and the validity of the argument will be affected accordingly.

he take this judgment to imply the same principles, and whatever his justification of or opposition to such judgments may be.

In spite of these qualifications it might appear that too much has been assumed to begin with, since, when more fully expounded, the three presuppositions may be seen to comprise the whole of Ethics: determine its subject matter, define its laws and provide the grounds of its validity. On the other hand it seems to me that no Ethical enquiry would be possible at all unless these three assumptions were made. For if there were nothing for us to examine, we would not come up against moral judgments at all; if they defined nothing, we should not know that they were moral judgments; and if their reference were not understood at least in a general way and in principle by other men, how could we talk about them at all, let alone enquire into their nature?

So that these three suppositions appear to form a sort of irreducible minimum of hypothesis which any enquiry into ethics has to assume in order to be possible at all. Again, though these three suppositions are made and used without proof, some subsequent discussion on their meaning and implication may possibly be of help in clarifying their nature, the extent of their import and the manner of their validity. It may also furnish us with some reasons and grounds for their vindication in retrospect.

I shall try not to make use of any other unproved assumption beyond these three and what may be directly inferred from them as a basis for the argument in this paper. Should any other fundamental and additional assumption have been employed, it was used unconsciously and the validity of the argument will be affected accordingly.

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1) This part of the Thesis has been published in Mind, in July 1943, pages 322-349, under the title: "Some arguments against G. E. Moore's view of the function of 'good' in Ethics." A few later interpolations into the text are marked at their proper place.

2) Edition of 1903; p.viii, lines 4, 5.

PART I.

ATTEMPT TO CLARIFY THE NATURE OF "GOOD" AND THE
FUNCTION OF "VALUE" IN ETHICS.

primacy, is given to the first query over the second. So much so that
the answer Some reflections on the nature of 'good'. solution to our
eth. The concept referred to by the word 'good' is too general in
denotative and too vague in conotative power, to be considered
sufficiently reliable as a basis for the assessment and delimitation of
ethical subject-matter or as a ground for the pronouncement of moral
judgments. To prove this first contention, i.e. the doubtful trust-
worthiness of 'good' in its double function: a) of an indicative and
determinant element of ethical subject-matter, and b) of a principle of
evaluation of moral judgments, I shall examine a very famous and
impressive Ethical theory in which 'good' has been made to perform both
these tasks: G. E. Moore's "Principia Ethica".¹⁾

In the preface to Principia Ethica²⁾ Moore divides the possible aims
of Ethics into two main trends. The one seeks an answer to the question:
"What kind of things ought to exist for their own sake?"; the other to
the query: "What kinds of actions ought we to perform?" For various
reasons, which shall be examined in detail as they are of paramount
importance for the general intent of Moore's ethical thought, absolute
be their subject. Therefore Ethics is undoubtedly concerned with the

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primacy is given to the first query over the second. So much so that the answer to the former is regarded by Moore as the solution to our ethical problems, the answer to the latter following almost automatically and as a corollary from the material constitution of the answer to the first.

As all answers to the first question are commonly (and very roughly) qualified by the attribute 'good', whilst those to the second are as commonly (and as roughly) qualified by the attribute 'right', Moore makes his stand on this matter even more explicit, by defining "right" as "good-as-a-means". Whether this attitude is warranted by the facts of moral experience, or by stringent reasoning from these facts, will be our first preoccupation.

In compliance with the demands of all methodical enquiry into Ethics, Moore starts his analysis with the initial datum of all such enquiries; the existence de facto of the act of moral judgement. In our experience, he says, we cannot but come across such sentences as "This is good", "This is bad", etc. Most of these assertions are obviously concerned with human conduct even where human conduct is not explicitly stated to be their subject. Therefore Ethics is undoubtedly concerned with the question of what good conduct is. But, Moore continues, good conduct (which we must remember is more closely and immediately associated with query number two: "What kind of actions ought we to perform?" than with query number one) is a complex notion. It contains the notion of "good" as well as the notion of "conduct". For (a) Conduct may be good, bad or indifferent, and (b) Other things besides conduct may be good. Hence

all ethical enquiry, whose preoccupation is after all with "good" and "bad" (which are its own specific and constitutive notions) rather than with conduct, cannot limit itself into an analysis of the judgment of conduct. For, since "good denotes a property that is common to conduct and other things"¹⁾ we might mistake the nature of this property by limiting our enquiry to one instance only (namely good conduct) of all possible good things. Thus we might take for the general nature of "good" something specific to conduct, and not shared by all those other things which might be called good. Moreover, by thus failing to grasp the nature of good in general, we are certain to mistake the nature of its particular: good conduct.

Therefore the first task of Ethics is to investigate the nature of "good" in general. This once grasped, the nature of "good conduct" will automatically follow from it, as a corollary, important only in as much as it might furnish the means of attainment of "THE GOOD". By this argument Moore takes the primacy of query number one over query number two to be established irrevocably. Almost as a matter of logical consequence, the task of Ethics is pronounced to consist in the determination and enunciation of the nature of "the Good" to which we must all aspire, rather than in the discovery and enunciation of a supreme law, to be followed and realised in our conduct.

"The peculiarity of Ethics is not that it investigates assertions about human conduct but that it investigates that property of things

1) P.2, 1.7, a. f.

which is denoted by the term good and the converse property denoted by the term bad. It must in order to establish its conclusions investigate the truth of all such assertions except those which assert the relation of this property only to a single existent".¹⁾

Another assertion of Moore's that ought to be mentioned at this point occurs in the preface, p.viii, 1.6, and runs "..... exactly what it is that we ask about a thing when we ask whether it ought to exist for its own sake, is good, or has intrinsic value".

At this point, several questions may be raised:-

- (A) Whether the contention that, other things besides conduct may be good, is true? If so:-
- (a) Does this imply that all instances of the application of good have but one meaning: not in the sense of derivative or primary meaning, but in the sense that they all possess moral significance?
- (b) If all instances of the application of "good" are not ipso facto possessed of moral significance, what exactly can their meaning be, and in what relation do they stand to the specifically moral meaning of "good"?
- (B) Whether the contention that, the property, commonly denoted by "good" comes under the jurisdiction of Ethics, in all its applications, is true, and whether its truth necessarily follows from the affirmation of (A)?

1) P.36 & 23, 1.2.

Explanation: The property "good" as it appears in the complex notion "good conduct", possesses a specifically "moral" meaning, which is drawn either from its intrinsic nature, or from its conjunction with a certain subject, namely human conduct, i.e. conduct which is motivated, willed, intended, and, at least for our purposes under the control of a free and intelligent agent. I suggest that the moral significance of "good" in the complex notion "good conduct" is based on the later part (conduct) rather than on the former (good). For "conduct" even when lacking all further qualification but that of being the motivated conduct of a free and rational agent, preserves still some moral connotation, whereas for "good" this is an open question. To illustrate this point: the moral significance of statements like: "Art is good", "Modern sanitary installations are good", is by no means self-evident, unless we are carried away by the mere similarity of expression. In some cases, as for example in "a good hiding", "a good road", etc., this lack of obvious and self-evident moral implications is even more evident. On the other hand, these statements are not devoid of sense, nor do they give the impression of being merely examples of the misuse of the property "good". Good, we might therefore conclude tentatively for the moment may be employed to qualify other things besides conduct. But in what sense, whether moral or otherwise, it is so employed must for the moment remain an open question.

In any case, even granted that (A) is true, it is premature to conclude from this one premiss, as Moore does, that (B) is true (i.e. to conclude from the fact that other things besides conduct may be good,

that all such applications of good fall necessarily under the jurisdiction of Ethics). Indeed, it seems to me that (B) does not follow from (A) at all, as Moore would have it, but rather from (a). That is, only if it be proven that all applications of the property "good" ipso nomine convey an ethical significance, in other words, that all applications of good have but one meaning and that meaning ethical, the contention that all applications of the property "good" fall under the jurisdiction of Ethics, will be true by implication. That is, Moore's contention that the preoccupation of Ethics is with "good" and "bad" rather than with conduct will be justified. But as (a) seems at present to be a tacit and even unconscious assumption, rather than a sufficiently proven assertion, and as it is not self-evident enough to be accepted without proof, (a) seems hardly a strong enough basis for an edifice as vast as the Principia Ethica.

Moreover, the question seems precluded already in the sentence quoted above from the preface, where for all purposes what ought to exist for its own sake, is identified with intrinsic value and also with what is good in itself.

Now this is by no means necessarily or even generally true, unless we take nothing to have intrinsic value except moral goodness. But this is obviously not what Moore means, whose general striving is to widen the boundaries of Ethics rather than to annihilate the domain of Aesthetics. As an explanation let us take "the Beautiful" as an example of a thing possessed of intrinsic value. Is "the Beautiful" always and a priori identical with the good? Or again, if we agree to say that "The

beautiful having intrinsic value is always good" - is "good" in this sense always and a priori identical with the good in the moral sense which is the predicate of human conduct? Suppose we had two instances of indiscriminate and unmotivated bombing. In one instance the old stained glass windows of a fourteenth-century church were destroyed. In the second case a house full of the most worthless possible of human beings, say incurable criminal lunatics. Which would be the morally worse action? And which action would diminish the sum total of intrinsic value existent in the world to a greater degree? Does not the fact that these two questions are not identical, that indeed the answers to them are of necessity opposite, prove that intrinsic value and moral goodness are not necessarily one and the same thing? That they might even clash with each other in their respective appeal and attraction for us?

Now, the special and specific preoccupation of Ethics it seems to me should be with moral goodness rather than with the beautiful, which after all comes mainly under the jurisdiction of Aesthetics. Granted even that moral goodness and the beautiful have this in common, that they both possess intrinsic value (the problem of intrinsic value is far too complicated and controversial to be pursued here) does this entitle the science of ethics to extend its boundaries in order to include all the domains of intrinsic value and incorporate them into its own system? Would this not bring about a blurring of the specific mission and character of Ethics, an insensitivity to its particular principles? Should we not, on the contrary, try to define the unique quality of Ethics as clearly as possible, and draw its boundaries as sharply as

possible? In short, is it not rather the task of Ethics to uphold the moral claims and safeguard itself against encroaching influences of kindred domains, rather than to seek to absorb these domains and lose its own soul?

* * * * *

However, before we can satisfactorily answer the question whether "good" holds moral significance in all its applications, we must discuss the notion of good as presented by Moore. We have seen that the question which Moore regards as the main aim of Ethics: "What kind of things ought to exist for their own sake?" may according to his assumptions be simplified to the question: "What is good?" There are, says Moore, three possible answers to this question: (a) particular answers of the form "This painting is good"; (b) general answers of the form "Books are good", "Pleasure is good"; and (c) definitions as when we say "Pleasure is good", not like in (b) meaning that pleasure is one of many possible good things, or even that pleasure alone is a good thing, i.e. $p \subset g$ or p is comprised in g , but meaning that $p \simeq g$, pleasure is identical with good and good with pleasure. The particular answers, Moore argues, are of no interest to this enquiry. The definition is useless since "good" taken as a predicate is a simple unique and undefinable notion in the sense in which yellow is undefinable. The general answers are our clue to a possible definition of what "the good" (taken as a substantive, an embracing whole of many and variegated parts) might be. Hence our main task should be to examine all such general answers, and sound them as to the truth of their contention. In Moore's case this meant a survey of

such schools of thought as Hedonism, Utilitarianism, Evolutionism and the Ethics of H. Sidgwick. During this examination their solutions should be stripped of the pretension of being definitions of "good". They should be subjected to a rigorous examination as to the truth of their contention, and when once found true, these various answers should be incorporated into the final idea of the good as its constitutive parts.

Here, too, several points may be raised in argument:-

- (A) Is it really impossible to define "good"?
- (B) What justification is there for the assumption of the existence of such a comprehensive whole as "the good", whether it be defined as an organic unity or not?

(A) In so far as "good" denotes a certain simple and unique property of things it cannot be defined in the sense that it is irreplaceable by another term, or by a string of terms, or by an enumeration of its constituent parts, i.e. a descriptive definition of the term is not possible. But, on the other hand, a definition in use, in the sense in which x is defined in the equation

$$2\underline{x} + 3\underline{y} + 6\underline{z} + 13 = 0 \qquad \begin{array}{l} \underline{y} = \underline{a} \\ \underline{z} = \underline{b} \end{array}$$

might be possible. For example "yellow" though indefinable in itself, might be defined as "that colour which corresponds to the wavelength ξ "; or alternatively as "that colour which occupies the intermediate place between red and green". This admittedly does not give us an accurate description of what the term contains but furnishes us with a workable means of determining the position of this term in our general system of

always approved of bad we disapprove. There seems to be a certain knowledge. Indeed, in many cases where the property is simple and unique and its content grasped immediately and directly either by the senses or by intuition, it is found useful in scientific investigations to ignore this and deal but with its definition in usu. Thus though the significance of, say, the ordinal number 2 is grasped intuitively, analytical arithmetics finds it useful to define 2 as the immediate successor of 1, or the immediate predecessor of 3. Now a certain definition of good may be attempted on the same lines. "Good", we might say, "is the opposite of bad." This is not so trivial as it might seem. For although our intuitive concept of good may vary considerably from one age to another, from one country to another, from one social class to another, from one individual to another, and even in the same individual from one time to another, one thing remains stable throughout these changes: its relation to "bad". In other words, of good whatever we might mean by it, i.e. whatever its material content, we must have grounds and reasons for this approval, that it be not a blind inarticulate sentiment, but a consciously and coherently argued stand: In this way a certain objectivity is gained, inasmuch as these grounds and reasons, this coherent and conscious argument is communicable. In no way has there been accused, that its communicability involves the power of conviction, or assures the similarity and identification of the different contents of approval. On the contrary, the very difference of those contents, the dissimilarity, even the relativity of what is approved, brings out more clearly the constancy of the structure of the act of approval, the identity of relation, the absolute nature of the function. As to the subjective feeling of approval, it might be described as a more evolved rationalised feeling, including both feelings of admiration and satisfaction in a pleasurable way, a warm feeling that might reach the pitch of enthusiasm but does not usually do so. This feeling whatever its qualifications does not enter into the consideration of the formal implications of functions of approval at all, and an analytical examination of all that it entails will be of interest only in connection with the question of how the human will can be influenced and activated by judgments of approval.

always approve; of bad we disapprove.¹⁾ There seems to be a certain reflexive relation between "good" and "approval", which exists of necessity - and in all cases. They correspond to each other as "yellow" corresponds to the "wavelength ξ ". Hence for our purpose we might define "good" as that property of a thing which calls forth our approval of that thing. To avoid misunderstanding it should be stated that by the use of the term "calls forth" we do not mean to imply any causal relation between good (as the cause) and approval (as the effect). We could have defined good with the same justification as that predicate of a thing which expresses our approval of that thing, in which case "approval" would have appeared to be the cause and "good" the effect.

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- 1) I venture to state this correlation without further analysis since in my argument I shall make use of the methodical function of approval only. There is no call made on the feeling of approval, the genesis and nature of this feeling or the respective subjectivity or generality of it. Nor is there any appeal made to the actual material contents of the objects of approval. The only qualification made is that there be grounds and reasons for this approval, that it be not a blind inarticulate sentiment, but a consciously and coherently argued stand. In this way a certain objectivity is gained, inasmuch as these grounds and reasons, this coherent and conscious argument is communicable. In no way has there been assumed, that its communicability involves the power of conviction, or assures the similarity and identification of the different contents of approval. On the contrary, the very difference of these contents, the dissimilarity, even the relativity of what is approved, brings out more clearly the constancy of the structure of the act of approval, the identity of relation, the absolute nature of the function. As to the subjective feeling of approval, it might be described as a more evolved rationalised feeling, including both feelings of admiration and satisfaction in a pleasurable way, a warm feeling that might reach the pitch of enthusiasm but does not usually do so. This feeling whatever its qualifications does not enter into the consideration of the formal implications of functions of approval at all, and an analytical examination of all that it entails will be of interest only in connection with the question of how the human will can be influenced and activated by judgements of approval.

But even as "yellow" can be said to be neither the cause of "ξ" nor "ξ" the cause of "yellow", so neither is good the cause of approval, nor approval the cause of good, but each corresponds to the other in a certain reflexive relation. Again, as for many scientific analyses it is more useful and more fruitful to examine the relations and implications of the wavelength ξ, than those of "yellow", so it might be more useful and fruitful in our enquiry to examine the implications and relations of "approval" than those of "good". Before we go any further there are two points which need clarification: (a) What exactly do we mean by "approval"? (b) What are the reasons which might be adduced in justification for our reducing the enquiry into the nature of good to an enquiry into the implications of approval?

(a) To approve of something is to think it desirable (in the sense that it should be desired, not in the sense that it is desired) in view of a certain object or end, or to think it suitable and fitting to certain preconceived principles or criteria.

This definition seems at first sight to call forth a series ad infinitum, since obviously before we approve of anything we must first approve of the object or end for which it is deemed desirable, and before we approve of those objects or ends we must approve of other objects and ends in view of which the former seem desirable, etc. If we want to avoid this, we must assume that there are things we approve of in themselves, without reference to any ulterior object. But in this case our approval will be based on certain principles which we hold to be true, or on certain criteria which we bring to bear on the respective object or end.

These criteria and principles, which we have termed "preconceived" open up the vista of yet another infinite series. For obviously before we examine whether a thing fits certain criteria and principles, we must first examine these criteria and principles in their own right, in view of higher criteria and principles, and those again, and so on, ad infinitum. But this is not necessarily so. For in our investigation we might come upon a concept that is primary and self-evident, or which cannot be reduced to other concepts, and must either be accepted or rejected intuitively. That there is such a primary concept in Ethics, which is not identical with good, and therefore not dependent on approval I shall try to prove in another connexion. For the moment I should like to point out tentatively that not all the criteria and principles upon which approval is based are necessarily of a moral character, and that by examining the nature of these criteria it might be possible to prove that not all instances of the attribute good necessarily represent instances of moral judgement.

(b) The reasons, then, for reducing the enquiry into the nature of "good" to an enquiry into the nature of "approval" will be:-

(α) That by this reduction the appearance of the attribute "good" in an assertion will be seen to be insufficient to establish this assertion as a moral judgement.

(β) That by this reduction the existence of absolute values independent of our reaction to them will be seen to be by no means so stringently and conclusively and rigorously proven as it would appear to Moore by taking such statements

as "This picture is good but I do not like it" at their face value.

(γ) That even the existence of values, whether absolute or not, will not have an automatic bearing on Ethics, since it will be seen that all values, even absolute values, are not necessarily moral values.

(B) That therefore as a corollary to α , β and γ , no reasonable purpose of Ethics will be served by an enumeration of all things (whether in particular, general, or definition-like statements is of no importance here) that have been or are pronounced good. Nor would an examination of them in the light of what we ourselves hold to be good serve such a purpose. Nor would it make any difference if we should find a common denominator and term it the highest good; or if we should combine several of those things on an equal footing and call it an organic whole, a process which, by the way, might yield many different and variegated patterns of the "good life"....

(α) Let us examine such diverse statements as: "a good painting", "good roads", "a good hiding", "a good slaughter", "a good time", "good conduct", "pleasure is good", "art is good", "virtue is good", "justice is good". On the assumption that wherever terms like "good" and "bad" appear moral judgement is given, these statements by including the term "good" have a spurious appearance of being moral judgements. That this appearance is spurious and entirely based on the external uniformity of the attribute good will be seen upon closer inspection.

What do we mean by calling a painting good? Obviously that this particular painting calls forth a feeling of approval in us. This approval is easily seen to be based on the fact that we consider the painting, or that the painting strikes us as having artistic merit for one reason or another. (I have used both the term "we consider" as well as the term "strikes us" to emphasise the rational-reflective as well as the spontaneous-reaction elements that enter into the composition of "approval".) Our approval of the painting is an instance of aesthetic judgment based upon certain aesthetic principles which we hold to be valid, as well as on a certain direct appeal that the painting in question exercises over our aesthetic susceptibility. This direct appeal is in most cases expressed by the term "beautiful". Even a moral action can be called beautiful, when considered only in so far as it appeals directly to our emotional susceptibilities. Alexander in his book, Beauty and other forms of Value, analyses the concept of beauty even further, and states that "nothing is beautiful, whether in itself attractive or unattractive, save in so far as it is aesthetically good, or aesthetically right".¹⁾ So that even that direct appeal to our susceptibility in order to be effective must accord with certain principles and criteria which render it (aesthetically) right. By calling a painting not only beautiful but good, we generally wish to emphasise that it so conforms to certain aesthetic criteria which we regard as having undoubted validity, as to make that painting worthy of our well-considered approval over and above any direct appeal it may have.

1) P.165.

However we might regard such complex problems as those of the objective and general validity of aesthetic criteria and the admixture of subjective and objective elements in aesthetic judgments, one thing is quite clear: In no way did any moral considerations enter into the process. We neither consider whether the picture will make us morally better men (which is not the same as an aesthetically enriched one), nor if it will have any beneficent effect on the standard of public health, or foster a social revolution. All these considerations might enter the mind of a spectator but they have nothing to do with his calling the painting a good one in the first place, i.e. with his approbation or disapprobation of the picture as such. This sort of approval might be termed aesthetic approval, and the attribute "good" that corresponds to it is in no way identical with moral goodness.

But let us regard the more general forms of this statement: "good painting", and "painting is good". In an assertion like "good painting" the criteria which determine our approval of what constitutes painting that is good, are obviously again of a purely aesthetic order. Not so in an assertion like "Painting is good". Here we almost automatically add in our mind "good for what?" In this case, we do not approve of painting because of its inherent qualities as an art, but for some ulterior motive. Thus the difference between such statements as "a good painting" and "painting is good", is not so much a difference of generality or particularity of statement, but lies in the fact that in one case the approval denoted by the attribute "good" was based on the inherent criteria of the concept so qualified, in the other on external

criteria. It does not follow that such ulterior motives or external criteria are necessarily moral ones, as might be concluded from the impression that Moore's discussion of such instances gives. "Painting" for instance may "be good" for hiding the cracks in our wall, which is by no means a moral motive. Or, "Painting" may "be good" for distracting the attention of a sovereign from the social injustice rampant in his domains, which might be a moral motive though not exactly a good one. Now the better the painting, the better it will distract the sovereign: "Good painting" will be "bad" which proves that the "good" in "a good painting" is by no means identical with the "good" in "Painting is good". And even if our former example might be taken as a sophistry, in any case the differences of the set of motives (whether inherent or ulterior) in these different assertions may be clearly grasped from the fact that such a statement as "Good painting is good" is by no means a mere tautology.

These inherent or ulterior motives must not be confused with good-as-a-means, and good-as-an-end. For, although when we approve of something for reasons outside its inherent nature, we generally approve of it as a means, i.e. we consider it good-as-a-means: when we approve of something for inherent reasons this does not mean that we approve of it as an end, as something good-in-itself. Sometimes we do not even consider it good at all. Our approval in this case corresponds to what we might roughly describe as "a 'good' specimen of its kind", or the "technically good".¹⁾

1) E.F.Carrit considers these as two different kinds but it should not be too difficult to prove that they are reducible to a common factor. E.F.Carrit: "An ambiguity of the word good", from The Proceedings of The British Academy; Vol.XXIII.

To illustrate this point let us take the example of "a good road". By a "good road" we mean a road that is well-kept, asphalt-covered, smooth, straight. Here again the term good does not signify moral approval, though it certainly signifies approval of some sort. For when we reflect on the criteria and principles on which we based our approval of the road, we see that no moral criteria have entered our consideration, but only such principles as were inherent in the concept of "a road", and our criteria of what a road at its best, at the maximum realisation of its function as a road would be like. Hence the "good" in 'good road' did not correspond to any moral approval, but to a certain other kind of approval that might be termed "technical approval". In other words, though the attribute "good" in "good roads" is not devoid of meaning, it has no moral significance whatsoever.

That the kind of approval signified by "good" in such complexes as "a good...." is always determined by the principles and criteria of the domain of which the concept so qualified is an element can be seen even more clearly in such examples as: "a good pleasure", "a good hiding", "a good slaughter". In the first example we must take "good" to mean intense, undisturbed and of long duration, i.e. we approve of this pleasure because of certain modifications which enhance its innermost nature, the nature of being pleasant. Much in the same manner "a good slaughter" means a slaughter which is big, extensive in scope and efficient in its implementation, and therefore when judging of slaughters in general we find this one to be a good example of its kind. But no moral judgment is implied. The criteria we employed are the criteria of

the efficiency of the slaughter, the maximum realisation of the potentialities implicit in the concept of the noun qualified by the attribute good.

Therefore when the noun is an element of, say, the aesthetic domain, the term "good" will signify an aesthetic judgment, for it will correspond to the kind of approval that is based on aesthetic criteria. When the noun is an element of the domain of science the attribute "good" when applied to it will signify an epistemological judgment, for it will correspond to the kind of approval that is based on the principles and criteria of epistemology. Similarly when the noun qualified by the attribute "good" is an element of the domain of Ethics, the term "good" when applied to it, and only in that case will signify a moral judgment, for it will correspond to that kind of approval which is based on moral criteria and principles.

In other words, the term "good" will have a moral significance (in such complex notions as "a good.....") only when applied to concepts that are elements of the ethical domain (necessary condition). But it will not have this significance whenever it is so applied. (The condition is not sufficient.) For instance, there are concepts which though elements of the ethical domain, may also fulfil certain functions in other domains. "Conduct" may be said to be "good" in the sense of "polished manners"; or in the sense of efficient conduct, or of suitable conduct, as we see it in every example of heroic or brave conduct, no matter whatever other, evil or good qualifications the action may have. The conduct of a bank-robber facing the combined forces of the metropolitan

police and the technical gadgets which guard the safes, is certainly brave and courageous to begin with. If he carries out his job efficiently, quietly, etc. etc. he certainly conducts himself well, and under the circumstances a certificate of good conduct must be handed to him. But this does not necessarily mean that his conduct is morally good, since it was not as an element of the moral domain, that conduct was considered here, but as an element of a domain which for want of a better appellation may be termed that of "practical success", and which is in no way to be identified with that of ethics since the determining and fundamental rules of the one (for instance, the end justifies the means) is diametrically opposed to that of the other.

"Good" then will have moral significance only when applied to concepts defined inside the ethical domain, and provided it was only in this function (- of being elements of an ethical domain - to the absolute exclusion of any other function this concept may have in any other domains) that the concept had been used.

On the other hand there are concepts which, like "cruelty", "justice", "virtue"; "vice", are certainly moral concepts, i.e. defined in the ethical domain. But it is plainly impossible to speak of "a good cruelty", "a good vice", "a good virtue", or even "good justice". For what reason? Because though all of these may be carried to the highest peak of efficiency, it is not under the criteria of efficiency that we judge them but under those of ethics. And under the criteria of morality the issue has been decided already and is already embodied in the concept. Thus it is absurd to say "a good virtue", for virtue

itself means "a morally good quality". Or to say with moral significance "good cruelty" for cruelty is a vice and vice is a morally bad quality, and it is impossible to call a morally bad quality morally good. In the same way it is absurd to speak of "good justice", for justice that is bad is ipso facto justice no longer. But in the moral domain there are many concepts which do not by definition contain the results of moral judgment, and which we might term "the plastic material" of ethics. These are concepts like "conduct", "will", "motive", "deed", etc. whenever it is used as a term defined inside the moral domain. Let us consider "good conduct". Here the issue is not precluded since conduct may be bad, good and indifferent. On the other hand, by "good conduct" we do not mean conduct carried to its highest efficiency, for such conduct may be bad as well as highly evolved or realised or organised or polished, or whatever it may be that we regard as the highest technical possibility of conduct. The "good" of "good conduct" is then specifically different from all other forms of good, it is moral goodness. Therefore good conduct does not share its property with other things and an examination of this property, denoted by good, in other things cannot help us at all to understand what good conduct is.

The problem becomes more complicated in assertions of the form "..... is good". For example, "Pleasure is good"; "Painting is good"; "Roads are good"; "Justice is good". In these cases the predicate "good" corresponds to that kind of approval, which is not based upon the criteria that govern the inner nature of the concept said to be good, but is based on some ulterior end, or ulterior reason not inherent in the

concept itself.

In that case we have instances of what is called good-as-a-means, and we plainly must first examine the things for which they are means, (a) as to their goodness, i.e. we must ask ourselves whether we approve of them, and (b) as to their moral goodness, i.e. we must ask ourselves if we approve of them on moral grounds. In this case, our preoccupation will be with those things, and will follow the same lines. But in some cases this end may be seen to be not ulterior to the concept but inherent in it. Then our approval assumes the character of an intuitive acceptance of the concept. Concepts so accepted are usually termed ultimate values or intrinsic values. But as their acceptance, because of its instantaneous character, was not based on moral criteria, it is by no means a necessary attribute of intrinsic values as such, to be moral values. In other words, if an intrinsic value is a moral value, this is not an outcome of its formal nature as an intrinsic value, but the result of its particular, material determinations.

Let us take "Painting is good" as our first example. In this case we naturally ask "good for what?" or "good because of what?" The first extension is of no further interest to us here, the second might evoke the answer, "Painting is good because it is an art". This means that we assert "Art" to be "good". On what grounds? Because it incarnates the beautiful. That means that we assert "the Beautiful" to be "good". On what grounds? Because it is beautiful. That is, the beautiful becomes the reason and the end for our approval of it. Saying that "the beautiful" is "good", is really saying that it is "beautiful", i.e. that

our approval of it has the character of an intuitive acceptance and affirmation of its nature as the beautiful. This means that saying that the "beautiful is good" is a mere tautology unless we specify "good" to mean "morally good", in which case this assertion is plainly false, since not moral but aesthetic criteria have entered into the constitution of the beautiful. Thus the view of a town in the act of being bombed is magnificently beautiful, I have been told, and so no doubt were the sights of Rome burning and of christians blazing away like torches to light the pleasure-gardens of the emperor Nero; still being beautiful did not make them morally good. The two may coincide by chance, but are not necessarily identical. As a matter of fact they often clash in actual experience.¹⁾

Let us examine the more difficult and problematic assertion: "Pleasure is good". Let us assume that "Pleasure is good" really means something besides "Pleasure is good because it is pleasant", which would be only another illustration of the case of intuitive approval. Let us assume that "Pleasure is good" is a moral judgment, i.e. that we judge "pleasure" to be "morally good". Then its opposite "pain" would be "morally evil". I suggest that it is not so, but that pain and pleasure are morally neutral concepts, and that whenever they enter moral judgments, they do so, and are proclaimed to be morally bad or good, in

1) In another connection the beautiful and the good will be seen to be not merely different, indifferent and independent of each other, but positively antagonistic in their rival claims on the allegiance of the wills of men.

accordance with some other element, moral by its intrinsic nature, in combination with which they form the object of our moral judgment. I suggest this because I see no valid reason for attributing to pleasure (as against other values) a special standing as regards morality, and insisting in the face of all evidence to the contrary on its being good; even in the restricted sense of its being prima facie good, i.e. holding that a complex situation in so far as it includes pleasure is in so far morally good. On the contrary, cruelty in so far as it holds pleasure is in so far morally worse, for example; whilst if an operation has to be undergone in which some pain is unavoidable, the greater or lesser degree of pain does not change the moral standing of the whole situation at all. Illustrations can be multiplied ad lib. They all seem to me to point to one thing; that since (a) no such thing as pure (uncaused and unconditioned) pleasure ever enters our moral judgment, and (b) the moral standing of such complex objects of our moral judgment of which pleasure or pain form part seem to be determined not so much by the fact of pleasure being present as by the nature of its cause, circumstances, and perhaps effects, it would be more plausible to hold that pleasure and pain are morally neutral and dependent in their moral worth upon the moral standing of the thing or the activity they accompany. This seems to me not only a plausible, logical and fairly-wellfounded view to take, but also a very workable and useful hypothesis to hold when dealing with moral problems. Into what unnecessary mental acrobatics the contrary view leads us can be best illustrated by these extracts. They are taken from Susan Stebbing's Hobhouse Lecture (Dec. 1943) and propound a

thoroughly Moorian view of Ethics:-

'Moral evaluation is not confined to the evaluation and criticism of conduct, it is concerned with good and evil wherever they may be found . . .'¹⁾ Consider, for example, the pair of ethical judgments: "Pain is evil", "Cruelty is evil". These are diverse types. "Pain is evil" I shall call a simple, or basic ethical judgment in the quite precise sense that the truth of the judgment is not based upon any other ethical judgment that is more logically simple, but is itself a basis for other ethical judgments. "Cruelty is evil" is not thus simple and basic, its truth is based upon the judgment "Pain is evil" and follows from this judgment, together with the intrinsic nature of cruelty as being enjoyment in witnessing or inflicting pain upon other sentient beings. I should myself say that it follows from the judgment "cruelty is evil" that under all circumstances and in all conditions to act cruelly is evil. This follows, however, from the total judgment, not merely from the fact that what is predicated of something is that it is evil. It does not follow from the judgment "Pain is evil" that deliberately to inflict pain is to act evilly, nor that a situation in which pain is present is naturally evil on the whole. The pairs of judgments I have cited as examples are clearly diverse in logical type.

'A judgment of a third type has been mentioned in what I have just said: To act cruelly is evil. This judgment could not be true unless

1) P.12.

the judgment "Cruelty is evil" were true. And cruelty could not be evil unless it were true that "Pain is evil".¹⁾

Now several fallacies may be pointed out in this argument: First, though "Pain is evil" is a logically basic judgment, in the sense that it is not based on other judgments, but as I have put it, is intuitively accepted, it is overhasty, and against the evidence adduced by herself ("It does, however, not follow from the judgment 'Pain is evil', that deliberately to inflict pain is to act evilly, etc. . . ." Susan Stebbing, quoted above) to infer that it is also an ethical judgment, basic or otherwise. For, as we have seen, "pain" might enter into moral situations without prejudging their ethical standing in one way or another. This could not be so if "pain" in its intrinsic nature would hold an ethical meaning, an ethical value. Witness the case of "cruelty". "Cruelty" is a moral concept, though not a simple or a basic one. But in so far as it is a moral concept, holding its moral value and worth in itself, the judgment "Cruelty is morally evil" is true in all cases, or whenever "cruelty" enters a moral situation, that situation is necessarily, irrevocably and unredeemably evil. But it would be hard to explain how, if "Cruelty is evil" is based and derived from "Pain is evil", the derived judgment had more moral validity and force than the judgment from which it is derived. Therefore we must conclude that "Cruelty is evil" as a moral judgment is not based upon "Pain is evil" but draws its moral validity from some other element, or principle that enters its formation.

1) P.13.

What are the elements that make up the concept of cruelty? There is: Pain. The infliction of pain. The deliberate infliction of pain. The deliberate infliction of pain upon a sentient being to his detriment. The enjoyment, or pleasure taken at the deliberate infliction of pain upon a sentient being to his detriment. Explanation: The presence of pain though in itself unpleasant (bad) is not enough to constitute a moral evil, since the infliction of it may be involuntary and therefore not morally bad. The deliberate infliction of it upon a sentient being may be for his own good (like an operation) and therefore morally good. Only when the infliction of pain is deliberate and to the detriment of a sentient being we have a situation of unadulterated moral evil. When enjoyment, i.e. pleasure in this, is added, the evil of the situation increases or in any case does not decrease.

Hence we are forced to conclude that the basis of what is morally evil in the complex situation "cruelty" is not the pain involved but the "harming of a sentient being" and the enjoyment of this harm. "Cruelty is evil" as a moral judgment is, therefore, not based upon the judgment "Pain is evil", but on the contrary, in so far as pain may be said to be morally evil it is so as a possible ingredient of "cruelty".

Another consideration which seems to strengthen our argument is the following: Take the situation described above and termed "cruelty": the deliberate infliction of pain upon a sentient being to his detriment. Now let this situation be viewed with pain, rather than with pleasure, and the outcome is pity. That is, in this case the addition of pain to a certain situation has caused this situation to change its moral sign from

negative to positive. Does it follow that pain is a morally good thing?! Only if we take "pain" to have positive moral significance which is denied by those who would consider pleasure and pain as basic moral concepts.

Consider another example: this time let the basic notion pleasure ("Pleasure is good" (Susan Stebbing)). Add the inflict or causing of it. The deliberate infliction of it. The deliberate infliction of it on a sentient being. The deliberate infliction of it on a sentient being to his detriment. (This is possible, viz. Dorian Gray, Faust, etc.) And the outcome is "cruelty". Only this time it is satanic cruelty rather than human. For isn't it Satan's function on earth to inflict pleasure on us to our detriment? Isn't the infliction of pleasure to one's detriment the very definition of temptation, and the fact that it is through pleasure that we fall, an added degree of cruelty?

Now add to this pleasure, i.e. a pleasurable contemplation of this state of affairs, and the cruelty of it becomes insupportable. But pain added to it, i.e. the same situation viewed with pain, would furnish us with another example of pity (even like the pity of the blessed and the angels when they look down upon the poor sinners falling into the snares of the tempter).

There is another drawback in this theory which must be considered here. By assuming pleasure and pain to be possessed of intrinsic moral value (positive or negative) it is impossible to explain the changes of sign from positive to negative and vice versa which we have found to occur in the above examples:

In the following diagram I shall use the signs

morally good	+ +	good	(i.e. possessed of value)	
" bad	- -	bad	(and approved of but not)	-
" neutral	0 0	neutral	(necessarily on moral grounds.)	0

Our problem is: 1) Is "Pain is bad" equivalent to --, or to -
 2) Is "Pleasure is good" equivalent to or ?

	value ; moral value		value;moral value
Pain	-	? Pleasure	+ ?
Infliction of	-	00 Infliction of	+ 00
deliberate infliction of	-	00 deliberate infliction of	+ 00
deliberate infliction upon a sentient being	-	00 deliberate infliction upon a sentient being	+ 00
deliberate infliction upon a sentient being to his detriment	-	-- deliberate infliction upon a sentient being to his detriment	+ --

this situation

	value ; moral value		value;moral value
1) <u>viewed with pleasure:</u>	- ; + ; ; --	1) viewed with pleasure	+ ; + ; --

the minus for the pain inherent in the situation the plus for the pleasure.

2) <u>viewed with pain:</u>	- ; - ; ; ++	2) viewed with pain	+ ; - ; ++
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first minus for the initial pain inherent in the situation, the second for the pain of the spectator.

the first plus for the pleasure inherent in the situation, the second for the pain felt by the spectator.

This seems to me to prove, that if the moral values of pleasure and pain are to be explained, as well as the rules according to which they change their signs (from negative to positive), they must be reduced to their attitude towards the concept of "harming another human being". Any affirmative attitude to this will have a negative moral value (be its value as a pleasure, or its artistic etc. values whatever they might be). On the other hand any negative attitude to the concept of "harming another human being" will have a positive moral value. It now seems to me conclusively proven that, "Pain" and "Pleasure" have no intrinsic moral values, in themselves, but draw whatever moral significance they might have from the situation in which they are inherent or which they accompany. From this it follows that judgments like "Pleasure is good", "Pain is evil", have no moral significance, and therefore cannot be regarded as the basic judgment from which other more complex moral judgments like "cruelty is evil" draw their validity. This brings us to our second point: it seems then that "to his detriment" is the fundamental notion which gives the whole complex its moral status. Now before our conclusions above will really become fool-proof, it must be shown that "to his detriment" cannot be reduced or expressed in terms of "pleasure" and "pain", i.e. a future state in which as an outcome of the present state the balance of pleasure will be negative (for example punishment in Hell for yielding to the temptation of pleasure on earth). That is, our main object now should be to prove that "to his detriment" or "harming a human being" does not essentially refer to the notions of pleasure and pain (although it might and probably will be accompanied in

all cases by one or the other) but to a concept that is different altogether and rooted in a different domain, the concept of human worth, or the dignity of man. . . . For otherwise pleasure and pain which we have expelled through the door as the fundamental notions of ethics, would enter through the window (*expellas furca tamen usque recurret!*). In order to lessen this danger, let us remember the very significant fact, that "harming another sentient being" may refer to and include the infliction of too much, too often experienced and too indiscriminate pleasure.

That a reference to the pleasures of after life as a compensation for the pain and deprivations of this life, cannot be considered an altogether satisfactory argument must be admitted by anyone who pauses to reflect that the moral principles cannot possibly be different in after-life without making absolute nonsense of all our strivings here. If the whole point of being moral on earth, and disdainful of pleasures is to ensure an unlimited wallowing in the pleasures of Paradise then we must, reasonably, choose earthly pleasures. If the whole problem is a matter of calculation and scheming then the pleasures of the earth have the advantage: of a plausible degree of certainty, of immediacy in time and of known quality. Besides, it is always possible that we might find ourselves deprived of after-life pleasures, as a punishment for having schemed for them . . .

However there is another point which must be raised here: Every situation into which the "harming of a sentient being" enters must be viewed from three different angles: that of the sufferer, that of the executor, that of the spectator. All three functions may be centred in

one person. Or two persons may fulfil the three functions in different combination: for instance John being the sufferer, and George both executor and spectator, or John sufferer and executor, George spectator etc. Three or more persons may divide this function amongst them in different ways. These situations are really quite commonplace, and of daily occurrence.

Now assuming "pain" to be the determining and constitutive factor of "harming a sentient" being, what possible moral difference can there be between case a) in which a leg has to be amputated without anaesthetics, and case b) which is the same as case a) with the additional qualification that a mistake in diagnosis has been made by the responsible physician, and it was later discovered that the operation was unnecessary? Since the amount of pain was the same in both cases, there should really be no moral difference. But, as a matter of fact there is. Assuming that the doctor in both cases operated with the smallest amount of pain possible, and in both cases was indifferent or detested such pain as he could not avoid inflicting, yet in the first case he did not harm his patient and in the second he did. For he had broken a promise which he had made to all men and everyone to cure them of their ills and to do so with the greatest caution and respect for their persons. But of this later. For the moment it may suffice if it were shown that it was not the pain involved which constituted the "harming of a sentient being".

Now if the doctor (as a spectator) had taken pleasure in any pain he inflicted on the patient (in the first case) but had refrained from increasing the amount of pain (he had not crossed the border from

spectator to executor) he would not have "harmed" the patient in any way.

His "enjoyment of pain" as far as the sufferer is concerned would have no moral implications. The reason why we nevertheless term such instances "cruelty" and condemn them morally, is not because "pain and pleasure" per se are involved. We do not, for instance, condemn envy, because "pain in another's pleasure" is involved, since the same situation "pain at another man's pleasure" can be termed pity and become morally good. The reason seems to be that the taking of "pleasure in another man's pain" even if it were for the good of that other man, is to the moral detriment of the spectator. There may also be a reference in this judgment to the probability of passive and occasional enjoyment turning into an active creation of occasions for enjoyment: i.e. in the course of time the doctor who takes pleasure in the pain he cannot avoid inflicting, will start inflicting uncalled for pain so that he may enjoy it.

The spectator will have become executor, or rather spectator-cum-executor. The ultimate ground of the "harming of a sentient being" seems then to lie not in the amount or nature of the pain inflicted but in the degradation of one sentient being into a means of procuring pleasure or profit for another sentient being. This holds good irrespective of whether the "degradation" in question implies painful or pleasurable sensations for the sufferer, the person degraded. Once again then, pleasure and pain have been found to be interchangeable without affecting the moral standing of a situation.

"Pain" and "pleasure" then, harbouring no moral elements in their intrinsic nature, are not moral values, and therefore the judgments

"Pain is evil", "Pleasure is good" being intuitive judgments cannot be ethical ones.

On the other hand, "Justice is good" is a moral judgment. "Justice is good" because it is intuitively approved, it is morally good because its material particular content is in accordance with certain basic moral criteria, i.e. our approval of it is morally determined and refers to a moral content.

We may now conclude and say that the answer to the query "What is good?" is so far from furnishing us with a solution of our ethical problem that the attributes "good" and "bad" in general do not even furnish us with the subject-matter of ethical enquiry. At most they might seem to serve as indicators, pointing the way to where in some cases ethical subject-matter may be found, depending on whether the approval to which "good" corresponds in each case, is based on moral criteria, or involves an intuitive acceptance of a moral concept. Hence, in our opinion, the peculiarity of ethics most certainly is its preoccupation with assertions about human conduct, and with the property of "good" or "bad" not wherever they may be found but only in so far as these terms are applied to human conduct.

(β) In order to prove that "good" is not dependent on our approval (an association which we do not uphold in its causal but only in its correlative meaning, i.e. that where "good" appears there is also approval, and vice versa) but is the expression of an objective value, independent of our subjective reaction to it, Moore cites assertion of the form: "This . . . is good but I do not like it." He takes this to mean,

that though subjectively we do not appreciate a painting - for example - yet we must bow to the objective manifestation of the intrinsic value of (in this case) beauty and call it "good". But we have seen that to call a painting "good", means to assert that it complies with certain aesthetic principles and rules, which we suppose to govern the art of painting, and to possess certain qualities that constitute the artistic merit of a painting. On the other hand, the assertion of such a relation between the particular painting and certain aesthetic principles, we have called "the expression of approval". For it would manifestly be absurd to call a painting good, when it neither appeals directly to our aesthetic susceptibility ("we do not like it") nor conforms to our conception of what a picture should be, even though this conception came to us second-hand. On the other hand, what is the meaning of "like" in this assertion? There are two possibilities: Either it means that I approve of the picture for certain reasons and on certain principles which I yet do not regard as accepted and venerable enough in the hierarchy of aesthetic rules to warrant the decree of "good"; or it means that I have no better reason to approve of the picture than a sentimental attachment involving an emotional reaction that I choose to express by "like".

For example, if we say: "This is a very bad painting but I like it because I inherited it from my great-grandmother or because I have seen it hanging over the mantelpiece ever since I was a child", we do not make an aesthetic assertion, let alone a moral judgment, but recount a piece of biography for what it may be worth. Therefore this second meaning of "like" is of no interest to us, and it was certainly not in

this second meaning that Moore wanted it to be understood.

On the other hand, if we accept "like" in its first meaning, there is no essential difference between the grounds of its assertion and the grounds and structure of the judgment expressed by "good".

The reason for this difference lies rather in the different amount of objective force and validity which we attribute to the two respective sets of criteria. This amount is not necessarily fixed, or unchangeable, and the proportional strength of the sets are variable in time so that what we might pronounce to-day "Good but not to our liking" we might to-morrow pronounce to be "to our liking but bad". In other words what may be to-day the primary principles and criteria of aesthetic judgment may to-morrow become secondary. For example, we view a certain surrealist painting. It does not conform to our main preconceived ideas and criteria of what a good painting should be; on the other hand, something about it may strike us as being "a good sense of colour", which also is regarded as one of the criteria of a good painting. We should then pronounce judgment and say: "It is not a good picture but there is something about it which I like". Now suppose the same picture viewed by a second surrealist painter. He will in the main agree with the aesthetic principles of his rival's work, but since his idea of implementation of these principles will necessarily be different, he will pronounce the picture to be "good" (because of its accordance with his main artistic principles), but not to his liking (because of its deficiency in view of some other aesthetic criterion of secondary importance). In both cases judgment will be given in accordance with the

same two sets of principles. The difference being that in the first case greater importance is ascribed to one set (what we might call the classical principle in painting); in the second case greater importance is given to the second set of principles (what we might term the surrealist principle of painting). Hence, as far as the nature of the grounds and the logical structure of the judgment is concerned, there is no essential difference between the assertion "this is good" and "I like this". In the same way in which the "good" corresponds to "approval", "like", too, corresponds to approval. It seems also probable that there are just as many kinds of "liking" as there are kinds of "good", and kinds of "approval". If so, "like" and "good" signify the difference of degree in the assurance of approval (the degree of assurance being dependent on the primary or secondary importance attributed to the grounds on which it is based). Though the relation between "good" and "like" is thereby irrevocably stated, the material contents of what we call "good" or "liked" are variable in direct proportion to the variable standards of different periods.

In the main, the same argument will apply to statements like "The Useful is good but I do not like it", where the "Useful" will be seen to be "good" because of our approval of, say, the principles of general prosperity, but will be seen to be not "to our liking" because of our approval of the aesthetic principles of art, with which the useful does not always comply. Sometimes moral principles may or may not form one of the sets; and though it is never on moral grounds that one set is regarded as more important than the other, it is an open question whether

in the case mentioned above (when moral principles form one of the sets) preponderance is always given to this set. For example: "Cruelty is bad but I like it" seems to imply this, and so does "Justice and Equity are good but I do not like them". In other words, it is an open question whether the appearance of a "good" which is "morally good" automatically degrades other kinds of good to "like", i.e. whether absolute primacy should be given to moral approval over any other kinds of approval.

Personally I am inclined to think so, and proof for this contention might be found in an examination of our everyday moral experience.

(f) As to the existence of eternal intrinsic values, independent of our approval, all that can be proven is that there are things of which we approve for no ulterior reason but their inherent nature, but which not only are not independent of our approval, but whose only possible definition contains the concept of approval. We define value, or intrinsic value then, as that concept which generally corresponds to what we have termed "intuitive approval". This relation between "intrinsic value" and "intuitive approval" is not causal in any respect but correlative, as we have seen the relation between "yellow" and "wavelength" to be. But then "intrinsic value" will have no meaning outside this definition, and for our purpose, in an ethical enquiry, we might find it useful to investigate the nature and peculiarities of "intuitive approval" rather than those of "intrinsic value". It will also be understood that "intrinsic values" are not necessarily moral values, as the concept of "intuitive approval" does not contain any reference to moral criteria. There might be a moral concept, which is

also an intrinsic value, but this will be grasped directly in its material contents. It might also be that in any clash of values, the moral will prove the stronger, and aspire to primacy over all other values. But this also cannot be proven by an enumeration and survey of values in their function of correlates of approval, their examination, classification and arrangement into patterns, but by an analysis of our moral experience, our actual moral judgments, their grounds, laws and validity.

Some reflections on the twofold function of values in Ethics.

"Probably the only universal precondition for using the word 'good'," writes Sir D. Ross¹⁾ "is the existence of a favourable attitude in ourselves towards the object." In other words, of 'good' whatever we may term so, whatever its concrete content, we approve; of 'bad', we disapprove. The concrete content of what is called good may change from one country to another, from one period to another, from one class to another, from one man to another, or even in one man from one day to another. The only constant factor in this continuous change is the unvarying relation to approval. The relativity of 'what' is 'good' does not impair the stability of the relation between approval and good. Indeed approval and 'good' may be defined as the correlates of a constant, necessary and reflexive relation. Since neither the concrete determinations of what is approved or called good, nor the grounds,

1) "Foundations of Ethics" page 254.

reasons and criteria in accordance with which it has been approved and termed 'good' enter into the definition of this relation, it cannot be stated off-hand whether the 'good' so defined is identical with the 'moral good' or if it possesses any moral significance at all. Thus, the 'good' in 'a good hiding' though it corresponds to an approval of the strength and the efficient administration of the 'hiding' in question, i.e. an approval of this particular 'hiding' as a splendid specimen of its kind, does not amount ipso nomine (of good) or ipso facto (by virtue of the constant correlation between approval and good) to a moral judgment. In order that this act of approval be equivalent to a moral judgment, it must first be ascertained either - that we approved of the 'hiding' for reasons of morality, or that a 'hiding' in itself is a moral concept, i.e. a concept whose nature contains elements of moral import, and that therefore a good specimen of 'hiding' will necessarily imply a great excellence in whatever the moral import of its elements may consist. This actually happens when we talk of 'virtue' or 'justice', where the notion of moral excellence is contained in the nature of the concept and where, in consequence, approval of these concepts implies moral approval. But there are concepts which, though defined inside the moral domain, do not contain a reference to moral excellence in their very nature: these are the basic moral concepts: will, conduct, action. Approval of such concepts can be taken to possess moral significance only when it is based on criteria, grounds and reasons which themselves have moral import and are defined inside the ethical domain. Thus the 'good' in 'good conduct'

is in this second function, that all 'goods' and values implied by them

in the sense of 'beautiful manners' does not correspond to any approval based on moral grounds (one can be insulting, unjust and cruel in the most 'beautifully mannered' way) and, therefore, does not determine a moral judgment or define a value of moral import.

Thus, there seem to be two necessary conditions, which must be fulfilled by any judgment of approval before it can be regarded as a moral judgment: it must be based on, and given for moral reasons; it must be directed to concepts which are defined inside the moral domain. Yet there seem to exist some moral judgments which seem to bear upon 'goods' or values defined in other domains, as for instance, when 'pleasure' is judged to be 'morally bad', i.e. pleasure which is 'good in itself' is declared 'morally bad'. The possibility of such judgments derives from the fact that the 'goods' judged are deprived of any intrinsic and autonomous value they might have enjoyed in their own domains and reduced to the status of means, qualifications and modifications of conduct, will and action. Now conduct, will, and action, are the most fundamental and important elements of the ethical domain, the plastic material and subject matter of all ethical deliberation. Therefore anything that determines their nature, informs their direction, or influences their purpose, must certainly be of particular interest to any theory of Ethics. Roughly it may be stated that most, and perhaps all, 'goods' defined in their reflective relation to approval, enter into another, not less constant relationship to will, conduct and action, in which they appear to determine these latter. It is in this second function, that all 'goods' and values inasmuch as they

determine and influence will and conduct and taken in the whole of their relation to will and conduct, are considered fit and legitimate objects of ethical judgments. As objects of ethical judgments these wholes are naturally judged under ethical criteria and without reference to any intrinsic excellence the value which forms part of this whole might have possessed in its own domain. Abstraction is made from the grounds on which approval of a value for instance, 'pleasure', has been based in the first place. Nor is the value considered in its own right ('pleasure per se'). Account is taken of it only as an element determining a whole of which conduct or will is the predominant and absorbing factor. This whole is then judged under moral criteria (i.e. criteria different and independent of those that constituted pleasure as a value in se).

Thus when Plato decided to ban the playing of the flute from his ideal State, he did so not because he thought flute-song not-beautiful-enough in itself, i.e. lacking in aesthetic excellence. On the contrary he thought the very fact of its being so beautiful and soul-stirring made it morally suspect as a dangerous rival claimant on human will and purpose. The intrinsic excellence of a value like Beauty is then an added danger, a negative property, as far as the jealously guarded claim of the morally good for the first place in influencing will and conduct is concerned. The primacy which the morally good claims in this example from Plato's and in our everyday moral experience, over and above all other 'goods' seems then to refer to a jus primae determinationis, if I may say so, a right of precedence in influence over will and conduct rather than to a claim of superiority of status among values as such, considered in and

for themselves.¹⁾

It is not claimed that 'Moral Goodness' is better than 'Beauty', but that, when a man is faced with a choice between the two it is morally incumbent upon him to choose moral goodness. I say morally incumbent because, though in the moral domain it is always incumbent upon him to choose Moral Goodness, in the aesthetic domain it may be incumbent upon him to choose Beauty. Inside the aesthetic domain, for instance, the work of greater moral merit is not necessarily considered the better work (think but of Catullus, Propertius and Petronius). In fact it has all the chances of being the worse, inasmuch as it is apt to distract our attention from the criteria of poetry and elegance indigenous and legitimate in the aesthetic sphere to those of moral import which are, here, extraneous and irrelevant.

In other words, the facts of moral experience, i.e. certain moral judgments, seem to demand that precedence be given to moral value over all other values in respect of its claim on the allegiance of will and

1) Nor can we assume that the one is the result of the other, since the intrinsic superiority of the 'morally good' over the 'aesthetically good' is an unwarranted hypothesis, which cannot be proved either by reference to the different criteria and grounds of approval or to the different intuitions to which they correspond. Moral criteria are different but not superior to aesthetic criteria, indeed they are neither comparable nor commensurable. Nor is the intuition which reveals to us the intrinsic value of the Beautiful, in any way comparable or commensurable with the intuition which reveals the intrinsic value of the Morally good. Indeed we would need another intuition over and above these to reveal to us the hierarchical status of the values. The discussion of the possibility and plausibility of such an additional intuition must be left to a later occasion.

conduct. It is asked that will and conduct, regarded as elements of the moral domain, should always be determined by moral values rather than by other values. In accordance with this, the good will is defined as the will which habitually chooses to be so determined.

Our problem may now be stated in this form:

- A) Can the claim for supremacy of the moral value over all other values be substantiated by means of an analysis of the system of values considered in their relation to will and conduct?
- B) Can any justification for this claim be inferred or deduced from such an analysis?

To sum up: 'Goods' or 'values' fulfil a double function in Ethics, depending on whether their static aspect as the correlates of approval, or their dynamic aspect as the correlates of will and conduct, is brought into the foreground.

In their first function only the moral values are defined inside the moral domain and there is no principle to be found inside that domain according to which the superior or inferior status of values defined in other domains can be evaluated. The criteria, grounds, reasons and intuitions in respect of which different values have been determined are different, independent, incomparable and incommensurable. Hence the superiority of the moral value over all other values cannot be deduced from an analysis of a system of values considered in their first aspect. Indeed the very notion of superiority in this context is meaningless as there is no standard of comparison between different domains.

In their second function all values are defined inside the ethical

domain, not indeed as they stand for themselves, but in their conjunction with will and conduct which they influence and determine. Our problem can now be defined as follows: Will an analysis of a system of values in respect of their second function yield us a principle of evaluation by which we may determine the superior or inferior status of different values, and particularly, establish the primacy of moral value? That is: can the claim for supremacy of the moral value over other values in respect of their relation to will and conduct, and inside its own domain, be substantiated and justified by inferences drawn, and conclusions deduced from an analysis of values in their second function?

The will seems to be its own end.

I shall from now on, for simplicity's sake, refer to values in their first function of correlates to approval as 'good' and to the relation between 'good' and 'approval' as R_1 ; in their second function of correlates to will and conduct as 'values', and to the relation between value and will or conduct as R_2 ; to moral value in its first aspect as 'morally good' and in its second as 'moral worth'.

I shall also use will, desire and intended action to stand equally for all human conative tendencies or intents, as well as for action (the concrete realisation of the will informing it); and for conduct (perseverance in a certain mode of action). I permit myself this freedom since for the purpose of this enquiry neither the concrete realisation of an intended action, nor its unique occurrence or repetition, nor the lesser or greater degree of rationalisation and coherence between it and others of its kind, usually discriminated in the notions of instinct,

desire, need and will, affect the nature of R_2 (the relation between value and will) in any way.

* * * * *

(A) Roughly values can be said to enter into four kinds of relationship with will:

- a They may be located in the ends, purposes, or objects of will.
- b They might lodge in the motive or initiative urge behind the will.
- c They might serve as a regulative principle or law to which the will seeks to conform and adapt itself.
- d They might be the accidental results of will, i.e. the necessary outcome of a certain conjunction between will, end, and motive, but not envisaged or intended in itself, and in this sense accidental to will.¹⁾

In the first case value is the purposed consequence of action; in the second the chosen motive; in the third the revered law; in the fourth the (morally) accidental by-product of action. Thus to take the example of Beauty a man may make it the end of his actions (the Maecenas) or the motive for his action (the Aesthete) the law regulating his action (the Critic) or it may simply be the by-product of his action (the Artist). Lorenzo de Medici for instance made the beautification of Florence, i.e.

1) Like in Hume's example of a man who throwing a coin to a beggar hit the beggar's eye and caused him grave injury.

the realisation of Beauty, his object. His motive in doing so may have been a love of Beauty (in which case he would also have been an Aesthete) or ambition to outshine all other Italian princes, the desire of glory, or a wish to invest money in a certain way and raise the credit of Florentine Banks. The principles on which he regulated his action in order to achieve this end might well have been those of expediency, greed, and exploitation. The resulting by-product of his action were his own and his compatriot's poverty, delight, and edification, and posterity's delight and edification. On the other hand Michelangelo's action in fashioning some of those incarnations of Beauty which represented ends for Lorenzo might be described as having the execution of an order as its end. (The Moses, as well as many other musical, pictorial and sculptural masterpieces were made to order.) His motive might have been an urgent need of funds, or a need to fashion something and quieten his craving for creation. The regulative principle of his action might have been the rules of sculpting-technique he had learnt in his teacher's studio, or had acquired by his own experience. Only as an accidental by-product of his action can Beauty be named.

This process is even clearer when Truth is substituted for Beauty. The end of a creative scientist's action is the solution of a problem. His motive may be an urge to experiment, a disciplined curiosity. His regulative principles the technique of whatever branch of science he is dealing with. Only as the accidental by-product can Truth be quoted. Not only Truth in general but even that particular truth which he looks for is not the end of his action. Consider the case of a scientist, only

I would rather call him a philosopher, who searches for truth. Surely he will look it up in other people's books and experiments, where it is to be found, just as the man who desires Beauty will look for it in the Picture-Galleries, Concert-Halls, and Beauty-Spots of the world, rather than labour to fashion something himself of which he can have no assurance that it will indeed turn out to be true, or beautiful.¹⁾

Now of the four possible forms of R_2 mentioned: value as an end, a motive, a regulative principle, or a by-product of action, only the first two cases appear to be instances of immediate and concrete determination of the contents of the two factors of the relation (value, and will) by each other. In the third case the determination of will by value seems to be limiting and regulative rather than constitutive. In the fourth it can hardly be regarded as determinative at all, since though the result or by-product of an action might have been, under certain circumstances, foreseeable, it certainly was not directly and immediately

1) We are faced here for the first time by one of the paradoxes of value; namely that a value can only be realised (i.e. created, incorporated, materialised not enjoyed or contemplated) when it is neither the end nor the motive of action. Beauty is neither an end nor a moving power for the creative artist, as Truth is neither an end nor a moving power for the scientist. Both are the morally-accidental by-products of well-executed work. Happiness cannot be achieved by striving after it or making it the ground of one's action; it is, as Aristotle put it, only the accompaniment of a well-ordered (in respect of other values well-ordered) life. No action can be morally good, as Hume had it, which has nothing but its morality for end or motive. The artist who strives after Beauty is not a creator but a critic, a philosopher, or an aesthete, i.e. Beauty is only an end or a motive power for those whose real end is not its creation but its enjoyment, and therefore, ultimately, their own self-realisation. By making Beauty, Goodness or Truth one's end one ultimately reduces it to the status of a means. This brings us face to face with a second paradox of value, whose discussion however must be postponed for a later occasion.

intended. motive for desiring it is my desire for that end, so that the

Taking the first two cases of R_2 : value as the end, and value as the motive of will, it must first be noted that a certain dialectical process existing between the two appears at times to liquify the rigid difference between them. Thus in certain instances, especially when the 'ends' in question are ultimate ends, they appear at the same time incorporated in the motives of will. Hence, though it is not meaningless to speak of the ends of will as opposed to the motive (as it happens when we say that his end was good but his motive bad, or his end bad but his motive good) we must bear in mind the fluidity of these concepts. If I, for example, desire or will a good thing like equality (assuming that equality is a good thing) because I am envious of those more fortunate than myself, my motive is as bad and petty as any motive can be. But the point is, that in reality I do not desire equality for itself, I desire it as a means to pull certain people down, and therefore my real end is the belittlement of those people. The motive of my will (envy) is incorporated in a certain manner in my end. On the other hand assuming that equality is a bad thing in itself, if I desire it because I pity those less fortunate than others and wish to raise them to a certain level, what I really desire is not equality but the improvement of certain unfortunates. My motive, as well as my end, ultimately anchors in the value of benevolence. But if I desire equality because I approve of the principles incorporated in the concept of equality, i.e. for itself, and as an ultimate end, then the end has in a certain manner been incorporated in my motive. Whenever I desire something as a means to an

end, my motive for desiring it is my desire for that end, so that the ultimate 'end' enters into the composition of my motive; and whenever I desire something for itself, as an 'ultimate end', my motive for so desiring it enters into the composition of my 'end'.

Now motives of will or desire seem to have a common characteristic in that they point to a certain fundamental lack or discomfort and a need to satisfy this lack. This seems very plain in cases of the simpler motives like hunger, fear, ambition. But what of the more complex, and subtler values like Beauty, Truth, etc.? It seems that in this case, it is Education's task to create new needs, make us aware of 'lacks' we did not feel before, and make our discomfort acute: in short - to create new motives of desire. Thus for a musically educated man the lack of opportunities to hear good music will become an acute discomfort, while the less well-educated will only feel the lack of food very acutely. So that when values like Beauty, Truth, etc. are cited, as ends for desire, and when they are desired for their own sakes and without any ulterior motive, they themselves have in a way become the motive of the desire directed towards them. They are incorporated in the motive in such a way as to form the valuable part of it; but of this later. For the moment it is enough if we bear this fact (of the peculiar fluidity of the two concepts: end and motive) in mind, whilst examining the different modifications of R_2 .

R_2 is the relation between value and will or desire. In the first case: a), value lodges in the end of desire. In the second case, b) value lodges in the motive of desire. These relations are capable of

three different definitions and assume the modified forms \wp_1 , \wp_2 , and \wp_3 .

- 1) \wp_1 is a formal correlation between value and desire.
- 2) \wp_2 is a causal relation in which desire is the cause of value.
- 3) \wp_3 is a causal relation in which value is the cause of desire.

Explanation:

- 1a) Value is assumed to lodge in the end or object of desire.

\wp_1 is defined as a formal correlation between value and desire. \wp_1 is defined in such a way as to make all that is desired possessed of value. Inversely all that possesses value, is by definition, desired. In fact values which are not desired are meaningless concepts in this context. Similarly the question: "Are values desired because they are good", or "Are they good because they are desired" loses its sense. By virtue of \wp_1 , a one-to-one co-ordination is established between value and desire. This enables us to substitute the enquiry into the nature and system of values, for that into the nature and systems of desires, or vice-versa. Conclusions reached in one enquiry will be valid for the other, since, by definition, values and desires have been declared to be co-extensive, and neither has meaning or significance outside the defined relation.

There is no discoverable connection between the class of 'goods' defined by their co-relation to approval in $\sigma R_1 A$, and the class of 'values' defined by their co-relation to desire in $V R_2 D$. No common standard of evaluation is defined between R_1 and R_2 . They function independently of each other.

- 1b) When value is assumed to lodge in the motive of desire it is impossible to define \wp_1 . There are only two possibilities of value

lodging in the motive. Either all motives of desire are declared valuable by virtue of certain hypotheses. In this case what is fundamentally postulated is the absolute value of 'life', of 'nature', of 'desires' or of the elan vital. Or we declare some motives valuable, that is, we treat motives as ends. This happens when we say for instance: I desire to be charitable rather than vengeful, benevolent rather than cruel, i.e. I desire to have a certain motive rather than another. Here the value of benevolence is defined in relation to my desire to be so, as an object or end of desire. In both cases \wp_1 has proved incapable of being defined between value as motive and desire. For in the first case we overstepped the boundaries of formal relationship, and indeed made \wp a causal relationship. In the second we reverted to instances of type 1a) considered above.

2a) Value is assumed to lodge in the end or object of desire. \wp_2 is then defined as a causal relationship in which desire takes the place of the material, effective cause of value: "Values are valuable because they are desired." First, by hypothesis, there is desire. Then, what is desired is declared valuable. Desire in this context is the causa existientiae of value. It is the ground of the valuableness of value. It is the determining factor of the concrete qualifications of what is considered a value. It is the principle of evaluation. Thus defined \wp_2 allows for the formulation of the question: "Is everything that is desired, good?" In other words, does being desired imply being "approved of", or are there some 'values' defined by their relation \wp_2 to desires which cannot be brought into any correlation with approval?

2b) Values are assumed to lodge in the motives of desire. By the basic hypothesis of this particular causal relation ρ_2 it is assumed that a) desires exist, and b) they have the power to confer value on their objects. Now this power to confer value, desires ultimately must draw from their source, the primary desire for life, the elan vital or whatever it may be that splits itself up into the innumerable forms of desire which we study. The ground for the valuableness of motives lies in the affirmation of life and vitality, implied in the stimulation of desire. Sometimes in the harmonisation of the different desires. But in this case we have overstepped the boundaries of the definition of ρ_2 . We have entered the domain of ρ_3 .

3a) Value is assumed to lodge in the end or object of desire. ρ_3 is defined as a causal relationship in which values are the effective material cause of desire. "Values are desired because they are good." First by hypothesis, there exist 'good' objects. Then these good objects are desired. The 'good' is the cause of which 'desire' is the result. 'Good' is the causa existientiae of desire, the determining factor of its concrete characteristics (intensity, duration, ubiquity). 'Good' is the ground of desire's being set into motion, and its principle of evaluation. The desire for Beauty for instance will be superior to that for Warmth, if Beauty as a value is superior to Warmth as a value.

The relation ρ_3 thus defined allows for the formulation of the question: "Is everything that is good also a value?" In other words, does everything by virtue of its correlation to approval enter into a

causal relationship with desire? That is, does everything 'good' actually evoke desire?

3b) Values when lodged in the motives of desire are clearly defined in this third relationship, where they appear incorporated into the motive of desire before revealing themselves as the end of it. Thus if I desire Beauty for itself I do so either because I approve of it and this approval itself becomes the motive of my desiring it, or because I feel a distinct lack and an acute need of it, which is only possible if the existence of Beauty in itself were assumed, and its revelation became the cause of my wanting and desiring it. In both cases Beauty in some form is incorporated into the complex whole of the motive of my desire for Beauty.

Our main problem is now capable of a more stringent formulation:

Can the superiority or primacy which moral worth claims over all other values in the relation R_2 inside the ethical domain, be deduced or inferred from an analysis of this relation in its forms a, and b, (value as end, value as motive) and defined in its three different modifications § 1, § 2 and § 3?

In other words, will an analysis of R_2 in all its forms and modifications furnish us with sufficient grounds and ample justifications for upholding the primacy of moral worth over all other values?

This primacy, it must be remembered, is the basic assumption of all factual moral judgments. Therefore we may also put our question in this form: Can the facts of moral experience be explained by reference to an analysis of a system of values considered as factors of the relation R_2 ?

* * * * *

What exactly does the definition of R_2 as a formal relation §1 imply with regard to the question of the superiority of one value to another, and especially the supremacy of moral worth over all other values? or even an inferior value. The conclusions reached in §1 do not affect Values as ends of will or desire, are in this context defined as what is desired. Desired, in this context and by definition, is equivalent to valued. What is in no way desired by anybody, what is valued by nobody in anyway, cannot be considered a value. It cannot be a value because it is not recognised as such by any conative agent, and hence possesses validity for no one; and because, by definition, the nature of a value consists in being desired, i.e. valued, that is, in possessing validity. Will and desire in this relationship, fulfil the role of detectors of value. They are the occasion at which values become valid, the agent through which values attain validity. But desire and will do not constitute the ground for values being values, nor do they determine the concrete inner natures of different values. The only principle they afford for measuring differences of superiority or inferiority in values is the intensity of the corresponding desire. As far as this definition goes nothing that is desired by any agent, in any way whatsoever, is devoid of value, be its inner nature whatever it be. Pain may become desirable and therefore valuable to the Spartan youth who desires it as a means of putting his courage to the test, or to the martyr who exults in it for its own sake. Cruelty may be highly desirable and valuable to a man who bent upon self-realisation by enlargement of experience, desires it as an item of experience per se. Cruelty

may even be desired for its own sake and the pleasure inherent in it. But inasmuch as it is desired it has value, and inside the domain defined by ρ_1 , the formal form of R_2 , there is no means of branding it as a negative or even an inferior value. The conclusions reached in R_1 do not affect $R_2(\rho_1)$ in any way. What is declared 'bad' in relation to disapproval can still be counted a major value in $R_2(\rho_1)$ if the correlated desire be but intense enough. Indeed, if the qualification desired . . . in any way whatsoever were examined more closely, it would be found to blur and obliterate such important differences as: α) desired as a means and desired as an end; β) desired subjectively or desired objectively; γ) desired de facto and desired by postulate, i.e. the famous difference between desired and desirable, between what is actually desired and what ought to be desired. The definition of R_2 as formal, dissolves all the mentioned difference and renders them meaningless. Either of the possibilities envisaged under α , β , and γ equally satisfies the relation ρ_1 , and produces equivalent instances of ρ_1 .

α) Thus it makes no difference to ρ_1 , the formal correlation between desire and value if something is desired as an end or as a means. For example, if I desire to read a certain book and if I desire to buy it in order to read it, there is no perceptible difference in the nature of my desire for the one and for the other. As long as my desire is directed towards the reading of the book, it is the reading of it that possesses value for me, but as soon as my desire is directed towards the acquisition of the book it is the acquisition and not the reading that has value for me, though the moment I had acquired it the reading may or may

not again become the sole object of my desire. As long as my desire is alive the same sort of value is conferred upon all things that are its objects, whether they be ends or means to ends. If there exists any essential difference of gradation on the hierarchical scale of values in accordance with the principle of means and ends, this difference does not correspond to any differences in the nature of the desires to which they are correlated; nor is it in any way dependent on the inner nature of desires. Rather does it seem to be determined by the inner nature of each value and its objective relationship to other values. But these objective relationships between values (and among them a relation of means to ends) stand in no discoverable proportion or ratio nor do they seem to have the slightest bearing, on what may be desired as means and as ends.

Thus the listening to good music will still be a means for self-development, whether one listens to it because one desires to improve one's self, or whether one listen to it for its own sake, for the pleasure of it, or in order to be seen in the concert-hall. What one man desires as an end, and even as an ultimate end, another may desire as a means to an absolutely different end. But these differences have no meaning and no validity inside the domain defined by ρ_1 , the formal relationship, because values have no being there outside their relation to desire, and therefore no gradation.

β) In the same way, it makes no difference to the nature of ρ_1 , the formal co-relation between desire and value, if something is desired subjectively; for biographically unique reasons, or objectively: on

generally acceptable grounds. For example, if I desire a hideous picture because of the sentimental reason that it portrays my grandmother in her youth or if I desire Leonardo's Madonna of the Grotto (which is I think a fair example of a painting which anyone would desire to possess) there is no perceptible difference in my way of desiring the one or the other. As long as my desire is alive and directed with equal intensity towards both these objects they both possess the same sort of value for me. But, since value has been defined as the correlate of desire and, since it is a fact that my grandmother's picture is so related to my desire, the fact of its having value conferred upon it by its relation to my desire is an objective fact which must be acknowledged objectively. According to the definition, my grandmother's picture must be regarded as a value (by virtue of its being desired by me) by everybody, though it may not be desired by everybody. But then it would not be differently desired by me if everybody else were to desire it too. The degree of value conferred upon an object by virtue of its relation to desire does not vary with the degree of any objective valuableness it may possess. There is no discoverable ratio between the nature of desire and the subjectivity or objectivity of the values to which it corresponds. If there exist any essential difference of gradation on the hierarchical scale of values, this difference does not correspond to any difference in the nature of the desire to which it is co-related, nor is it in any way dependent on the inner nature of this desire. If this distinction is made at all it is made inside another system in which values are determined by other definitions - (for example by R_1 their relation to

approval), and then transferred to desire. But since ρ_1 is defined to be purely formal, such a transfer is not possible in this context, and the distinction between objective and subjective values will be seen to have no significance or meaning, indeed will not be definable at all, in this domain.

γ) It makes no difference to the nature of ρ_1 , the formal correlation of desire and value, if I desire something as a matter of fact, or if I desire something in potentia, i.e. if I actually desire something or if I ought to desire something. This can be proved by showing that in respect of values defined formally as the correlatives of desire, there is no essential difference between the desired and the desirable (in the sense of what ought to be desired).

What do we mean by desirable? We may mean something which is desired in a certain way, or something which is desired for certain reasons. We may even refer to something which is not actually desired at all but of whose valuableness and goodness we know and have become convinced in another context. For example, we may know about a certain thing that it is good not by virtue of its being desired, but by virtue of its being approved. We know that it is good because we have found it to be the correlate of a judgment of approval.

To illustrate this point let us imagine a value which has been defined as a value solely by its correlation to an act of approval. For example a certain piece of modern music. Now we approve of this certain piece insofar as it satisfies our criteria, rules and principles of what

good music should be. But assume that its harmonies do not please, and its melodies do not seem to satisfy any of the desires that are usually satisfied by listening to classical music. For the sake of the argument let us also assume that this particular piece of music fails to satisfy any desire we may have for self-improvement, or for additional experiences, or for self-punishment (some people find a strange satisfaction in listening to horrid music, and seem to put a certain value on this self-imposed torment). In short, we approve of this music because it 'comes up to standard' but we do not actually desire it for any reason whatsoever. This desirable - because good piece of music - would then not be desired at all, and the case would seem to be proven for an essential and unbridgeable difference between the desirable and the desired. But the very fact of a judgment of approval if there were no reasons against it and no stronger desires to distract us, would tend to move our desire. No judgment of approval can be so purely rational as to forego all possible effect on will. 'Good' does not suffice unto itself but strives to become valid for us, to become a value. The very notion of good being ipso facto desirable seems to point to this. For does not desirable imply that we ought to desire it or in other words that somebody desires us to desire it? The example of the piece of music was very abstract, but if considered against its concrete background it would surely be clear that at least one person desired it very much indeed and presumably found it highly satisfactory - namely the person who composed it. The difference between desirable and desired in this

example seems not so much a difference of kind, as one of degree, of distribution of generality - in short, a quantitative difference.

I cannot at this moment think of a single example of a thing which has been thought to be desirable without having been actually desired at least by one person: the person who discovered it to be so. Thus a social reformer who propagates the idea of absolute equality for instance, desires people to desire absolute equality. He thinks they ought to desire it. He raises absolute equality to the status of a desirable value. He himself approves of it and desires it in actual fact. And although all men or even the majority of men do not as yet actually desire it, he does his best to make them desire it. In this case too the difference between the value desired and the value desirable is not one of essence but of generality of implementation, or validity. This generality of implementation does not indicate the inner nature of a value, and furnishes no gauge for its status in the hierarchy of values. Many values of supreme importance, it is true, have become valid under similar circumstances (being values for, i.e. being desired, first by one man and then by a minority of men). But some values of inferior quality or even negative values like gratuitous cruelty or totalitarian State-politics show the same characteristic of being actually desired by only one man or a minority of men who seek to make it desired, or think it ought to be desired, i.e. that it is desirable for the majority. The characteristic of being a value in potentia, a value as yet largely more desirable than desired (in its quantitative and distributive implication)

is therefore not sufficient to determine by itself the status of the value concerned.

According to Brehier value is always desired. But this is not necessarily so. We can mention quite a few values of the status of the scale of approval which are not in general greatly desired (like a low handicap at golf, which though intensely desired by some is only slightly desired by most). Again we must bear in mind that whenever the status of values according to approval may be, we can take account of it, and

all. Another distinction to which desirable and desired is usually taken to refer (and this is the one most obvious to the layman), is that expressed by the Roman poet: *video meliora proboque deteriora sequor*. By 'meliora' Ovid wishes to indicate the sort of private and political life her father, the King, and Colchiz, her country, expected and desired Medea to lead (the desirable). By 'deteriora' Ovid refers to the love of Jason so fervently desired and so relentlessly pursued by Medea as to cause the neglect of her filial and patriotic duties. Here the opposition of desirable and desired is made to correspond to that between a fainter and a stronger desire, the fainter being coupled with the overriding judgment of approval, the stronger with the overridden. Thus, for instance, Beauty is considered of greater intrinsic value than food though the desire for food under certain circumstances (when we are hungry) can become so acute as to eclipse completely any desire we might have cherished for Beauty. Brehier holds that in general and at all times and by their very nature the higher values are only mildly

1) By the author's view is. There may always be a few people who desire a superior value like honor or justice by the operation of their souls more than food and wealth.

desired.¹⁾ The proportion between values as approved and values as desired according to Brehier varies inversely. But this is not necessarily so. We can mention quite a few values of low status on the scale of approval which are not in general greatly desired (like a low handicap at golf, which though intensely desired by some is only mildly desired by most). Again we must bear in mind that whatever the scale of values according to approval may be, we can take no notice of it, and allow its influence inside the domain defined by ρ_1 , the formal correlation between desire and value, unless it were found to follow a distinct and well defined pattern. But we have seen that the distinction between desired and desirable (both taken in their formal correlation to value) follows no such distinct and well defined pattern. It has been found to depend more on the incidental (subject to no discoverable law) degree of intensity and generality of desires than on any inherent quality of the values towards which they were directed.

Hence when ρ_1 is defined as a formal correlation between desire and value (and a fortiori when in ρ_2 desire is assumed to be the material and effective cause of value) the distinction of values in respect of greater and lesser desirability has no meaning. Similarly the distinction between "what is desired" and "what should be desired" becomes meaningless, since no fixed ratio of variation whether direct or inverse, can be discovered to hold between desires and their corresponding objects. Given as our basic premisses the existence of desires, their

1) By the majority that is. There may always be a few people who desire a superior value like truth or justice or the salvation of their souls more than food and warmth.

qualifications, and their corresponding objects of satisfaction, any norm to be deduced from these premisses would have to be based on the varying degrees of intensity or generality in desires. Such a norm would assign degrees of superiority and inferiority to values, according to the degrees of intensity and generality in the corresponding desires. But such an assignation of value degrees would go counter to the facts of valuational experience. It would also vary with circumstances to such an extent that no satisfactory degree of constancy could be obtained. But a certain degree of constancy, and were it only a fairly constant formula to regulate the flow of variations, is absolutely necessary if a principle for the evaluation of values is to be established. Since no such principle can be established on the given premisses, no clear formula for the distinction and ordering of values according to superiority and inferiority can be defined in the domain circumscribed by § 1. Again, if no distinction can be made among values; no order of precedence proved; and no hierarchical scale fixed, no conceivable proof can be adduced to establish the supreme status of moral worth and its absolute ascendancy over all other values in this context.

In other words, the justification for the supremacy of moral worth over all other values cannot be vindicated with the help of an examination of a system of value, in which values are defined by their formal correlation § 1 to desire.

Can this primacy of moral worth be justified if we assume that the relation between will and value is a causal relation of the type § 2? In § 2, it should be borne in mind, desire is defined as the material

effective cause of which value is the result. We are fortunate enough to possess an outstanding example of this approach, in S. Alexander's "Beauty and other forms of Value".¹⁾ A scrutiny of Alexander's views as put forward in this book and in respect of the way he develops his basic assumptions, and the conclusion he draws for his moral theory, should do much to clarify the inevitable results of such an approach, as well as the unavoidable consequences it entails for any theory of Ethics. It may also be of help in providing a possible answer to our question.

According to the basic assumption of 'Beauty and other forms of value' value is the result of 'natural election'. The primary cause, primary both temporally and logically, is to be found in the 'natural' desires, needs and impulses of man (animal or even mineral, as the natural predilection of one chemical for another, of the magnet for the filing seems to show). Value is, what satisfies these natural impulses. Nothing which does not satisfy an impulse has value. Value has no being or meaning in itself. Its reality is constituted by a relation to desire. This assumption is self-evident in the case of the lower or animal values. Thus hunger, and the vital need for the replenishment of the organism gives food its value. Food, though it were pleasant (beautiful round apples, for instance) would have no value and would not satisfy our hunger were it not also nutritious. But even if the higher values like Beauty, Truth and Goodness are pronounced valuable "we may feel sure in advance . . . there is some special impulse in ourselves or some

1) London, 1935.

qualifications of an impulse in ourselves which makes us do it"¹⁾ If we wish to analyse the concepts of these higher values we must first make it our business "to identify these impulses".²⁾ Since no value has a being in itself independent of its relation to impulse, Beauty, too, cannot be regarded as a quality of things which we discover as we discover the other qualities of things, for instance the pleasantness of apples. (But only this pleasantness, not their nutritious value, can be discovered in this way.) "The character of the Beautiful cannot be found in an analysis of the beautiful objects but in that of the satisfied impulse".³⁾

Briefly then, Alexander singles out the three impulses of construction, curiosity, and gregariousness which are shared by man and animal (as are many other impulses) for special consideration. They are singled out for becoming for the first time purposeful in man where they had been blind in the animal: a bird builds its nest because it is prompted by an obscure constructive impulse to do so, but man builds his chair for the purpose of sitting down on it. Secondly they may become disinterested in the immediate practical use to which they have been put, as when a man making a chair disregards the practical destination of this chair, and becomes interested in the making of it for its own sake.

Some impulses then from being blind may become first purposeful, then disinterested and contemplative. What satisfies them in their latest

1) Page 14, B and other forms of V.

2) Page 14, idem.

3) Page 35, idem.

form does no longer simply satisfy but satisfies in a certain manner; in a disinterested, objective, and contemplative manner. What satisfies our impulses in the manner so described are termed higher values. Thus the correlated stages of satisfaction for the constructive impulse are construction, craftsmanship, art. For the inquisitive impulse they are experience, useful experience, science; and for the gregarious impulse they are companionship, organised societies, virtue. But every impulse has to create its satisfaction from given materials. Just as stone, colours, words, notes of music are the material of Beauty, and sense data the material of Truth, so the natural impulses are the material of Virtue. In morality we are concerned with the passions of man, with their desires for material and immaterial objects and the fitting satisfaction of these passions. It is not the good things we might get, not external nature as mere foreign material, we are concerned with but the good directions of our will, the nature of man. Virtue is not so much an adjustment to our natural surroundings as an adjustment to one another in the face of these surroundings. Goodness is what effects harmony between individual wills, and is nothing else but itself a natural impulse, the gregarious impulse, become disinterested, objective and contemplative. The ought of morals is a new sort of reality fashioned creatively out of natural impulses by the introduction amongst them of another natural impulse which regulates, dominates, and harmonises them, just as Beauty is a new reality made by the introduction into the material of art of the creative impulse which blends mind with material, infuses it with life and transforms it. Morality, in short, is that system of wills which

satisfies and satisfies objectively the impulse of morality. In this respect obligation may be said to be the relation of any single element to the whole system. We ought to be virtuous because each single act of virtue is needed to maintain the system of socially adjusted wills.

Since these values have been taken to satisfy disinterestedly the natural impulse turned contemplative, this very disinterestedness, it is argued, is a warrant for its objectivity. Still, one might argue, if X thinks a picture beautiful though it be in fact hideous, the very fact of his being disinterested in the matter (he neither wishes to buy nor to sell it) does not ensure the objectivity of the beautiful character of the picture. To circumvent this argument Alexander hastens to define the objectively valuable, as that which not only disinterestedly satisfies an impulse, but also satisfies a standard impulse. The standard he holds is determined in Aesthetics by a "tyranny of the qualified" minority; in Science by "a conspiracy of scientists"; and in Morals by "the tyranny of the many who want to be good over the minority which desires courses of action that cannot be adjusted to the social whole".

As long as a man "fits" into his society he is virtuous, and there can be no difference between a man virtuous as a savage among savages, or as a Christian among Christians. Changes in the code of morals of a society are only justified when the sympathy of the majority has been won for whatever satisfies the impulse of the reformer. And always one will have to entertain a justifiable prejudice in favour of what is already accepted. There is no right and no privilege, not even that to life and liberty, unless it has been recognised in a society by the

adjustment of the majority of wills. But though there are no degrees in virtuousness (according to this theory I am just as virtuous if I think that a murderer should be hanged in a society in which capital punishment is accepted, as when I think it a crime in a society which does not admit of capital punishment), Alexander claims that the scale of virtue may differ, thus safeguarding the possibility of progress. Within virtuous action itself there may be a variation in respect of its greatness or smallness just as there might be such a variation in Beauty: the Beauty of a Tanagra figurine for example is just as perfect as that of the Moses of Michelangelo, but its greatness, significance, import varies in direct proportion to the greatness of its subject-matter. So too the scale of the virtuous action may vary. The action involving more men, more values, more and weightier decisions must be acknowledged superior. "The widow's mite is just as generous as the millionaire's endowment of a hospital, it may even have more merit but it is not so large nor so magnificent".¹⁾ Hence, in a way, the historical greatness of an action becomes the measure of its moral value, and the historical progress of the world becomes in a certain sense identified with its moral progress. But Alexander is naturally reluctant to accept this inevitable and stringently reasoned outcome of his basic assumptions. For in spite of being stringently reasoned in itself, it stands in blatant contradiction to the facts of moral experience. Alexander therefore tries his best to qualify the stark result. He admits that a

1) Page 142.

great difficulty and a strong argument against himself stems from the existent essential difference between historical greatness and moral value. Even the example brought and chosen by himself of the widow's mite does more to weaken his argument than to strengthen it. For the widow's mite possesses a moral grandeur and magnificence which the millionaire's hospital, and all the hospitals endowed by all the millionaires in the world, can never hope to rival. For their magnificence is not moral but physical and the two cannot be compared. Alexander also admits the difficulty inherent in defining "morality as a man-made creation of the social impulse". The social impulse by itself can never be a sufficient warrant for the assumption that the "direction of its evolution" will indeed lie in that of the "world's (moral) advance". To secure this ultimate convergence of the two directions of development Alexander is forced to recur to religious faith in the existence and the providence of God. He concludes by citing Höffding's: "Religion is the Faith we have in the conservation of Values". Thus and thus only can Alexander assure us that the man-made values of the social impulse are real values indeed.

Several points must be raised against Alexander's theory:

- A) This theory uses concepts like α) superior values, β) arbiters of value, and γ) progress, which are not defined inside that system, and can only be defined by disrupting the system.
- B) The superiority of the social impulse over other impulses cannot be defined inside this system in a way that would include the notion of moral merit in its definition.

A₂) In Alexander's system impulses are natural and what satisfies them are values. There is no way of singling out the superior values unless one relies on the nature of the impulses themselves. These one can do in two different ways: a) by distinguishing the blind, purposive, disinterested and contemplative stages of an impulse. b) by virtue of differences of intensity and/or generality of impulses: quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus.

a) Alexander has singled out the impulses of construction of curiosity and of gregariousness for consideration. They create the "superior values" of Beauty, Truth and Virtue, as they gradually pass from a blind into a purposive, from a purposive to a disinterested, and finally into a contemplative state. But why single out these impulses? The impulse that is satisfied by food can also become disinterested and contemplative. Yet Alexander does not regard Gastronomy as quite so superior a value as Beauty. As a matter of fact, most natural impulses can pass through those stages until they become contemplative. Yet Alexander admits only three superior values. We must therefore conclude that the form which an impulse assumes (i.e. for instance the contemplative form) is not a sufficient condition for establishing and assuring the correspondingly satisfying value of a superior status.

b) If the natural impulses which are strongest, most general and most persevering were always satisfied by superior values; if those less intense, less general and less often met with were always satisfied by inferior values, a stable and well-defined relation could be said to exist between the nature of the impulse and the value by which it is

satisfied. In this sense it would have been possible to define the concept of "superior values" inside Alexander's system. But as a matter of fact Alexander does not so define the superiority of values. He considers Beauty though it be satisfactory only to few, or Truth which is satisfactory only to the scientist as vastly superior to the value of food which is intensely satisfactory to all. Nor would it be quite accurate to infer that superiority of value can be defined in inverse proportion to the strength and the ubiquity of the impulse it satisfies. Undoubtedly the higher values are usually less ardently desired than the lower ones. Food is desired even in its absence with great intensity, whilst Beauty to be satisfying must find us in a receptive frame of mind: the Beauty of a Beethoven quartet will hardly be satisfying when one is hungry. Nevertheless were justice for instance desired by all men, all of the time most intensely, whilst titles and other honours were but faintly desired by a few, Alexander would still hold justice to be the superior value.

In short the superiority and inferiority of values cannot be defined inside Alexander's system. The concepts of superiority and inferiority used by Alexander are alien to his system and not to be deduced from his basic premisses. They are based on wholly different assumptions, on assumptions which contradict the very basis of Alexander's theory. To sum up: In addition to his basic assumption: (that values are only the results of natural impulses) and in contradiction to his definition (values have no being in themselves besides the reality of their relation to impulse) Alexander has assumed, probably in unconscious accordance with the evidence of everyday valuational experience, that there exist some

values which are superior in themselves, without any reference to their relation to impulse. These are, primarily, the values of Truth, Beauty, and Morality.

Only in this way can we understand how Alexander came to single out the impulses of construction, curiosity and gregariousness for special treatment.

A β The notion of an "arbiter of value" is not homogeneous to Alexander's system. No principle of evaluation is defined in that system, which would help us to discriminate the qualities of severally directed desires, unless it be the quality of the objects at which the desires are directed. (This possibility is precluded by Alexander's assumption that value has no being in itself.) Thus if I desire an ugly picture as satisfactory to my need of Beauty, my desire is in no way different from that of a man who desires a beautiful picture. Desire cannot draw its qualification and justification from the thing that satisfies since, by definition, desire determines what satisfies it, and calls this satisfactory thing into being, but is not in turn determined or called into being by it. What is and what is not beautiful can therefore, in stringent consequence from the premisses, only be determined by the consensus of a majority of desires. But this again would contradict the facts of everyday valuational experience. Therefore Alexander is forced to assume that what is and what is not beautiful, is decided by a minority of people who setting themselves up as qualified though self-appointed judges tyrannise the rest into submission and acceptance.

Now, as a matter of historical fact, such contingencies have often arisen in the history of art. The impressionists, the expressionists, the "fauves", the futurists and the surrealists have certainly conquered their public in this way. But then, it was also in this way that in Hitler Germany the most hideous-neo-classicism conquered its public, and half a century earlier the pre-raphaelites conquered England. Now, though it be a matter for discussion whether surrealism or pre-raphaelitism, neo-classicism or plain academicism be the more offensive manner of painting, the very fact that such a discussion is possible seems to prove that we have an outside principle of evaluation, with which we measure the arbitrations of those who call themselves qualified. In other words the verdict of the arbiters of beauty does not represent a principle of evaluation. It does not constitute a norm of beauty, but itself is subject to such a norm, itself is judged by a principle of evaluation, in no way derived from, and independent of, desire. The generality, the penetration, the fervour with which a form of beauty is accepted historically is but accidental to its inner status. The same holds for morality. Even if the whole world accepted slavery as the norm of virtuous life, even if "the majority of good-willed men" (i.e. social "fits" in Alexander) accepted say capital punishment for theft as the rightful law of the land (as happened in England until the beginning of the 19th century), we could still ask whether this was morally right. Our question would have a meaning and significance in the ethical domain for which Alexander's theory does not offer any explanation. Alexander's theory therefore we must conclude does not account for all the facts of

no being in itself and is but the result of an impulse. It will therefore be our everyday evaluational experience.

A) Again the word "progress" has no defined meaning inside Alexander's system. The assumption of basic natural impulses and their qualifications only warrants that changing circumstances will affect the impulses in varying ways, so that different things will satisfy them at different periods in history. There is no assurance that this change will be for the better simply because it is later in time. Indeed the concept of 'better' itself has no meaning in this context since we possess no principle by means of which we might assess what is better and what is worse. Moreover, any change must first overcome the justified resistance of a society which has already found a certain equilibrium in the adjustments of the individual wills to each other, and were it only the Hobbesian equilibrium of one man, or body of men, having absolute power over all other men. This equilibrium can be overturned (and its overturn can in its time win the acquiescence of the larger number and establish a new equilibrium on a different level) only by a feat of force - spiritual or corporal - by a feat of historical greatness, be the executor a single man or a body of men. But then "historical greatness is not always identical with moral superiority" as Alexander admits. A faith in God's providence watching over human destinies is needed to assure us that historical change is indeed equivalent to 'progress'.

But in order to be true to Alexander's theory, this 'faith' too must be regarded simply as the satisfaction of our impulse for security. It will be a subject to the same objections as any other value which has

no being in itself and is but the result of an impulse. It will therefore be no sufficient safeguard for the possibility or existence of "progress". "Progress" (in the sense of moral progress not in that of temporal change) is a concept that defies both definition and justification inside of Alexander's theory. Any use Alexander makes of it is therefore unwarranted and amounts to a disruption of his system.

B) Much in the same way it can be shown that the superiority of the social impulse over all other impulses cannot be justified inside Alexander's system. The social impulse may dominate other impulses as a matter of fact, by sheer actual superiority of strength. But it has been shown above (A(b)) that superiority of strength in the impulse does not imply for Alexander superiority of value in the thing that satisfies it. Therefore the superiority of the social impulse cannot be vindicated on the ground of its strength.

On the other hand, though the social impulse may not actually dominate all other impulses, we may desire it to do so. That means that there exists an impulse which will be satisfied by the superiority of the social impulse over other impulses. In other words an impulse for society as such. This is the social impulse. But then we must take the social impulse to be satisfied by the superiority of itself. In other words the sole reason why we attach importance to society is society. Though in a very complicated way this may be a quite accurate description of the manner in which each one of us is psychologically determined in our attitude to society it cannot justify the attribution of moral value to any one factor in this process (as Alexander does). The moral value of

the social impulse still stands to question. It cannot be proven or justified inside Alexander's theory, and therefore the superiority of the social impulse cannot be shown to be a moral postulate (in contradistinction from social postulate). Strictly speaking the question of the moral value of the social impulse can neither be raised nor answered inside Alexander's system. A fortiori, the superiority of the social impulse in this sense cannot be discussed in terms of this system.

To sum up: an approach which defines the relation between value and desire §2, i.e. assumes desire to be the material effective cause as well as the only determinator of value cannot yield any principle by which values themselves may be evaluated. All it yields is an enumeration of the different impulses together with an enumeration of the things that satisfy them. In this context push-pin is as good as poetry and an apple as good as courage or fame. This, though a possibly truthful description of an actual state of affairs viewed from a certain angle, does not solve our question. For if we ask: Can an analysis of §2 in all its implications yield a vindication of the claim put forward by moral worth to superiority over all other values? - the answer is plainly: no. In other words, an analysis and examination of theory of value based on §2 as its primary assumption, will fail to account for the facts of everyday moral experience.

3) Let us examine the third possible relation between value and desire §3. In §3 values are defined as the effective cause of desire. Values are assumed to possess a being in themselves and for themselves, an inner nature preceding and independent of their subsequent causal relation to

desire. The intrinsic nature of the value is the effective cause of desire and the determinant factor of the quality of the desire it has caused. It is also the ground of the desirability of the value. If we abstract for the moment from the relation to desire, and examine the values for themselves, we find that there are four different ways in which values can be related to each other.

1) Values can be separate, each contained in itself, disconnected and incommensurable.

2) Values can be each contained in itself, incommensurable, but connected into ordered systems which take their unity but not their value from the unity of human consciousness.

3) Values can be connected with each other in a system of ends and means and containing the scale of their value in the very determinations of their inner nature fixed, as it were, immutably, by God.

4) Values could be disconnected and separate but commensurable according to a certain scale determined by an intuition superimposed on the primary intuition in which the intrinsic nature of values is recognised.

1) In the first case, the case propounded by Hartmann and Scheler, we have a system of absolute values, each value claiming the complete allegiance of our will. The single values alternately appear and disappear from our spiritual horizon as we become conscious of, and pay obeisance to, now the one, now the other. It is impossible for us to pay obeisance to all of them at once, for their imperious demands are heavy,

and sometimes contradict and clash with each other. Single values reveal their force and validity at one time, in one period of history, only to disappear and be forgotten in another.

They usually reveal themselves through the agency of a reformer, a prophet, a Messiah. Their claims on our allegiance are put forward with a certain high-handed violence. Their appearances at certain stages of history have an air of arbitrariness and betray a dependence on the accidental circumstances of history. This dependence however does not detract from the intrinsic absolute essence of the value. This intrinsic essence remains for ever intact and inviolate. Whether moral worth overrides other values in this context, will therefore be entirely dependent on accidental historical circumstances. Considered in and by itself moral worth possesses no reason, ground or justification for assuming supremacy over other values.

2) In the second case values are considered to be absolute in themselves, incommensurable with each other, yet connected and ordered into certain unified systems by virtue of the unity of consciousness of human beings. Such systems of values are examples of what Lamont calls the "total good"¹⁾ and what many others, including Green and Bradley, called self-realisation. Self-realisation, the unified order of many values, claims the allegiance of our wills. Since there are many human beings, and many possibilities of different combinations of values, there are many different unities of "self-realisation". Still the formation of

1) In Principles of Moral Judgment, page 121.

such a unity is subject to certain rules and principles. Thus the values included must be compatible and capable of a certain harmonious interlocking. The system must show a certain coherence and resilience, and should be as variegated as possible. Since it cannot include all values (human beings are finite, therefore their self-realisation is finite) it must strive to embrace the greatest possible number of values. Now as values are absolute and incommensurable, in themselves, the absolute value of each unity (as long as it conforms to the standards mentioned) is not comparable to that of any other unity. It can be neither superior nor inferior to another unity but only more or less perfect in itself. The perfect self-realisation of the scientist as a scientist is neither better nor worse than that of the artist as artist or that of the saint as a saint. If self-realisation as a harmonious system or an organic system of values, be the ideal of ethics, the superior claim of moral worth is inexplicable.

Why does a man feel it incumbent upon him to interrupt a life of aesthetic appreciation and personal affection (G.E. Moore's description of the highest ideal)¹⁾ in order to perform the simplest and lowest duties of daily life? Why did any Frenchman or Englishman interrupt their aesthetic appreciations and other self-perfections in order to fight in the late war? Why does Plato (in the parable of the cave)²⁾ make his philosopher interrupt his contemplation of the 'Sun', in order to return

1) Principia Ethica, page 188.

2) Republic, Book IX.

to those chained inside, and tell them about what he has seen beyond the cave? Surely if ^{Desire} ~~Virtue~~ is the highest good, then man, in order to attain to it, has a right to neglect his duties towards his fellow men? But if this were not so, if moral duties have a stronger claim than any self-perfection and self-realisation, as the facts of our everyday moral experience seem to point out, then the reason for the strength of the moral claim cannot be found in the principle of self-realisation.

3) In the third case values are assumed to be commensurable. They are gradated in virtue of their inner nature from lower to higher in an ascending scale. Sometimes they are so ordered in respect of the relationship of ends to means as Aristotle ordered them. Sometimes values are ordered in respect of parts and wholes. Thus pleasure is considered of greater value when combined with beauty, than when combined with food (Moore). The principle by which the order of precedence is determined in this context, is assumed to be immutably fixed by an "eternal order of nature" or by the will of God in accordance with the true inner nature of each value. A thorough understanding of the intrinsic nature of a value and its relations with other values would then entail an exact knowledge of the position of the value in question on the hierarchical scale.

But the inner nature of a value and its relation with other values appear so ambiguous and dialectically bivalent as we approach them now from the creative and now from the contemplative angle that we find it quite impossible to decide by deductive reasoning from the facts of valuational experience on their true order of precedence. Who should

know more about beauty than the artist who creates it and the connoisseur who appreciates it? Yet from an analysis of their attitude to beauty it will be impossible to decide whether beauty is a means to self-realisation or self-realisation a means to beauty, and therefore impossible to decide their true order of precedence on the scale of values. For the connoisseur who takes beauty as an absolute value and makes the contemplation of it his ideal, ultimately beauty becomes a means of enjoyment or a way of self-perfection. For the artist who starts by considering self-realisation as an absolute value, and makes the creative activity the ideal of his life, beauty ultimately becomes the absolute value, to which his self-realisation and enjoyment is but a means and a way of attainment. The same dialectical relation can be observed to hold between the gentleman for whom science is but a means to enlarge the field of his self-realisation, and the scientist for whom it is an absolute value, regardless of the implications which its pursuit might have for his self-development or his enjoyment of the activities involved in this pursuit. Yet when faced by the famous Lessing-question: God offering perfect knowledge in one hand, and the pursuit of it in the other, the gentleman with the contemplative approach would choose perfect knowledge, but the scientist would choose with Lessing the pursuit of it, i.e. his self-realisation. In the same way, it will be impossible to determine whether moral worth is a means to self-perfection or whether self-perfection is but the pursuit of moral worth: In other words it will be impossible to decide whether moral worth or self-perfection occupy the higher position on the scale of values. A fortiori it will

be impossible to prove that moral worth is the supreme value.

4) Since the true grade of values cannot be decided by deductive reasoning from the facts of valuational experience, the fourth case assumes that we possess an intuition which reveals to us immediately and directly the true status of a value. Thus in addition to the intuition which discloses to us the intrinsic nature of a value, we possess an intuition which discloses to us the relative merit of a value. Hence the supremacy of moral worth over all other values is established by an act of intuition. Furthermore on the strength of this intuition a postulate to the effect that moral worth has a right to override the claims of all other values on our allegiance, is formulated. This postulate bases its validity solely on that act of intuition. It falls and stands with it. Consequently, it would appear, that whoever lacks or denies the intuition which establishes the primacy of moral worth over all other values, is not subject to and bound by the claim of moral duty.

This is a very difficult problem which we must refer to a later occasion. For the present it will suffice if it were cogently shown that an examination of β_3 (the causal relation between value and desire in which value is the effective cause of desire) does not yield a justification, ground or reason for the claim of moral worth for supremacy over all other values. In other words, this supremacy can be neither inferred nor deduced from such an analysis of a system of values and unless an intuition were called in for the special purpose of establishing that supremacy.

To sum up: Values perform two different functions, corresponding to the two different ways in which they can be defined. First values can be defined as correlates of judgments of approval. Secondly they can be defined as correlates of desire, will, and action. In their second function they come under the jurisdiction of Ethics inasmuch as they exert an influence over desires, will and action, and, hence, over human conduct. There are four possible relations between conduct and value. Value can be the end or object, the motive, the regulative principle or the accidental by-product of conduct. Only in the first two cases can conduct be regarded as actually and directly determined by value. In the third case the influence of value on conduct is limiting rather than constitutive, and in the fourth this relation is incidental.

The relation R_2 between conduct and value as it appears in the first two cases (value as the end, value as the motive of conduct) can be defined in three different ways. First as ρ_1 , a formal correlation of desire (the spring of will, action, conduct) and value. Secondly as ρ_2 , a causal relation with desire the effective cause of value. Thirdly as ρ_3 , a causal relation in which value is the effective cause of desire.

It has been shown that no proof for the supremacy of moral worth over all other values in claiming our allegiance, can be deduced from analyses of the three different systems of values (which correspond to the three different definitions of R_2 : ρ_1, ρ_2, ρ_3). The supremacy of moral worth is not warranted, nor justified by the results of these analyses and it can only be established by means of an intuition appealed to for that

value were it achieved by killing off the diseased and weak (as they all

very purpose.

In short the results of an examination of the system of values in their second function does not explain or warrant the primacy of moral worth, which we see requested in everyday moral experience, any more than the results of an examination of values in respect of their first function did.

Some additional reflections on the nature of value.

Values fulfilling the function of ends or objects of conduct will partake to a certain extent of the qualities of 'ends' as such. These qualities, in their turn, will, to a certain extent, be coloured by the qualities proper to 'values' as such.

"Ends" considered in themselves, have for instance a tendency to obscure the ways and manner in which they have been reached and detract from the latter's importance. "Ends" tend to swallow-up their "means" and to absorb them so completely as to obliterate altogether any qualities the 'means' might have had in themselves. Thus, it is the same as far as the 'end' of producing the 'Divina Comedia' is concerned, whether it were created by Dante harnessing all his genius to the making of it, or whether it were accidentally produced by the monkeys typing away at their typewriters through eternity. The 'end' accomplished tells nothing, cares nothing, and does not account for the way in which it has been achieved. It stands on its own. It speaks only for itself. "The perfect health of all mankind", would, as an 'end' accomplished represent just the same value were it achieved by killing off the diseased and weak (as they did

in Sparta) as it represents when achieved by the curing and strengthening of the diseased (as we try to do nowadays). It would possess the same value were it achieved because of our love for mankind and our reluctance to see it suffer, as it would were it achieved because we regard mankind as slaves and serfs and seek to get the greatest amount of labour out of them. The end does not take any account of means or motives. It is independent of them and indifferent. But inside the moral domain, means and motive are sometimes more important than the end achieved. Consider "perfect health", for example. Let us assume that "perfect health" has been approved on moral grounds, and consequently has been defined as a desirable value inside the moral domain. Now let the one way of achieving it be the killing of the diseased and weak, and let this action be qualified as 'bad' in itself inside the moral domain. Then it would still be considered a morally bad action, even though it were the sole means of achieving a "good" end. Again let the motive for desiring "perfect health" for all be the selfish one of wishing to exploit that health for our benefit. This motive too will not be redeemed by the goodness of the end achieved. Inside the moral domain a 'good' and even if it is "morally" good, i.e. admitted to possess moral worth, does not furnish the moral justification of its means, nor does it confer moral sanction on its motives. "The greatest happiness of the greatest number" though it were considered the supreme moral value, the very ground of all morality, can neither make the enforcement of it on those unwilling to accept it a morally good act, nor should a man desiring it be actuated by motives of envy and hatred of those more fortunate than himself, render

his motive good.

Not only can an 'end' not justify (morally!) its means or sanctify its motive, its very function as an end appears to render it morally questionable and disqualifies it as a principle of moral evaluation.

By virtue of its nature of 'end' it possesses the following characteristics:

- a) A certain relation to means;
- b) a tendency to claim absolute allegiance to the exclusion of all other values;
- c) a tendency to set itself up as an absolute standard and principle, in excess of all limitation.

a) In the relationship of end to means it is the end alone which confers a relative value on its means, after having deprived them of any value they may have possessed in their own right previous to entering into this relationship. In this effect it offends against that principle of moral evaluation which demands that every action be judged for, by, and in itself, irrespective of its consequences. Only thus can the unobstructed application of moral evaluation be safeguarded, i.e. the necessary basic condition of moral evaluation be fulfilled. In this sense it may be said that the tendency of all ends to justify their means must go contrary to the very conditions under which the working of moral evaluation becomes possible at all. This objection holds good even if the "end" referred to were the very principle of morality itself.

In addition there seems to be something repugnant to the moral principle, in the thought of putting itself up as an end of human

conduct. The reason for this may possibly be found in the two other characteristics of the notion of end: its tendency to make itself the sole absolute to the exclusion and denial of all other ends, and its tendency to make itself absolute in the sense of unlimited and infinite validity.

b) The first tendency gives rise to a phenomenon which for want of a better name we might call "Sacro-egoismo". This 'sacro-egoismo' can take three forms, an individual, a social and an objective form. By individual "sacro-egoismo" we designate some personal good which like the Eudaimonia of Aristotle, the Self-realisation of Green and Bradley or the Sainthood of the religious person is declared the supreme ideal. By social sacro-egoismo we refer to such supreme ideals as the utilitarian paradise, Rousseau's, Hegel's and H. Cohen's State, Kant's Kingdom of Ends, Democracy, Totalitarianism etc. By objective sacro-egoismo we refer to Science, Art, Philosophy, etc. when set up as the ideal end for human action.

In the first case, when the sacro-egoismo applies to a personal ideal the problem is relatively simple. No personal ideal, no end formulated in relation to a single individual, be it the saving of his immortal soul or the perfection of his moral character is great enough to withstand the claim of the most commonplace and insignificant duty as between person and person. A man who in order to spare himself anxiety refuses to lie to an ill friend because he does not wish to taint his own moral perfection, is in a way not less blameworthy than one who lies for his personal advantage (in money matters for example). It is simply that

the one regards his main advantage to lodge in his property, the other in the morality of his character. But both in some way appear equally egoistic and morally blameworthy in their attitude to their neighbour. La Sainteté chez certains rigoristes chrétiens, chez un Kierkegaard par exemple, comme la parfaite harmonie intérieure dans le sage antique, finissent... par se distinguer mal de je ne sais quel égoïsme raffiné.¹⁾ Again we must mention the parable of the cave in Plato's Republic, where service to fellow prisoners chained in the darkness is put higher than the contemplation of the "Sun" itself. The attitude expressed in the moral evaluations mentioned may possibly be due to the fact that in a certain way morality can be said to be defined only between person and person in the intra-subjective domain but not in the internal subjective domain of one person, where other ideals may reign supreme. To avoid this objection let us consider the sacro-egoïsme in its social form. To circumvent the first obvious criticism let us say at once that we will consider it in its most general form, i.e. as embracing all mankind. To circumvent the second obvious criticism which is usually raised against any social ideal, i.e. the necessity of forcing recalcitrant individuals to accept it, let us point out at once that we would educate everybody so that by their own free will they would become happy members in the best of all possible human societies. Even then a vague feeling of moral malaise warns us that all is not well. That not all our moral aspirations

1) D. Parodi quoted by Renée Bertrand in the Revue de Métaphysique et de Morale, July 1941, page 165.

would be fulfilled in this ideal state, that most of them would be deadened and destroyed. Consider but for a moment a world in which nobody ever loved or painted, or made music, or erred unless it were for the general good. A world in which everybody went around educating everybody else and perfecting their moral characters. Surely such a world has something inhuman about it, a nightmarish mechanical quality which we dimly feel to be unsympathetic to morality, morally not quite right.

c) The reasons for this indistinct feeling might become a little clearer if we considered the third characteristic quality of "ends"; their tendency to constitute themselves as absolute ideals. There is something almost sacrilegious in the idea of any single ideal arrogating to itself the limitless power of an absolute. Ordered systems of values, be they even the perfect social ideal appear to suffer the same fate. For has not God himself renounced the absolute perfection and moral goodness it was in his power to bestow on his creation, in order to make place in it for the freedom of man? And is not every social ideal that would make itself absolute (by the very fact that it is not subject to the same limitation as a personal ideal made absolute, i.e. the concern and respect for other men) open to the objection that it would impair our moral freedom, and make nonsense of moral merit and evaluation. In other words there is something immoral in the very notion of an absolute value or end, an absolute ideal, inasmuch as it ultimately denies our freedom of choice. No value can be absolute as an end, for man is above

value. Not even moral freedom itself can be made into an absolute end unless it destroy itself. Value as an absolute ideal by its very absoluteness denies the claim of moral worth for primacy over all other values.

Values fulfilling the function of ends or objects of conduct can therefore not serve as a standard of moral evaluation: a) because of their irrelevancy to the moral status of a given action of which they are the ends, and b) because the essential characteristics of their nature as ends run counter and obstruct the course of unhampered moral evaluation.

Values fulfilling the function of motives to actions will be our next concern. Our first query: Is the moral status of an action determined by the moral value of its motive? Our second query: In what way is it so determined? Our third query: To what extent is the moral evaluation of an action determined by the moral value of its motive? It is generally believed that the moral goodness of an action lies in the goodness of its motive. An action no matter how good its consequences and its accidental by-products will not be considered morally good unless done for a 'good' motive.

Now the motives of action can roughly be divided into two main classes: motives which spring from the natural inclinations of a man, and those born out of a certain deficiency, or lack. This lack or deficiency may be the lack of a material, or an immaterial spiritual object (lack of food for instance, and lack of glory). This lack may be brought to our attention by the very absence of the object (such is the case when we are

hungry). It may also be brought to our attention by an accidental meeting with the object material (like unknown and exotic kind of foods or pleasure which we crave only after having experienced them at least once) or immaterial (the beauty of a Beethoven quartet or a Chinese poem!) which fills this particular lack.

As far as the motives which spring from our natural inclinations are concerned we cannot be held responsible for them since they are not of our choosing. If a man be kindhearted and give a beggar a coin there is no more moral merit in it than if he were by nature irascible and shouted at a servant.

"Pity though it is the most gentle and the least mischievous of all our passions is yet as much a frailty of our nature as anger, pride and fear...."

"There is no merit in saving an innocent babe ready to drop into the fire; the action is neither good nor bad and what benefit soever the infant received we only oblige ourselves; for to have seen it fall, and not have striven to hinder it, would have caused us pain; which self-preservation compelled us to prevent...."¹⁾

"But such men, as without complying with any weakness of their own can part from what they value themselves and from no other motive but their love of goodness perform a worthy action in silence; such men, I confess have acquired more refined notions of virtue than those I have hitherto spoke of; yet even in these (with which the world has yet

1) Bernard de Mandeville: An Enquiry into the origin of Moral Virtue, quoted from Selby-Bigge, & 1011.

never swarmed) we may discover no small symptoms of pride and the humblest man alive must confess that the reward of a virtuous action, which is the satisfaction that ensues upon it, consists in a certain pleasure he procures to himself by contemplating on his own worth; which pleasure together with the occasion of it are as certain signs of pride, as looking pale and trembling at any imminent danger are the symptoms of fear."1)

On the other hand, though a man cannot at a certain moment choose what motive to have and what motive not to have, he is free not to act upon a motive. He is also able though this be a slow process to train himself to acquire certain motives in future. This he is able to accomplish by making use of the second spring of motive, the lack of some material or immaterial object. Some of these lacks (like hunger) he feels by virtue of his being a man, some (like ambition) he feels by virtue of being a certain kind of man, but the lack and need for some things he does not discover for himself unless they be forced on his attention by others. Cigarettes for instance, and many sorts of pleasure, and for some men the enjoyment of beauty and for others the human sympathies, are acquired motives. In a way the faculty of men for acquiring new motives of action is the reason and the explanation of the possibility of education. But it must be pointed out, that the fact of a motive's being acquired and secondary does not ipso facto render it morally good. The lowest of depravities and the highest of moral virtue

1) 1012. idem.

are alike the acquired habits of man in society and become genuine motives of his conduct only after a certain time of training has elapsed. Hence, an acquired motive must be good in itself before moral merit can be attributed to it.

It is one of the most intriguing paradoxes of morality that a motive which is both good and acquired seems to possess moral merit only as long as a certain tension between it and the primary natural inclination exists; but loses its claim to moral merit the moment it has been so well assimilated as to become second nature. It is irrelevant to the moral worth of my action if I succour the poor because I am naturally soft-hearted or if I succour them because I have so long been trained to do so that I am no longer capable to refrain from it. The certain degree of compulsoriness which clings to motives of natural inclinations and those which have become second nature, deprives them of their claim to moral merit. Thus the actions of angels, whose every motive is good by virtue of their angelic nature can hardly be said to possess moral merit. He who is not able to sin cannot be virtuous in the moral sense, though he may be termed so by analogy. What we really wish to express when alluding to the moral perfection of angels is that, were any man to act in a like manner rising above the imperfections of his human nature, such a man would be morally perfect. . . .

These reflections seem to lead to a very disturbing conclusion, namely that moral merit may be attributed to the motives of any man only in the interim between their acquisition and their complete assimilation into his nature. A naturally good man will be debarred for ever from

performing a good action. Even Kant's authority can be claimed in support. For did he not make the famous distinction between pathological love and practical love¹⁾ when discussing the injunction: Love thy neighbour as thyself? Did he not declare that there was no merit in the actions, the self-sacrifices, a mother brought to her child? And did Schiller not fathom Kant's true meaning when he wrote the famous dysticha:

Gewissens skrupel: Gern dien ich den Freunden, doch tu ich es

leider mit Neigung

Und so wurmt es mir oft, dass ich nicht

tugendhaft bin

Decisum: Da ist kein anderer Rat, du musst suchen

sie zu verachten

Und mit Abscheu alsdann, tun, wie die

Pflicht dir gebeut.²⁾

Must we then assume that it would be a morally bad thing for a man to aspire to moral perfection, since such perfection attained would debar him from ever performing a moral action again? Does the contention against motive hold good even when the motive in question is the principle of morality itself as in Hume's dictum: No action can be virtuous or morally good unless there is in human nature some motive to

1) Xenien aus dem Musenalmanach 1792, Horenausgabe im Propylaen Verlag, Berlin 1926; page 245.

2) Kant at this point as in many other matters follows Pauline doctrine; compare the notions: ἔργον and ἄγαν.

produce it distinct from the sense of its morality? In other words, if the motive of an action be the sense of morality would there be no moral merit in this action? Thus if I give alms to a beggar because a sense of moral duties has been implanted into my heart, there is no moral merit in this action than if I learn to play the piano because I have been taught to value such accomplishments. If I dedicate all my life to the welfare of mankind because a love of justice is my prime motive, there is no more merit in my conduct than if I spend my life trying to solve mathematical problems because mathematical problems happen to be of the greatest interest to me. In short, it seems that an action cannot draw its moral merit from the moral value of its motive either.

To sum up: We have seen that an action cannot be said to be morally good in view of its 'end'. Indeed 'ends' even "morally good ends" have been found to be disqualified as principles and grounds of moral evaluation by the very qualities of their intrinsic nature as "ends". Now it seems possible that 'motives', or values in their function of motives of action, will have to share the same fate. For though the moral merit of an act in a certain way depends upon its motive:¹⁾ an act cannot be considered morally good when its motive is of inferior or negative moral value²⁾ it now seems extremely doubtful whether an act can be declared 'morally good' in consequence of the superior moral value of

1) The moral merit of an act does not depend at all upon the moral value of its end. An act though its end were morally bad could still be considered good because of its motive.

2) i.e. goodness of motive is a necessary condition for the goodness of an act.

its motive.¹⁾

An attempt has been made to make the moral merit of an action depend on the contravening of its natural motive. An action would then be morally good only if it went against its motive. Thus 'helping a friend in need' would be a morally good act only after all natural sympathy towards this friend has been eliminated and a thorough hatred of him and his plight wrought up instead. M. Sartre in his approach to moral problems seems to concur fully with this view. In his example of men confronted by the twin duties of joining the Maquis or looking after an aged and helpless mother, he considers it the right moral act for men of war-loving, sanguine and courageous natures to stay with their mothers; for men of weak, timid and fearful character to join the Maquis.

But it seems to me that this view is subject to the same objections as the one considered before. This attitude makes the moral merit of an action no less dependent on motive (though on the inversion of it) than the more straightforward one which made the moral merit of an action directly dependent on the moral merit its motive. A man is no more blame- or praiseworthy for the moral value of his motive inverted, than for the moral value of his motive direct. Both, the one and the other, are beyond his power to choose or change.

The only conclusion left to us is that the moral merit of an action lies in the rising above motive, in the independence from motive. In the liberty of man, to check his own motives; limit their range; choose

1) i.e. the goodness of motive does not seem to be a sufficient condition for the goodness of an act.

which of them to implement in action, in what way, and to what extent; which to disregard altogether and suppress. In the liberty of man to rise above his motives and above the values incorporated in motives as he rose above values incorporated in ends, lies the possibility of moral merit. "Helping a friend in need" will not become a morally good act by forcing ourselves to hate this friend first, but by disregarding and discarding both motives of hate and of love, by rising above them and then acting...how? in accordance with what?

First we must make it clear that this rising above value, this free Sovereignty of man face to face with his motives and his ends, is not to be considered an arbitrary act, an act ex nihilo on every new occasion as M. Sartre would have it. An act whose sole qualification is that it goes against every natural motive we ever harboured. The act must rise above value but not against it, and its rising must not be haphazard but conform to a certain law. Thus, for a man to drown the cats he loves (the example is taken from M. Sartre's Age of Reason) with the sole motive of asserting his independence and superiority over any natural motives, cannot be considered an act of moral merit. The act must in itself hold some moral merit. Now it has been shown that the merit of an act can neither spring from the value of its end or consequences, nor from the value of its motive. On the other hand end and motive are the sole concrete, material, and direct determining factors of acts. The only values which constitute the contents of an act.

How then can an action acquire moral merit?

Let us consider the two remaining relationships into which value and

action can enter. First value can be the law to which an action conforms. Secondly it can be the accidental result, the by-product of action. In the first case value is defined to lodge neither in the motive of an action (for example the urge to create) nor in its end (the statue) but in the laws of artistic technique on which the action of making that statue has modelled itself. This constant checking of itself in respect of the law, this constant adaptation of itself to the law, may, it is proposed, be what ultimately confers value on the actions of aesthetic creation, scientific research, moral righteousness. Value in this sense is not the material concrete constituent of action but its norm. Its manner of becoming effective, of influencing and determining action, is solely negative. It regulates and limits the given material of action but must not try to create this material.

Thus the power of moral worth to confer moral merit on actions conforming to it depends wholly on its persevering in this austere negativity in its manner of becoming effective. Thus for example the moment the basic moral law ceases to exert its influence in the abstract manner, becomes an end-in-itself (whether it be in the guise of liberty, saintliness or democracy: the greatest happiness for the greatest number) and enters into the valuation relation with desire, it becomes subject to the same objections and criticisms as any other ideal and loses its claim to moral worth. That is why we cannot make "right action" our end without depriving it of its nature as right action, nor can we make it the motive of our action without depriving it of its moral worth. The negative formulation of many moral laws may perhaps not be an

accident of language, but the expression of an essential quality of the manner in which the moral law becomes effective. However proof for this contention cannot be advanced from an analysis of values in their relation to desire, but must be left to an analysis of moral experience in all its implications.

A last word on values as by-products of action. Here values are neither the end (statue) nor the motive (creative urge) nor the law of action (rules of technique) but as far as the desire and intention are considered the accidental by-product of the action (Beauty). Therefore they do not, and cannot enter the consideration of moral deliberations and judgments which are made irrespective of them. It is another paradox of moral theory, that the superior values if realised at all are realised in this manner. It is in this manner that according to Aristotle happiness is achieved; according to Alexander, Beauty; according to religious doctrine, the qualities of sainthood, humility and grace. There is something elusive and unapproachable about the superior values. We cannot force them into the harness of our desires. The moment we try to turn them into motives or consciously sought ideals they seem to fly us and keep out of reach. We can never achieve happiness by looking for it, or moral worth by labouring at our moral perfection, or the grace of God by continuously calling upon it. We may learn to know them as the correlates of approval at our leisure, but when we try to make use of them as the correlates of will and conduct, they vanish.

PART II.

ATTEMPT TO CLARIFY THE NATURE OF "RIGHT" AND
DETERMINE ITS FUNCTION IN ETHICS.

Some Reflections on the function of "right"
in Ethics.

The notions of 'good' and 'value', whether used in their static meaning, i.e. as correlates of judgments of approval, or in their dynamic aspect i.e. as correlates of human desires, interest, will and action, are (and to show this has been the object of Part I) incapable of supplying a self-sufficient and secure basis for a system of Ethics. That the notions of "good" and "value" are so often taken to own this capability is primarily due to the unquestioning acceptance by some Ethical Thinkers of two temptingly convenient and plausible, and yet by no means necessary or universally true maxims. The first maxim confirms the commonly made overhasty equation 'good' = 'morally good' and insists on maintaining its unimpaired validity on higher levels of analysis. The second maxim states that all striving after values, and the urge to realise¹⁾ values is in itself good.²⁾ And, on the strength of the first

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- 1) i.e. like the French realiser, to bring into being, embody, actualize.
 - 2) "The word 'good' covers much, it is common to the aesthetic and the moral sphere. What is good aesthetically, what is skilfully done and perfect must not necessarily be good from a moral point of view, but the infinite effort for what is good artistically has the same root as the endeavour for what religion and morality call good." (How To Win the Peace, Atlantic Monthly, February 1942). Thus Thomas Mann, avoiding the first pit-fall is trapped in the second. There exists no doubt a very strong similarity of structure between what makes for excellence in morals and what makes for excellence in art. Both depend upon a self-elevation above motive and end, and a strong self-discipline rigorously regulated in accordance with the

maxim, morally good. This is particularly meant to hold when the values in question are the so called higher values of Goodness, Truth and Beauty, with special emphasis on the first. Now, I have tried to show in the first part of my argument on the nature of good that the equation 'good' = 'morally good' may be true in some instances, if and when definite and very special conditions¹⁾ hold; but is not necessarily true, as it were, by virtue of the very nature of the terms involved; and therefore must

formulated laws and rules (of technique, or of morals) to achieve as a by-product, Beauty in Art and Righteousness in Moral Life. (Compare pages 100-105). But here the similarity ends. For apart from this, Morality claims the right to dictate its limits even to the most self-disciplined, rigorous and devoted of aesthetic pursuits. Later in "Dr. Faustus, the story of a German musician", (1949) Mann has recognised the morally dangerous implications of the second maxim. Indeed the refutation of this maxim provides the main theme for Dr. Faustus, illustrating as it does the unavoidable deadly clash between the perfecting of a value, rigorously pursued, the "infinite effort for what is good aesthetically"; and the 'morally good'. It might not be amiss to recall, in confirmation, T.H.Green's attitude to what he terms "the excesses possible in regard to aesthetic pursuit", which no less than the "mere animal appetites" need to be restrained by a "due regard of our friends and of society". "In a community where moral energies are debased, excellence in music could hardly be accounted of actual and present value at all" (Prolegomena to Ethics, p.370): indeed it might imply indifference and complicity. Furthermore, this clash between "the perfecting of a value" and the morally good, is not solely due to the heterogenous nature of the value concerned. It cannot be avoided even when the value is itself a moral value. "No purpose must be allowed to become dominant, not even the purpose of morality". (J.L.Stocks. The Limits of Purpose, The Hibbert Journal, October, 1927). This in recapitulation; the clarification of what exactly is meant, implied and demanded by the "true regard of our friends and of society", i.e. the demand to restrain even our moral purposes out of a respect for the freedom and autonomy of others we must leave for a later occasion.

- 1) i.e. when its first member is already defined inside the moral domain, and characterised by a judgment of approval, based on criteria, principles and grounds, which themselves are formulated in the moral domain.

not be made to carry the weight of an elaborate Ethical Theory. In the second part of my argument I have tried to show, that the pursuit of values, be they even moral values, is not eo ipso a morally positive action. On the contrary, the more intense, concentrated, uncompromising and self-sufficient that pursuit, the more it stands in danger of acquiring a morally equivocal character. To substantiate this seemingly paradoxical view, I have tried to show that a consideration of the nature of values and their properties¹⁾ must needs lead to the conviction that by its very essence a valuational attitude to human problems runs counter to the very first requirements, nay even to the very possibility of free and unhampered moral judgments. Hence I have concluded that the notions of 'good' and 'value' are in themselves and by themselves incapable and insufficient to define, establish and vindicate the domain of moral judgments. Also, that no matter how we combine them with each other, and into what complex system we may force them the formal structure of such systems, and the principles and laws of their arrangement, will not yield a basis for Ethics. In respect of 'good' and 'value' then, we seem to have come to the end of what has always been a blind alley, and an attempt at some different approach to our problem seems indicated. Fortunately, in Ethical Theories we come across another notion, usually mentioned in connection with good, the notion of "right". At times this notion is not clearly separated from the notion of good, or restlessly

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- 1) i.e. the essential tendency of every value as such to seek ascendancy over all other values, self-sufficiency to the exclusion of all other values; and absolute status through the annihilation of all other values.

identified with it. Thus, implicitly, when Samuel Clarke gives the alternative lists Justice, Equity, Goodness, Truth and Justice, Equity, Righteousness, Truth¹⁾ and Ralph Cudworth²⁾ speaks of the "right and good", "the wrong and evil", or explicitly when William Wollaston³⁾ states "For that cannot be good which is wrong, nor that evil which is right". It should, however, be noted that all these Moralists had prejudicial metaphysical, or rather, religious, reasons for holding the 'right' to be identical with the 'good'; thus G.E. Moore, for instance, defines the 'right' as what is "good-as-a-means". Sometimes it is used in conjunction with the notion of 'good' and in addition to it as by Sir David W. Ross. Some other time it is allowed to dominate the notion of 'good' as in certain passages by Kant. On the whole, two main approaches to the question of the relation between the 'good' and the 'right' can be distinguished. The one tries to reduce one notion to the other, (whether it be the good to the right, or the right to the good), in an attempt to preserve a monistic, homogenous and self-consistent basis for Ethics. The other acknowledges the irreducible essential difference between the two notions, and making no attempt to coerce an uneasy identification acquiesces in a pluralistic, complex, insecure basis for Ethics, internally divided by the strife and emulation of its two constituent

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- 1) S. Clarke: On Natural Religion, (1706). In Selby-Bigge's British Moralists of the Eighteenth Century; & 489.
 - 2) R. Cudworth: A treatise concerning Eternal and Immutable Morality (1688), idem.
 - 3) William Wollaston: The Religion of Nature delineated, (1724), & 1047 idem.

notions. Remembering that 'good' by itself cannot provide a sufficient basis for Ethics, and that therefore an appeal for help to the 'right' is unavoidable, our problem can now be reduced to two main questions:

- A. Can systems combining the two notions, surmount their inner discrepancies, and can they be exempt from the accusations of inconsistency and redundancy? In other words, Is a Pluralistic System of Ethics really necessary?
- B. If not, can the notion of right alone, and by itself furnish the basis for a satisfactory system of morals?

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The most famous attempt to combine the two notions of 'good' and of 'right', and use them equitably, without denying their diverse natures, in one system was made by Sir David W. Ross, in "The Right and the Good", and "The Foundations of Ethics" and closely followed by E.F. Carritt in "The Theory of Morals" and "Ethical and Political Thinking". Ross takes as his starting point two hypotheses¹⁾ (a) that there exists something which may be termed 'moral experience' and that this experience consists in coming, in our daily life, across such judgments as, 'this is good', 'this is bad', 'this is right', 'this is wrong'; (b) that this experience

1) Covering most of the ground of the three hypotheses mentioned in the preface, Ross' second being equivalent to my second and third. How important this point is will be seen, when his later contention that the 'well-educated man' is the only possible arbiter moralis is faced with the second hypothesis and their full measure of incompatibility and contradiction is brought out.

is open and accessible every man-qua-man.¹⁾ This is one of the main suppositions of this theory. The second contends that moral problems are defined only in particular concrete given situations, that is, in reference to unique non-recurring sets of circumstances, and ought to be solved in their given context. Therefore particular decisions and judgments ought to be made as the occasion arises and as the occasion warrants, not by an appeal to general rules. "For a rule can only be general but an act must be particular so it will be always necessary to satisfy ourselves that an act comes under the rule and for this no rule can be given."²⁾ I have termed this school of Ethical Thought, Occasionalist³⁾ from its insistence on the importance of the singularity

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- 1) I do not know if this assumption is capable of proof, and I am inclined to think it is not. But I think that anybody who reads and understands it, naturally accepts it. Indeed we have come to look upon it as one of the main determining factors of our concept of a "human being". Ross on page 3 of the "Foundation of Ethics" quotes the appropriate passages from Aristotle (Eth. Nic.) and Kant (Grundlegung einer Methaphysik der Sitten), in support of this contention. I'd like to add the beautiful passage from the myth of Plato's Pythagoras quoted at the beginning. I should also like to add that any deviation, transgression, or impingement of this assumption for reasons to be explained later, is likely seriously to endanger the validity of our enquiry, especially in its character of moral enquiry. The reasons for and consequences of such deviations should therefore be subject to the most careful scrutiny, and at first blush we should be against any such deviation unless very good reason be shown for it.
 - 2) E.F.Carritt: The Theory of Morals; (1928); p.114.
 - 3) In my paper "Ethics without Law?" the Hibbert Journal (Oct.1949).

of each occasion on which a moral decision has to be made. But to go back to Ross' first assumption. He points out that in this experience we find that the judgment 'this is right' does not always coincide nor is it necessarily co-extensive with the notion of 'good'; 'good' being defined in its usual hedonistic and agathistic sense. Thus, at times, we come across moral judgments, which seem to go counter all utilitarian considerations, or even considerations concerned with the perfection and self-realisation of human beings, and which proclaim an act right, that might endanger or completely invalidate the promise of good consequences contained in a given situation. Examples are easily found, though controversial. Thus, according to Ross, the telling of truth when it might endanger the life of a third person is not the act one might choose or advise anybody to do in certain circumstances, (for instance, those endangering the life of a third person). Nevertheless, if the truth were told at that moment, it would be told in obedience to a need to fulfill a certain obligation and insofar it would be 'right', and the telling of it morally defensible against any and all other considerations. Hence, it must be inferred that obligations of this type draw their validity from no other source than the nature of the obligation itself, i.e. each obligation out of its own nature. We have no reason to think that there exists one common ground of validity for them all.¹⁾ All we know is that they undoubtedly exist, for we cannot but come across them

1) "In principle there is no reason to anticipate that every act that is our duty is so for one and the same reason". (D.W.Ross: The Right and the Good; p.24.)

in our daily experience; and that, since they are not reducible to ulterior considerations and not to be explained away, we must find an interpretation of our moral life which takes full account of them. It is these obligations we wish to indicate when using "right" in distinction from 'good'. On the other hand, as we have seen, though these obligations form part of a given moral situation, these situations are complex, and usually make additional demands on our consideration, demands which are better characterised by the term 'good'. Thus, pro bono publico, or just for the sake of the man himself, we might prefer to burden our souls with a lie rather than risk the consequences and undesirable outcome of telling the truth about, for example, the whereabouts of a fugitive. Therefore obligations of the first type, which comprise the usual commands of "thou shalt not lie" etc., are first blush rather than absolute obligations; in the Rossian terminology: prima facie duties. They have a sort of right to a first-claim on our attention, always provided they do not endanger any desirable and acknowledged 'good end'.¹⁾ Which acts partake of this nature of

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- 1) Attention should be paid to the very significant difference between the Utilitarian opinion and the Occasionalist approach on this point. Whereas the Utilitarian opinion is that precedence should almost always be given to the prima facie duties over other considerations, because of the ultimately pernicious outcome for society a disregard for these duties would have, thus reducing the validity of these obligations to a utilitarian consideration of outcome and consequences, and denying the independent nature and source of their obligatoriness, Ross would have the prima facie duties almost always give way before hedonistic and agathistic considerations, exactly because he recognises their independence, and will not have them reduced to 'good' and in fact denied and because such is the choice a sagacious, scrupulous and wise man would normally make. Whether this actual choice will also embody the utmost in moral validity and worth, and whether it can always be said to have been reached for moral reasons and considerations is a point to which we shall return later.

unconditional obligations¹⁾ and that they do so partake, is self-evident; knowledge of it, immediate, intuitive. But, for an act to be an unconditional (in the first sense) obligation, and intuitively and immediately accepted, does not as yet confer on it the status of the real and objective duty determined by a given set of circumstances, i.e. the action we are morally and finally bound to take. This ultimately and finally right action, is decided upon by a joint consideration of the prima facie duties involved, and the 'good' (i.e. hedonistic and agathistic, or felicific and optimific) possibilities contained in a situation whose realisation is also held to be our moral duty.²⁾ Now

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- 1) Again it must be stated that 'unconditional' here means "not reducible to utilitarian considerations", "not to be explained away"; not as one might think necessarily prevalent and ultimately victorious over all utilitarian considerations. Now this necessity may be understood in two ways: As a factual necessity not to be escaped in actual decisions, which obviously is false, since no such necessity exists, nor can exist if moral obligations are to have any significance at all. Or as a moral necessity, in the sense that we might think it morally incumbent on us always to give unconditional prevalence to the prima facie obligations, though in actual fact we might and normally do decide on different courses of action. Now the Occasionalists give their blessing to such actual and normal decisions by claiming that not even morally can we be said to be bound always to decide in favour of the prima facie obligations if other considerations be strong enough to prevail over them, i.e. if the duty to seek 'good' consequences seems to possess the stronger claim. Here we come across the difference between moral principles and moral (i.e. in moral matters) decisions. A discussion of the exact significance of this difference and its far-reaching implications must be left for a later occasion.
 - 2) Whether this, one of the basic assumptions of the Occasionalist school, can be vindicated will be discussed at a later point.

these might all agree and harmoniously join together to point out one all-satisfactory course of action, which we then can follow wholeheartedly. Such a fortunate constellation of circumstances however is a matter of accident and very rare. Because of the complex and diversified nature of our lives, society, preoccupations, etc. it is more usual for the demands of prima facie duties to clash with those arising from optimistic and felicific considerations (i.e. from the pursuit, even the justified pursuit of values). Moreover, the demands of prima facie duties might clash amongst themselves if more than one are involved in a situation, as might those arising from optimistic with those arising from felicific considerations. Therefore, according to Ross and Carritt, our moral deliberations are subject to all those difficulties commonly encountered in an Utilitarian System of Ethics, (i.e. the weighing of alternative 'goods', the need to foresee results of actions ad inf., and take into account innumerable combinations and permutations of circumstances etc.) whilst in addition we have to consider the obligations embodied in prima facie duties and their demands in their own right. These added complications render a humanly insoluble problem even more hopeless (for no finite being can know the outcome of an infinite series of consequences, nor can a finite being surmount the difficulty of having to take into consideration an indefinite number of pertinent circumstances, even assuming that such a being is at all aware of all such pertinent circumstances). Therefore we must despair of ever knowing the right solution, and resign ourselves to a plausible and good-intentioned opinion about it. In other words, though a given situation, a given

moral problem, always in itself defines its right solution, and hence the objectively right act which embodies and actualises that solution, all we can aspire to is the morally good act, i.e. the act which seems to us right, though we may be mistaken in the facts of the situation (both by mistaking the actual nature of those we take into consideration, and by overlooking some altogether) and in our prognosis of the possible consequences. Again, because of the clash of values amongst themselves, and their clash with prima facie duties and obligations, clashes which cannot be resolved by principles applicable in all situations;¹⁾ because every moral situation is different from another, and its solution to be adequate must be individual not transcribed in any way from other solutions; and because we have not an indefinite time at our disposal, we are forced to use our intuition in deciding what our ultimate duty is in any given situation. By a lucky fluke we might hit on the objectively right solution and we are the more likely to do this the better we are acquainted with the facts and the better-bred and educated we are. We might still further reduce the possibility of mistakes of fact, and mistakes of calculation by taking counsel and seeking the advice of such of our friends whom we think 'thoughtful and educated men'. These 'Kaloi k'Agathoi' however though they may have a clearer grasp of principles and values involved, and a wider and more accurate knowledge of facts, i.e. experience, are also ultimately dependent on their

1) Since Ross and Carritt deny the existence of such principles and, should they exist, doubt whether they are applicable.

intuitions. Now these intuitions since they are called upon in every single instance when a moral problem arises, and since they have to take into account the concrete and therefore unique, never-again-repeated, details of every such instance, cannot have a uniform content, nor a repeatable structure. They have to be exercised every time anew, and cannot be checked. The only warrant we have for their moral goodness is the uprightness and sincerity of the agent or the adviser. The only hope for their objective rightness is the subtlety of instinct, the refinement of breeding and the high level of education in both agent and adviser.

The situation is summed up by Ross in the following manner, and the following inferences drawn: "In the complex fabric of common opinions about moral questions two main strands may be discovered. On the one hand there is a group of opinion involving the closely connected ideas of duty, of right and wrong, of moral law or laws, of imperatives. On the other hand there are opinions involving the idea of good or ends to be aimed at. In the one case human life is envisaged as obedience to laws, in the other as the progressive satisfaction of desire and attainment of ends."¹⁾ Neither system has been ever able to account for all the facts implied and contained in our moral experience. Nor has either ever been able to stand alone, and, as a matter of fact, even the most rigorous utilitarian system shows traces of absolute law in it and even the most implacable deontological system takes account of some hedonistic or

morally right act, which is the solution of the given unique

1) D.W. Ross. Foundations of Ethics, page 3.

agathistic consideration in its deliberations. That being so, we are driven to the conclusion that neither system is self-sufficient, that each needs the other as a complement; and that therefore a true and comprehensive Ethical Theory will need take both sides into account, and insist that their several demands be nicely weighed against each other in every single case, and leave the final decision to the 'intuition' of the 'well-educated' man, i.e. the man qualified to act as an arbiter moralis.

Now some very difficult problems are raised by this exposition and the conclusions drawn from it. We can roughly list them as follows:

- (a) The problem of the double function in which the notion of 'right' is made to serve: once as the characteristic of 'prima facie obligations' as distinct from 'productiveness of good'; the second time on a dialectically higher level, as the essential quality of the ultimate objective solution, the final duty, defined by a moral problem, in a given concrete situation, which takes both 'prima facie duties' and 'productiveness of good' into account. And the related problem of the concomitant double role 'intuition' is made to play, once as it is exercised in detecting and recognising the prima facie duties; the second time, at the corresponding higher dialectical level, as it is required to discern and decide the unique objectively and morally right act, which is the solution of the given unique and moral problem.

- (b) The problems arising from the unique and therefore ad-hoc nature of all such solutions; the resultant impossibility to formulate any objectively and universally valid moral law or principle, and the subsequent need for a qualified arbiter moralis.
- (c) The problem of the intrinsic difference between moral analysis and principles, and moral deliberations and decisions.
- (d) The problem of the equivalence and equi-importance of the ideas of 'good' and of 'right' considered as the constituent elements of an Ethical System.¹⁾
- a) In our daily moral experience we encounter the notion of 'right' in its first most elementary form.²⁾ That is we are brought face to face with certain acts, or obligations to act in a certain way, which we recognise and judge to be what they are, namely right and obligatory ways of action, by virtue of their own intrinsic nature and structure, and regardless of whether they are also 'productive of good' or 'conducive to good'. Thus we judge the keeping-of-a-promise, for instance, as in itself right and praiseworthy and insofar obligatory.³⁾ That is, the

1) Because of the mutual interdependence of these problems it might not prove practicable in the course of the argument to preserve their separateness but for the sake of clarity and completeness I shall try to keep as far as possible to the order in which they were listed in spite of the, in this case, unavoidable repetitions.

2) And, as we shall have occasion to argue later, its only morally valid form.

3) According to Ross this is a self-evident and not further analysable or reducible proposition. And he quotes six such self-evident unanalysable irreducible propositions, which he terms prima-facie duties. Now though these propositions are not analysable in Utilitarian terms or reducible to terms "of conductiveness to good" (and thus far we follow the Rossian lead), they are, as we shall see, analysable and further reducible, namely to one underlying principle of a moral and universally binding character, thus refuting the Occasionalist contention that such a principle does not exist.

keeping-of-promise is obligatory because it is the keeping-of-a-promise, and not as the Utilitarians would have it because not to regard it as obligatory would induce more and more people to disregard this obligation, and thus disrupt the pattern of social life. In the Utilitarian view what makes the keeping-of-promises ultimately desirable is that it leads to more keeping-of-promises and thereby helps social life to go on. Leaving aside the obvious retort about the dubious value of social life and the by no means evident evil of its disruption (at least both the positive value of the one, and the negative value of the other need to be proved, they cannot just be assumed and made a starting point for an argument), the absurdity of this particular Utilitarian contention becomes apparent when we pause to reflect that what we are asked to do is 'to attach moral value to the propagation of promise-keeping whilst we deny it to promise-keeping itself'. For if "the act which has no intrinsic goodness is held right because of its consequences", .. and if these consequences "are acts like it, they can have no intrinsic goodness either, and therefore cannot justify the action whose consequences they are. If rabbits are themselves worthless they cannot be of value as producing rabbits".¹⁾ In other words, the propagation of promise-keeping can only be of value, and more particularly moral value, if the individual act of promise-keeping already possesses this value in itself, i.e. if promise-keeping is right, in, by and for itself, and regardless of consequences. Hence, if there be any right action at all, and

1) H.W.B. Joseph; Some Problems in Ethics, p.100.

judging from the facts furnished by our usual moral experiences there seems good reason to assume that there is, it must be 'right' in itself, even if the 'right'ness in question prove only a prima-facie rightness, i.e. be overthrown in the course of a more elaborate moral deliberation in favour of some other more comprehensive considerations. "It remains a fact that an act of promise breaking is morally unsuitable insofar as it is an act of promise breaking, even when we decide that in spite of this it is the act we ought to do".¹⁾ This rightness of the act, and be it only a prima-facie rightness, is self-evident. The nature of this self-evidence is elucidated by Ross in the following passages "That an act is prima facie right is self-evident not in the sense that it is evident from the beginning of our lives or as soon as we attend to it for the first time but in the sense that when we have reached sufficient mental maturity and have given sufficient attention to the proposition it is evident without any need of proof, or of evidence beyond itself. It is self-evident just as a mathematical axiom, or the validity of a form of inference is evident".²⁾ Now to claim with however many reservations as to the exact nature of the self-evidence in question, that an act is right "independent of the tendency of the act to bring about a maximum of good, is to hold an intuitionistic view of a kind."³⁾ This intuition

1) D.W.Ross: Foundations of Ethics, page 85. We will have occasion to quote this passage again when considering its second implication, namely that an act done in spite of and in flagrant denial of the obligations inherent in prima facie duties still ought to be done, and that moral significance can be attributed to this 'ought', i.e. that this ought partakes of the nature of a moral injunction.

2) D.W.Ross: The Right and the Good, p.23.

3) D.W.Ross: idem, p.82.

which is susceptible and responsive to the self-evident nature of independently right acts, has been evoked by Ross for the very purpose of vindicating his theory of the existence of prima facie duties, and in order to substantiate the autonomous nature of the grounds on which they claim moral validity. Ross recognises about six such intuitively accepted classes of prima facie duties, i.e. acts right in themselves, regardless of their consequences; the context in which, and the accompanying circumstances under which they appear; and of whether in the end they prevail over or are prevailed over by other considerations. These he lists as fidelity (the keeping of promises), reparation, gratitude, justice, beneficence, the not harming of others. Now this list of prima facie duties has a somewhat haphazard and unsystematic air, and certainly arouses grave doubts as to its supposed irreducibility. Nor does it seem possible or plausible that not only the single right acts but also the exact number of all existing right acts should be revealed by intuition. An attempt to show that the six prima facie duties cited by Ross are based on and developed from one basic principle which they all hold in common, and to which an analysis of their nature and structure will needs reduce them should therefore not be wholly out of place. Nor would an attempt to show that the intuition involved is a very elemental, simple one directed towards this one principle.¹⁾

1) This will in addition prove more in accordance with one of the accepted fundamental hypotheses, (i.e. the one that claims that every man qua man is susceptible of moral experience, and a natural judge of moral matters,) than the assumption of a sixfold intuition directed towards six basically different 'rights'.

Let us consider each item of the list separately and ask ourselves what makes it an act "in itself 'right'".

1) Promise keeping: I ought to keep a once given promise, because by having promised somebody something in the first place, I aroused certain expectations in the promisee. The promisee has been induced, by my own admission, to believe that I am ready to fulfil these expectations. He therefore has a certain right not to have this justified belief set at naught; apart from the claims arising from all obligations he might have undergone, or the things he might have left undone, because of his reliance on the given promise. The breaking of my promise would mean that I have consciously and deliberately misused a man's confidence. It would mean a complete disregard of the promisee as a person, whose hopes and interests I am bound to respect because they are his hopes and interests, and regardless of whether I approve of them for their own sake. It would mean the denial of the promisee's status as my equal, whom I must not use as a tool either for my own advantage or for what I consider his. Nor can my estimate of the circumstances, i.e. what would seem to me circumstances freeing me from my promise, really free me from my promise (though the initial conditions under which the promise was made may have altered completely, even to making a fulfilment of the promise senseless) without the tacit or explicit consent of the promisee. The breaking of a promise in all cases, and in the most alleviating circumstances,¹⁾ would

1) Even in cases when we can say to ourselves: "He will understand and not mind" we are really making use of the promisee in that we force him into a psychological frame and give him, at least in our imagination, qualities he might not have or decline to exercise for our benefit. The promisee might on the other hand really "understand and forgive", but we have no right to bank on that.

therefore always seem to imply a disregard of the promisee's will in the matter, his independence as a "seeker of ends" in his own right, and his treatment as a "means alone" to be used to his or my own advantage as I see fit.

The terms we have been driven to use when examining the example of promise-keeping tell their own story and point the way to what seems still the best formulation of the underlying principle from which promise-keeping derives its essential rightness and such claims as it has on our allegiance, namely the second formulation of Kant's Categorical Imperative: "Never act thus that in your act you should use a human fellow-being as a means alone".¹⁾

2) "Reparation", the second item in the list of prima facie duties, is similarly reducible to this principle, and even more easily than "promise-keeping". For inherent in the case of "reparation", lies the fact of having used somebody to one's own advantage and his detriment, and therefore, a fortiori, 'as a means only'. Some harm has been done in the past, and it is therefore incumbent on the culprit even if he did it inadvertently, to make amends. For by not revising the initial harmful act, one aggravates it by one's tacit acquiescence, which amounts to a renewed affirmation of the misuse made of a human being in the past.

3) "Gratitude" is a form of 'reparation' and its reduction to the primary principle of moral obligation follows similar lines.

1) We will have occasion to deal later with the implications of this Util formula and the problems raised by it.

4) "Justice" is an impersonal and objective version of the moral principle when considered in its distributive application.

5) "Not harming others" is the most direct application of the principle, for it forbids the misuse of a human fellow-being for the sake of some advantage to be gained pleasure to be had, or just carelessly out of a disregard of his existence and interests.

In any case, the five prima facie duties considered are neither separate nor mutually exclusive, 'gratitude' being but a form of 'reparation' (i.e. a species of which reparation is the genus), 'promise-keeping' but a form of 'harming others'; 'reparation' linked causally to 'not harming others' of which it is the direct result, etc. etc.

6) "Beneficence" on the other hand seems at first blush to imply more than is contained in the principle. But understood as a moral injunction (not a sentimental appeal) as no doubt Ross meant it to be understood (for was not this the very purpose that made him define prima-facie duties as distinct from duties of conductiveness to good, in general and beneficence as a prima facie duty in particular!) it will be seen to be nothing more than the positive affirmation of the negative injunction embodied in the basic principle. Namely a command to regard the person of a human fellow-being with all the respect due to its aspirations, wishes, choices, and to accord it all the help it may need on its way. In short we are enjoined to look upon other persons with a favourable, encouraging eye. More than that would bring us back into the Utilitarian realm, where not the beneficent sympathy with another person (as a prima facie duty) but the producing of more good (by bestowing it

on another person) would seem to have claimed our allegiance.

The six prima facie right acts listed by Ross do therefore draw their moral validity from one basic principle. Since it also seems more probable and tallies more with our daily moral experience, that moral intuition be directed solely towards this principle as its only content, we can conclude that only by virtue of this principle applied as a criterion, is moral status accorded to any proposition. That is, insofar as a proposition incorporates and serves this principle, to that extent will it be morally right; and inversely, insofar a proposition infringes this principle, it will be morally wrong. (Hence, it appears permissible and it certainly is preferable to use this principle and appeal to it whenever a question dealing with prima facie rightness arises in the course of our argument, rather than to the unwieldy and probably incomplete list given by Ross).

The question we must now ask is: Can this moral principle be said to preserve its decisive importance at the higher dialectical level at which the solution of complex, concrete and unique moral problems are deliberated? That is, is what is 'prima facie right' also ultimately i.e. always and necessarily right? Or are there other grounds of rightness, beside the principle, viz. conduciveness to good, which might override it in the final decision without impairing the moral status of this decision? According to Ross - definitely not (for the first question), definitely yes for the second: "It remains a fact that an act of promise-keeping is morally unsuitable insofar as it is an act of promise breaking even when we decide that in spite of this it is the act

we ought to do." ¹⁾ "It seems to me ... rightness depends not on a joint consideration of fittingness and utility, but on a joint consideration of fittingness arising from utility and fittingness arising from other sources such as that a promise has been made", ²⁾ i.e. from what we have seen ultimately to be the moral principle. Now in these two quotations the crux of the problem is stated and decided in favour of the second alternative. Therefore a careful examination of the terms used and the significance and meaning they are charged with, seems indicated. First of all there are the different meanings of 'right'ness. 'Right'ness, according to Ross, is in the first place a sort of moral suitability, the quality of 'fitting in' with the requirements of prima facie duties. Since we have shown these duties to be both derived and deduced from a basic moral principle, we have proved rightness in Ross' first meaning to be nothing else but an accordance with basic principle. Not so the 'rightness' in the second quotation. Here the intrinsic and essential quality of 'right'ness is attributed to each and every successful, i.e. comprehensive ³⁾ solution of particular moral problems, regardless of whether this solution be in accordance with the first meaning of rightness or not. This is substantiated by two assumptions: a) that the intrinsic 'rightness' of a first immutable and universal principle is of the same order and nature as that of an accidental, particular, and non-recurring decision; b) that the obligation to produce 'good' i.e. the

1) D.W.Ross: The Right and the Good, page 85.)

2) D.W.Ross: idem page 81.) All italics are mine.

3) i.e. suiting both the 'prima facie' and the 'productive of good' duties.

rightness inherent in the principle of Utility, and the pursuit of values is on a par, both as to its intrinsic excellence, and its obligatory force, with the basic moral principle.

Now the second assumption is liable to the following reservations. From the reflections in our first chapter as well as from our daily experience it is perfectly clear that we have no right to disregard the prima facie duties (break promises, tell lies) to our own personal advantage, that is, in order to "produce good" for ourselves. It is considered quite immoral to override the prima facie duties even if, as reformers, we do so in order to bring humanity nearer to the state in which we would like to see it.

Altogether it is questionable whether we can be said to stand under an obligation to "produce good" for ourselves, though possibly we might have such an obligation towards others.¹⁾ In what sense we might be said to stand under such an obligation is made clear by the famous passage in Kant's Metaphysic of Ethics "What ends they are the very essence whereof it is to be duties: such ends are one's own perfection - our neighbour's happiness. These ends cannot be inverted and we cannot state as such, - one's own happiness - our neighbour's perfection. For his own happiness is an end which every man has by his natural inclination and therefore cannot be regarded as a duty, without contradicting itself. What everyone inevitably wills cannot fall under the notion duty - duty

1) Like Plato's philosopher who ought to return from the contemplation of the Sun to tell the chained people in the cave about it; but see also Kant's argument.

importing an obligation to adopt an end not wholly desired already. Therefore it is a contradiction in terms to say that a man is obliged to advance his own happiness with all his might.

And there is the like contradiction in saying that we ought to make the perfection of another our end, and hold ourselves obliged to further it, for the perfection of another, as a person, consists in his ability to choose his own ends in accordance with his own conception of his duty, and it would be contradictory to impose on me as my duty, something which only he himself can accomplish".¹⁾

The obligation to 'produce good' for ourselves can, then, be interpreted only as an obligation to seek our moral perfection. This obviously cannot be done by overriding the most elementary and self-evident of our duties (i.e. by lying, breaking promises etc.). But even so I doubt whether we can be said to be under an obligation to seek our moral perfection, since I do not think that moral perfection can be obtained in any such direct and conscious way.²⁾ Moreover the existence of such an obligation would amount to an intolerable interference with our freedom of choice of ends and ideals. Therefore it seems to me that we cannot be said at all to be under an obligation to 'produce good' for ourselves. It follows then, that if we are at all under an obligation to 'produce good', this obligation lies not in the fact that more good is produced, for the amount of good in the world increases when we produce

1) Metaphysik der Sitten, II Teil. Metaphysische Anfangsgründe der Tugendlehre, Einleitung. & IV.

2) As I have tried to show when discussing the "Twofold function of Values in Ethics".

it for ourselves no less than when we produce it for others, but in its "being produced for others". Furthermore if it be produced for others it must be produced as a matter of duty, in a disinterested, "non-pathological"¹⁾ way. That is we must not merely seek our own good, pleasure and satisfaction by the roundabout way of doing good to others; nor because impelled by natural inclinations we cannot help doing it.²⁾

Now it is clear that in this matter of 'producing good' for others the respect for other people's persons must stop us at any time and set limits to our purpose of doing them good. Any attempt to improve their moral character or further their spiritual perfection, is per se suspect as an arrogant interference with their autonomous and sovereign personalities; moreover according to Kant it cannot be done at all. But even to procure external 'good' for other people is a purpose which must be limited by a regard for those people's wishes, even when the process of "producing the good" in question, involves no harm at all to anybody, and no infringement of any prima-facie duty. Thus one must not do good to one's country against the electorate's will on pain of becoming a dictator. A fortiori we ought not to override perfectly clear moral injunctions (like not lying, not harming another etc.) in order to produce good for somebody without his express consent; nor override a

1) in the Kantian sense of the word.

2) viz. the example of "saving a baby from the fire" quoted on page 92 from Bernard de Mandeville: *An Enquiry into the Origin of Moral Virtue* & 1011 in Selby-Bigge. "... the action is neither good nor bad and whatever benefit the infant received we only obliged ourselves; for to have seen it fall and not have striven to hinder it, would have caused us pain, which self-preservation compelled us to prevent.."

clear prima facie duty we owe to one man, in order to produce good for another, or others. In short, no obligation to do good can, in case of clash, override the prima facie duties based on the basic principle, because it would be absurd to hold that we are morally obliged to commit a clear wrong in order to bring about a hypothetical good.

We must therefore conclude that the obligation to 'produce good' is not on a par, with that arising from the basic principle and, therefore, must give way to it in all cases if the decision reached is to claim moral worth and validity.

Now if that be so it seems extremely improbable that the ultimate decision unless it be in all identical with the prima facie obligations involved, is of the same order, nature and degree of rightness as the basic principle. In fact it can never be of the same degree, since the principle is formulated a priori and in a way in abstracto, whilst the final decision in a concrete instance is necessarily an admixture of moral principles and non-moral material. We must therefore ask ourselves what induced Ross to assume this similarity between the rightness of the prima facie duties or rather the basic principle and that of the final practical decision. The following consideration might possibly furnish us with an answer: Given the initial 'right'ness of prima facie duties this rightness "is distinguishable from our obligation to do them." (H.W.B. Joseph's formulation). A 'right' act is right whether it be performed or not. But the same word 'right' is used to characterise the injunction to perform it. An 'obligation' to perform an act is equivalent to saying that 'one ought' to perform that act, or that it

is 'right' that this act should be performed. Now there exists the obligation to perform a prima facie duty derived from the intrinsic and immutable nature of that duty, and there exists the injunction to perform "the best possible action for all concerned" in any given circumstance, which is also commonly expressed in terms of "ought" (as in the first quotation from Sir David Ross) and described as 'right' though always with the proviso "under the given circumstances" and although it is by no means self-evident that such injunctions, obligations and 'rights' partake of a moral nature or are morally justifiable. By association and analogy the accidental particular actions which these injunctions enjoin us to perform are said to be 'right' and proclaimed ultimate duties. Whether moral significance and moral obligatoriness can be ascribed to these "ultimate particular and accidental duties" depends largely on whether we are prepared to ascribe moral significance to Utilitarian considerations and the Utilitarian injunction 'to produce good' i.e. on whether or not we accept Ross' second assumption. Now this assumption has been proved untenable by an analysis of the terms (To produce good is obligatory) involved. It must also be questioned in the light of some less fundamental reflections on the mode in which it operates. Thus whereas the prima facie duties, i.e. duties derived from the moral principle are what they are by virtue of their intrinsic nature and structure, and remain so no matter under what circumstances, and in what context they appear, being rooted in the one constitutive notion of "human-fellow-being"; the "productive of good" duties change with every changing circumstance, and never appear twice the same.

Whereas the obligatoriness of the moral principle is self-evident, and its injunctions quite clear, the requirements of these other considerations are always a matter of perplexity, doubt and argument. Whereas an absolutely sure inner voice responds to the obligation laid upon us by the moral principle, and any infringement of it is usually accompanied by twinges of 'conscience', even when that infringement is done out of consideration for the "productive of good" duties, no such inner voice corresponds to the obligations arising out of the duty to produce good and any infringement of them done for the sake of the moral principle, is usually accompanied by the inner conviction of having done the right thing. Another reflection which should give us pause is, that even when we finally decide that what we "ought" to do in a certain situation is to break our promise, we are perfectly aware that we have allowed considerations of an alien nature to override our moral principles, and clearly distinguish the one from the other.¹⁾ Now it is a fact that we often thus allow our moral principles to be prevailed upon by, for instance, Utilitarian considerations, and that we deliberately choose to do so, and sometimes gladly take the responsibility for this decision upon us. But we always remain conscious of having chosen the Utilitarian in preference to the Moral principle. This the

1) viz. H.J.Paton: Can Reason be Practical?; footnote to page 28. "It is commonly held that a good will may have other motives than duty" (i.e. prima facie duties) "I do not propose to argue this here beyond saying that will based merely on these other motives will often necessarily issue in wrong acts and so (on my view) is not necessarily a good will. The will based on duty if it issues in wrong acts at all does so not because of its motives, but from some extraneous reason, such as ignorance of the situation."

fact. There are but two ways of dealing with it. One is to seek to justify such habitual decision, and post factum and in their concrete entirety, confer moral worth on them. The other is to analyse them lay bare the specifically moral component in their make-up, and judge them by the way in which, and the extent to which, this moral component has prevailed in the final outcome. The one way seeks to confer moral worth on the pursuit of values, and on all actions, decisions, obligations and rules deriving from this pursuit. The other will deny moral significance to all but one single component of our actions, a component moreover, which we have seen ought not to inspire and constitute a concrete action by itself. The first is the attitude of the Occasionalist school of Ethical Thought and it would be of interest to examine some of the results of its practical application: In order to do this let us look at some examples and statements in which considerations of 'good' have prevailed over those arising from the moral principle and see just how far we are prepared to attach moral worth to the outcome.

The statements I wish to examine are: "The maximum good of the few is better than the minimum good for the many assuming that we have only a certain amount of good at our disposal and are faced with the problem of how best to distribute it."¹⁾ and "We should choose the torment and suffering of an absolutely innocent human being if it were for the common good."²⁾ The examples: Dr. Max Brod and the question of the posthumous

1) D.W.Ross: Foundation of Ethics.

2) D.W.Ross: The Right and the Good; p.64.

publication of the writings of Franz Kafka; the question of the rehabilitation of morally compromised artists; and the question of whether the World-Association of Medical Research should make use of the files and achievements of the German Medical Institute - acquired whilst using human guinea-pigs.

Taking the examples first we find the following situation in the first case. Dr. Brod, on his own published evidence promised his dying friend to destroy all his writings. Afterwards he felt that it would be wrong to deprive the world of this incomparable intellectual experience and spiritual enrichment, and his friend of his well-earned fame. So he broke his promise. For the sake of this argument let us assume these writings to be one of the major blessings ever conferred on mankind, thus granting their publication the status of a supremely and objectively good act. No reasonable doubt can be entertained as to Dr. Brod's supremely good intention in publishing these works, even to the point of sacrificing his moral scruples, for the good of mankind.

Now, though we understand or even praise, though we might possibly choose to act similarly under similar circumstances, yet we are conscious that all these are but 'mitigating circumstances'. The mitigating circumstances of a human and therefore necessarily contingent universe. We cannot escape the consciousness that a moral wrong has been done. A promise has been broken. The confidence and therefore the innermost personality of a human being has been misused.

As our second example let us consider the case of a morally compromised artist, who, having lived all through the Hitler regime without

raising his voice in protest against the dreadful outrages perpetrated by this regime, now pleads that it is absurd to expect an artist living only in and for his work to take an interest in "politics". He never was party to any outrage himself, and as for his work, it speaks for itself. Let us assume that this work is supremely beautiful and satisfying. Then in reverence of this created beauty we shall accept both it and its creator. But even whilst doing so we most probably shall be conscious of the moral wrong done by a man who turned his ear from the death cries, the tortures, the debasement of his human fellow beings, in order to devote himself to the pursuit of artistic perfection.¹⁾ And we shall be deeply conscious that all our arguments about being human and humanly interested in the good and beautiful things of the world, are but an enumeration of mitigating circumstances brought forward in excuse.

The third example: Although no one would fail to feel the utmost horror at the thought of human beings used against their will as guinea-pigs, still most people when called upon to decide would probably think that the harm once done it might be better to use the files for the future benefit of humanity. The horror, as is all too obvious, we feel at the degradation of a human being to "a means only" in the extreme sense.

The common feature of all examples, has been the clash between a boon to be conferred on mankind, and the infringement of the moral principle by which alone it could be brought about. And let us

1) viz. the passage by T.H. Green, already quoted on page 102, in footnote 2) to page 101.

exaggerate the importance of these boons to the utmost. Let us suppose that Kafka's writings have brought the greatest beauty, the German medical files, perfect health to all people for all time. Yet we have morally condemned the actions which have produced them. Moreover, the degree of our condemnation has stood in direct proportion to the degree to which a human being has been misused, but has not been influenced at all by the magnitude of the boon conferred. (Thus though the boon of health is incomparably greater and more universal than the rather questionable boons conferred by Modern Art and Literature, the condemnation felt in the third case was much stronger than that felt in the first two cases.) Hence we must conclude: a) that there is no direct connection between the pronouncements of moral judgment and the Utilitarian boons involved in the situation judged, i.e. the former are completely independent and indifferent to the latter, and b) that moral judgments are directly dependent on the fate and treatment accorded to the basic moral principle in a given situation and that this is their sole determining factor.

In the words of Henri Bergson in "Les deux sources de la religion et de la morale": if we could buy the perfect happiness of a whole universe for evermore at the expense of a single human being's eternal torment, it would be morally incumbent on us to refuse. That we might, and probably should, decide otherwise in actual fact out of considerations for 'good' i.e. non-moral considerations of values and expediency, does not change the fact or content of the moral verdict.

This seems to me to prove conclusively that the fact that reasons of "productiveness of good" sometimes or even mostly prevail over the

sharing of the moral principle in our actual decisions possesses no moral significance and certainly does not confer moral worth on these reasons. Therefore, the two propositions quoted from Ross seem to me both mistaken (in what they assume to be the data of normal moral judgment as distinct from decisions in moral problems) and repugnant to our moral sensibility. If Ross' contention were true, if it be indeed morally better to give the maximum good to the few than to give the minimum good to the many, (i.e. to distribute misery justly), then we should be driven to hold it an Ethical obligation to deal in Black Market goods and consider the granting of Marshal Aid or the like a morally evil act. But this is manifestly absurd. As a matter of plain fact, we do not regard the "maximum good" as necessarily the morally best. Even out and out Utilitarians, though they do not avow this in so many words, proclaim: "the maximum good for the maximum number" not solely and entirely on grounds of quantitative calculations (for as we have seen the quantity would remain the same had they proclaimed the "maximum good for the smallest number). Rather do they proclaim this principle for the same reason which made Jeremy Bentham say: "Everyone to count for one and no one for more than one". The acknowledgment of the theoretical equality of claim of men-qua-men, is the moral principle underlying all Utilitarian Systems; the tacit bridge by which they cross from Egoism¹⁾ to Ethics. Ethics, it must be remembered, is not

1) Whether it be the Egoism of the one, or the few, or any arbitrarily limited greater section of humanity, like a nation.

a matter for the chosen few (though enquiries into its principles and structure may be) but is branded as a rather plebeian affair by its very first fundamental hypothesis, which by the way we have seen Ross accept fully and without reserve. Everyman, by virtue of this hypothesis, is allowed to be capable of proclaiming moral judgments, and competent to do so. In other words, though a better education and a vaster, more profound knowledge are by no means immaterial to the better understanding of the grounds and principles on which things are held to be right they cannot alter the content of what is held to be right.¹⁾ A, what Paton calls "too intellectualistic approach to the problems of action",²⁾ far from providing a guarantee against deviations from and transgressions against the normal moral tenets actually causes them. Thus the second of Ross' propositions to the effect that we ought to choose the torment and suffering of an absolutely innocent person if it were for the common good. Now it is perfectly true that as a matter of historical fact we sometimes (or even very often) demand this sacrifice for the common good. But it is also a fact, and this time a moral as well as an historical fact, that we do so with a slight misgiving at the bottom of our heart. This slight misgiving is the call of our moral sensibility ("Feingefühl"). And even if we never listen to it, even if in all eternity we were never to listen to it, it has called out, and this faint call is decisive proof for the moral worthlessness of our choice, and indeed commonly recognised and respected as such.

1) See Kant: Introduction to the Critique of Practical Reason & VIII.

2) H.J.Paton: Can Reason be Practical?; Henriette Herz Lecture, 1943, page 33.

The absolute sureness and incorruptibility of this moral sensibility, which is nothing but the intuition responding and corresponding to the obligation put upon us by the basic moral principle, is most clearly revealed by the way in which it insists on full personal responsibility for acts and emphasises the personal factor of motive in the evaluation of the objective moral worth of acts. This again brings it into sharp conflict with Ross' occasionalist view of the rightness of acts, who holds that if an act is objectively right then its performance must be morally right, no matter how and why it is performed, or if it be performed by a machine, since it is by its objective consequences and by the objectively defined prima facie obligations contained in it that the moral status¹⁾ of a given act is adjudged.

I have pursued the argument against Sir David Ross to such length in order to show to what subtle and abstruse yet manifest²⁾ deviations an initial error as to the nature and significance of moral rightness can lead one, unless it be continually checked and readjusted by the controlling exercise of a normal³⁾ (i.e. an ordinary) moral sensibility

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- 1) It will be interesting to remember that T.J.Green holds that no act can be morally right or have good consequences unless it also be done from a good motive. And that acts which appear right, though done out of a wrong motive on closer inspection will prove affected by the wrongness of the motive. This seems an unfounded and exaggeratedly hopeful attitude to take, but is noteworthy as an attempt to bring the results of elaborate reflections into line with the requirements of the normal moral sensibility.
 - 2) i.e. manifest when tested by the unfailing touchstone of normal moral sensibility.
 - 3) i.e. that sensibility which is identical with the primary intuition which corresponds and responds to the appeal of the basic moral principle. A further elucidation as to the exact meaning of 'normal' and the reasons for its choice as the qualifying attribute of moral sensibility must be left for a later occasion.

or intuition¹⁾ subtle enough to be dialectically conscious of itself and its function, but not so subtle or so elaborate as to lose contact with the more elementary facts and features of moral judgment, nor so overbearingly self-confident as to set itself above and transgress against the very basis, the very assumptions²⁾ which alone make possible an inquiry into the nature and structure of moral experience.

To sum up: The foregoing reflections and discussion show that Ross is mistaken in attributing the same kind of self-evident and unconditional moral 'right'ness and obligatoriness, which is possessed by the basic principle, to the somewhat Utilitarian duty of "producing good". For we have shown that the duty to 'produce good' must always give way before the most simple and unassuming of prima facie duties, if the final decision is to have moral worth, i.e. if it is to be morally right. We have also shown that there is no such moral obligation as the obligation to 'produce good' and that by letting such considerations prevail over the claims of the moral principle, no matter how good the consequences, and how excellent the intention one deprives the final decision of its moral worth, and may even be said to make it a morally wrong decision.

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- 1) As was the case with Utilitarians of all descriptions who seem to reach valid moral conclusions by invalid arguments, only because they have always been careful to avoid absurdities and to adjust the results of their calculations to the generally accepted facts of moral experience and evaluation, even though that involved the admission of heterogenous elements into their systems and the consequent near disruption of those systems, viz. the strange case of the concept of the dignity of man in J.S.Mill's "Utilitarianism".
 - 2) i.e. the three assumptions listed in the preface viz: that there exists a moral experience; that it is recognisable as such; and that its meaning is grasped by every man and communicable, or the equivalent two discussed by Ross at the beginning of the Foundations of Ethics, and which no enquiry into ethical matters may transgress or infringe with impunity i.e. without thereby invalidating its own conclusions.

In connection with these reflections we have mentioned the question of a moral intuition. We have distinguished the elementary moral intuition directed at the self-evident rightness of the basic moral principle, the source of all moral obligations whose function is a) to grasp the inner content of this principle as it stands isolated for inspection and contemplation; b) in the guise of moral sensibility, to detect and reveal it wherever it may be hidden, and proclaim its primacy, and c) to demand and insist that such primacy be accorded to it whenever in a given complex and concrete situation it is in danger of being overridden by the other constituent elements of the given situation. We have also mentioned in passing the derived, secondary and elaborate intuition which Sir David Ross uses to cut the Gordian knot of complicated and interminable moral and utilitarian deliberations.

Hereby we have shown that the assumptions which alone could have justified the Occasionalist contention that the comprehensiveness of a solution is what gives that solution moral validity do not hold. These assumptions, namely a) that the intrinsic 'rightness' of a first immutable principle is of the same order as that of an accidental particular and non-recurring decision, and b) that the obligation to produce 'good' is on a par as to its intrinsic excellence and its obligatory force with the basic moral principle; have been proved unjustified and invalid.

Therefore if Ross is to vindicate his contention about the significance of comprehensiveness and to defend the necessity of a Pluralistic Basis for Ethics he will have to choose some other way.

Let us see whether such a proof can be adduced from an examination of the way in which the moral problem is posed and the comprehensive solution sought by Occasionalists. In order to do this we must examine the process of moral deliberation and reaching of decisions as expounded by Ross and Carritt under the following four headings:

(a) What is meant by "a complex concrete given situation?") inside
(b) In what way can such a situation be taken to define a) the
successful solution of its own problem?) Rossian
system

(c) How do we come to know what the solution is?

(d) Can the carrying out of this solution be said to be morally incumbent upon us solely because it is the solution (as Ross claims); or are we free to define our own decisions independently of the features of a given situation though not regardless of it.

a) Following Ross' exposition closely but without prejudice, we find

that whenever we are faced with moral problems in real life these problems are not isolated from the variegated, complex, concrete stream of life but embedded in it. Hence the circumstances under which we are faced by these moral problems, i.e. the concrete complex situation, contains many features, each with its separate claim on our attention on the one hand. On the other, it represents a unique constellation of these features, a pattern and configuration which will never recur quite in this same way. Now each such living complex concrete situation is the outcome of an, at least for our human purpose, infinite number of infinite causal series and itself the future cause of an infinite number

of results. Again, the unique non-recurrent nature of such living situations, precludes the possibility of applying to it prepared, ready-made and already used, as it were, second-hand interpretations.¹⁾ By pain of missing some of its features, which may be salient, it must not be classified by analogy or association. Nor may some of its features be deliberately suppressed in order to facilitate such classification and enrolment of the new situation amongst our previous experiences, for fear of falsifying its unique character. In short, this 'living situation' puts us under an obligation to acknowledge and respect its uniqueness, complexity, concrete "given"ness, infinite diversity, and withal, unity. Thus far the "given situation". The obligation by the way under which it puts us is not of a moral but of a scientific nature. For it has all the characteristics usually associated with impartial and unprejudiced experimental investigations, such as are common to the natural sciences.

b) Each living situation, embodies an indefinite number of features, all claiming our attention, but some clamouring for a special sort of attention, a dynamic, active and productive attention. That is, some of the features of a given situation, show an urge, an inner tendency to reach over themselves and into the future. They expect us to satisfy this urge. They put us, as it were, under an obligation to do something

1) This the main assumption of the Occasionalist school is eked out by a second: namely that there are no general rules and if there were, it would be of no practical importance, since the general rules themselves have to be judged on the merit of the role which they play in given individual instances. Our main object now is to see whether this assumption "works".

about it; to bring into being the desired fulfilment of their inherent tendencies. Now this dynamic power inherent in situations and driving forth into the future, can tend in the direction of greater good,¹⁾ or of greater evil. Being human, we stand under no obligation to aid and abet the more evil possibilities²⁾ of a situation on their way to their future realisation, indeed we ought if we can to stop them, destroy them or deflect them. Now the obligation to help along those features of a situation which are productive of or conducive to good covers both the hedonistic and the agathistic possibilities, and will henceforward be referred to as the Utilitarian obligations.³⁾ Now these Utilitarian obligations inherent in a given situation are not necessarily coherent or harmonious. They might clash insofar as they are diametrically opposed

- 1) I will not enter here upon a discussion of "good", but assume it to be understood in the usual accepted sense of optimistic and felicific, or roughly, utilitarian.
- 2) This is an interesting point to follow up in connection with the principles certain religious sects hold about the holiness of all reality. An attitude found in a more secular form amongst some scientists and artists of all description.
- 3) That we are under obligation at all, is due to our initial position of being faced by a moral problem, i.e. forced to take some course of action, do something, no matter what to change the initial situation. But that acts which are conducive to good are on that account obligatory is an assumption in which I blindly follow Ross' lead in spite of the suspicion that its significance and implications are morally more pernicious than one would think at first blush. Doubts and suspicions I have already explained and which seem to me conclusive. However, at this stage of the proceedings, it cannot do any harm to follow Ross' exposition, nor does it seriously affect the problem with which we are concerned at the moment.

and their realisations mutually exclusive. Again they might clash insofar as our power of accepting obligations is limited and so much attention paid to the one element necessarily means so much less attention paid to another. In addition there are in a given moral situation certain features which put us under an obligation to help accomplish their self-set task, which are not productive of or conducive to more 'good': These are the self-evidently right tendencies of prima facie duties to get themselves performed¹⁾ or get other manifestly wrong tendencies stopped. These again do not necessarily enter into harmonious and coherent relations with the Utilitarian obligations or with each other. They may clash in the same two ways in which Utilitarian duties clash among themselves, i.e. because of incompatibilities of direction, and content, and because only a limited amount of the obligations inherent in a situation can be carried out by a finite agent. It is Sir David Ross' contention that each of these given situations defines one single solution²⁾ which satisfied the greatest number of the given obligations, i.e. produces the maximum amount of good, and infringes the least number of prima facie duties to the slightest possible degree. This solution, by virtue of its comprehensiveness (for it is by the criterion of comprehensiveness alone that it has been chosen among other possible solutions) is proclaimed the objectively right and ultimate decision

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- 1) In the same way and for more acceptable reasons I follow Ross' lead in accepting the obligatoriness of prima facie duties.
 - 2) According E.F.Carritt, who holds similar intuitionistic and occasionalist views, "one or a limited number of 'right' solutions".

determined by the given situation. The exact context of this decision is arrived at by a mysterious process, in which the conflicting claims of Utilitarian considerations and those arising from prima facie duties are settled off-hand. Prevalence is established¹⁾ on some inexplicable and mysterious grounds seeing that no common denominator²⁾ of the two conflicting obligations exists and that the sources from which they draw their respective validity remain independent and non-comparable. And it is decided without hope of appeal which obligation will and which will not be included when the final decision satisfies those that have been chosen. This process Ross calls 'intuition'. And he insists that by it, by the arbitrary, groundless exercise of this 'intuition' objectively right and morally binding³⁾ decisions are arrived at. The act

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- 1) viz., Paton's argument against Ross: "while we have many grounds for holding that an act is right in some respects and wrong in others, we have no ground whatever, in the absence of some more ultimate principle for deciding which of these grounds is the overriding one, we have no grounds whereby we can determine the balance of prima facie rightness over prima facie wrongness either in the act itself or in the comparison with other possible acts". (Paton: Can Reason be Practical? Henriette Herz Lecture, 1943, p.30). As a matter of fact Ross uses the criterion of comprehensiveness, almost as though it were a more ultimate principle; later we shall see, that this implies falling back on some other final principle namely on the principle of "productiveness of good".
 - 2) Here people who hold that the 'good' and the 'right' are not intrinsically different and that one, no matter which, can be expressed in terms of the other, have an easier stand. But Ross, who insists quite rightly, in their heterogeneity, is forced to choose between the two, no compromise being possible.
 - 3) Here the decision undoubtedly draws its moral validity from its comprehensiveness, comprehensiveness being the quality of a decision to be as fitting and as suitable as possible to as many as possible of the given features of a situation, in such a manner as to take a suitably greater account of pay and fittingly greater attention to such of the features as have been found of overriding importance in exact proportion to their importance.

circumscribed by this decision is the objectively valid and ultimate duty, the act we are morally bound to perform. But though objectively and ultimately valid in a given situation, a duty thus defined can claim no universal, or general validity. For it represents the unique solution of a unique situation, and is directly dependent and determined by a non-recurring, not repeatable configuration of circumstances. (Thus we cannot learn from one right solution about other right solution : A prima facie obligation of overriding importance, may under slightly different circumstances be of but minimal consequence. Each solution has to be worked out on its own, i.e. every moral problem resolved individually and without the possibility of recurring to general or universal principles. For such principles are by def. incorporated in the prima facie duties, and prima facie duties are themselves dependent on the given situation for the reaffirmation of their validity.) The only feature these objectively but only once valid duties have in common is that of comprehensiveness. Comprehensiveness, however, is a qualification of the formal structure not of the concrete content of such duties. It can never assure us that what is the right decision in one case will also be right in another case.

The Existentialist view which holds that a given moral problem does not define an objectively i.e. impersonally, valid duty ought to be mentioned at this point. It is argued that what in a certain situation is the right decision for one person, needs by no means, given an identical situation, be the right decision for another. The personality of the agent is a pertinent factor affecting the whole of the situation,

and a change in its qualities (i.e. a different personality) affects and changes the whole situation no less than any other change in the given circumstances. Instance without a general rule?

This seems to me a valid, decisive and conclusive argument against the possibilities of an objective view of duty which yet denies the existence of universally valid basic principles. In other words, unless there exist duties which because of their underlying basic principle, are universally valid, no matter for whom, no matter under what circumstances, and quite independent of the contingent and changing natures of factual situations and the individual personalities whom it obliges, the assumption of an objectively i.e. impartially but not universally valid duty is untenable.¹⁾ In other words, unless there exists a basic universally valid principle at the ground and source of all our moral judgments, there is no good reason to assume that anything can be objectively right, and no reason whatsoever why our moral universe should not reverse, or prove always to have been a meaningless jumble of haphazard, relative and subjective predilections. Therefore, we must reconsider the Rossian definition of duty: as the objectively defined solution of a given morally problematic solution, a solution reached in accordance with the principle of comprehensiveness and valid because of it. A definition which at no point escapes the narrow confines of a particular instance, since the principle of comprehensiveness itself is

1) viz. Paton: Can Reason be Practical? p.35. "If a man wills to do his duty, because it is this duty and not another, we should not regard his motive as moral."

only defined inside that one particular instance. That is we must ask and determined by intuition gives a very definite bias to say very first ourselves whether it be at all true i.e. practically possible that we "can judge an instance without a general rule"?

Hence the very description and exposition given by Ross of the facts and processes of moral deliberation in complex situations needs to be examined with the greatest circumspection before we accept it as a basis for discussion.

For it now seems that the Occasionalist demand that each situation be considered solely on its own merits, and its conflicting requirements arbitrated by an intuition uniquely applied to it is an impossible condition. The Occasionalist contention that "no number of moral rules will save us from exercising intuition for a rule can only be general but an act must be particular, so it will be always necessary to satisfy ourselves that an act comes under the rule and for that no rule can be given... if we can judge an instance without general rules... The enquiry of them (general rules) is merely an occupation not without some usefulness for men of leisure..."¹⁾ is thereby set at nought. Hence we can consider and ought to consider the facts of the given situation on their own merits, but the evaluation of these facts by which alone we decide which obligations to satisfy and which to reject, is accorded even before we exercise our 'intuition' in the individual instance by what I propose to call the "ready-made evaluational approach". This ready-made evaluational

1) E.F.Carritt. cited above on page 106.

approach, whether it be of an a-priori nature or derived from experience and determined by education gives a very definite bias to our very first estimates of a given instance and colours our view of the very facts themselves.¹⁾ Thus, Ross before he considers a given situation already knows not only that 'conductiveness to good' is amongst the features which ought to be encouraged and 'conductiveness to misery' amongst those which need to be suppressed, but also that 'conductiveness to good' is the over-riding value wherever it clash with prima facie duties. This pre-accepted evaluational approach is, I think, the product of an initial intuition of the nature of values and of their relative status in the hierarchical scale of values, arrived at independently of particular

1) Besides, as W.C.de Burgh pointed out (in The Relations of Morality to Religion; Proceedings of the British Academy, (1935) p.14), the very fact that we consider anything at all our duty and were it only the duty to make the "right practical response" to a given situation cannot "as such...be accounted for wholly in terms of the particular situation that provokes it. Recognition of this duty as a duty carries with it, as Kant showed, the recognition of duty as an Universal Principle, in other words the consciousness of the Moral Law".

In other words again, a certain pre-accepted evaluational approach defining a course of action to be taken in all cases namely, to seek and carry out the "most comprehensive solution— the right practical response" in every and all given instances, is characteristic of Ross' Ethical Theory. But this approach is not so undistinguishable nor so undifferentiated from the specifically "moral" one as De Burgh took it to be.

On the other hand this invalidates Paton's criticism of Ross: "The intention of the good man is always to do a particular duty in a particular situation, his motive is something more ultimate, a will to do his duty whatever his duty may turn out to be, a will to act in accordance with what we may call his general sense of duty" (Can Reason be Practical?; p.35.) and "...this general motive of duty for duty's sake is always necessarily present in a rational man. Without it he would have no duties at all and his conduct would be neither moral nor immoral" (in the footnote to the above quoted sentence) and shows it to be based on a misunderstanding of the deeper implications of the Rossian Theory.

problems and subsequently applied to them. Pre-accepted evaluational approaches are however by no means identical, that is, the estimate of the relative moral weight of different values is not necessarily immutably convincingly fixed for all to see. Bergson and Ross, for instance, take diametrically opposite moral views on the question of whether we ought to buy "the common good at the expense of a human being's suffering". Since they did not differ in their appraisal of the nature of the facts concerned nor in that of the nature of the values involved, they disagreed solely on the question of the relative moral worth which ought to be attributed to the values in question, Bergson contending that "human being" is the morally overriding consideration, Ross that the "amount of objective good". Now the first is not dependent on the single situation, the latter varies with circumstances. Therefore we must infer that the Occasionalist's very demand for situations to be judged on their own merits, and the conferring of moral worth on decisions reached according to the principle of comprehensiveness implies a pre-accepted evaluational attitude favourable to Utilitarian considerations.

The question we now face is whether one pre-accepted evaluational approach can be said to be morally preferable to another. In other words, whether intuitions are comparable as to their inherent moral worth. Or, in other words: How can we justify our contention¹⁾ that the

1) The contention we made when we pronounced the two statements quoted from Ross to be immoral, and particularly so when considered in their role of "contents of an elementary intuition".

1) F.F. Carrill: *Ethical and Political Thinking* Ch. II, p. 14.

perfectly sincere, perfectly self-confident intuition of one man, is better than the perfectly sincere, perfectly self-confident intuition of another? In other words, how can we prove that morally speaking Bergson is right and Ross is wrong?

c) We shall leave the question for the moment and return to Sir David Ross' description of how we come to know the objectively right solution to a given complex moral situation. Theoretically this knowledge is possible, though practically it is out of the reach of our human intellect. In other words, because of the infinite complexity of every concrete situation, and the indefinite number of experiences resulting from every single conceivable solution, only an infinite intellect can be said to perceive clearly and know for certain which is the right, i.e. the most comprehensive solution. To our finite comprehension such knowledge is impracticable. We can never know. We can only opine. A reasonably well substantiated opinion is the best we can do. "The general question is whether our obligations and consequently our duties depend upon our actual situation, including our capacities for affecting it and the consequences of what we may immediately bring about" (i.e. our "real duty") "or upon our belief about that situation". (i.e. our subjective duty) "or upon our moral estimate of what the supposed situation demands".¹⁾ (i.e. our putative duty).

Now it seems unreasonable to hold that we ought to perform an act which we do not and cannot know to be our duty. On the other hand if

1) E.F. Carritt: Ethical and Political Thinking; Ch. II, p. 14.

we think an act to be our duty, this is the morally right act for us to perform. If it transpire later that we were mistaken it would appear that we were morally bound to perform objectively wrong acts. The impasse can be restlessly resolved in two ways. Whether by giving up altogether an objective view of duty or by acknowledging the existence of some basic, and universally valid principle and abandoning the Occasionalist view.

Ross avoids both alternatives in their starker forms and settles for the obligation to perform the morally right act, with the proviso that it be considered our first duty to acquaint ourselves as fully as possible with the facts of the situation. For the more we know about a given situation the greater our chance of approximating the supposed to the real duty, the morally right to the objectively right act. In addition if we seek the opinion and advice of knowledgeable people (at this stage mainly as to what facts are pertinent and what consequences probable) there is a reasonable hope that subjective errors will cancel each other out and still further reduce the margin between the morally right and the objectively right act. Here we encounter for the first time the figure of the well-educated, knowledgeable man in the role of counsellor and arbiter moralis. At this stage his presence is acceptable enough since he possesses good qualifications for deciding questions of facts, and because advice is possible in questions of fact in the sense that features we might have overlooked before, are brought to our sight, ad-visum.

Furthermore, even though capable of dominating all the factual

material of a given situation, we should still not know what our duty is unless we also understand the valuational requirements of that situation. In other words, unless our "moral estimate of what the situation demands" were morally right. Now in an Occasionalist System which bans the use of general rules and ultimate principles, the only valuational estimate possible is that inherent and deduced from the given situation itself, viz. the demand for the comprehensiveness of the final decision. "Probably most right acts consist in bringing about the distributions of satisfactions which is due in the circumstances".¹⁾ In other words, in an Occasionalist System the sole definable criterion of moral worth is the 'comprehensiveness' of the final decision. But 'comprehensiveness' is mainly a quantitative principle and the questions resolvable in its light, primarily questions of facts. The decision it aids and abets us to reach is the decision which realises the maximum amount in 'units of good' and satisfied the greatest variety of obligation. Once again we must admit a complete knowledge of the valuational facts to be beyond our reach, and a well-reasoned and carefully calculated opinion the best we can hope for. To act upon this opinion is the morally right thing to do, with the proviso that we continually seek further points of assurance. At this point too, advice is both possible and acceptable, preferably the advice of well-educated and knowledgeable persons.

1) E.F.Carritt: The Theory of Morals; (1928) Ch.X111, p.114.

In conclusion we may say that though we can never know the objectively right solution of a given problem and can therefore never reach absolute certainty about what our objective duty is, we must act on our opinion of what it is, and we must seek to substantiate this opinion as fully as we may. Our only two clearly defined obligations, thus, in a certain sense, work against each other: the one enjoining us to act, the other to postpone action in order to seek for fuller information; and between them give our moral life a trait of precariousness and uncertainty.

This very unsatisfactory result is further aggravated by the reflection that our moral task when deliberating the solution of a problem is not always completed when we have considered the simple and the valuational facts of the situation and decided to act upon them. We might for instance be faced with a choice between what seem to us two equally comprehensive, non-identical, possible solutions; the one embodying one set of values and satisfying one set of obligations, the other another. Or we might be faced with a choice between the satisfaction of a utilitarian obligation, and the satisfaction of a prima facie duty like promise-keeping, which are mutually exclusive. In that case the principle of comprehensiveness will be of no avail since it is incapable to serve as a qualitative criterion for the qualitative evaluation of obligations, and grounds of obligation. It cannot, for instance, tell us which obligation is stronger, nor which values are of greater moral import. It furnishes us with no ground on which to decide whether the "suffering of an innocent human being" or the "greatest good

for all" is the morally overriding consideration. That is, it provides no reason to think that we ought to hold obligations of a 'conductiveness-to-good' nature as more or as less binding than those arising from the intrinsic rightness of the prima facie duties.¹⁾ Nor can the only other principle defined in an Occasionalist System, the one enjoining us to seek more accurate information, furnish a reason²⁾ for a decision of preference. The Occasionalist System denies that preference ought to be given from a moral point of view a priori and by virtue of their intrinsic nature to certain values over others. It declines to acknowledge a fixed immutable hierarchical order of values, and insists that the moral status of a given value changes with the circumstances under and the context³⁾ in which it appears. Defiance of authority may

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- 1) i.e. ultimately and in the last instance from the basic principle.
 - 2) The moral problem hinges not on facts, not even on valuational facts, but on the relative moral obligatoriness, the moral estimate of the values concerned. When and if agreement about valuational facts has been reached the specifically moral discussion sets in, like in the already cited case of Bergson versus Ross. All moral disagreements are disagreements not about the intrinsic nature and structure of values and their interrelation with other values. Both Ross and Bergson mean the same thing, or as nearly the same thing as makes no difference, when they speak about "the greatest good" and "human suffering", and yet they attach diametrically opposite signs of moral obligatoriness to them when forced to decide which ought to be sacrificed to which. All moral disagreements are disagreements about the preference that from a moral point of view ought to be given to one value rather than to another. What meaning this command to prefer can be said to possess in an Occasionalist System will be our next problem.
 - 3) That is, more moral significance than would appear at first blush resides in the obligation to acquaint oneself with the facts of a situation.

be the morally right course in one instance; in another it may be wrong. It also declines to make any exception in this rule, i.e. to acknowledge the existence of even one value which, from a moral point of view, is not affected by these accidental and contingent fluctuations of its obligatoriness. (This is but another result of the Occasionalist denial to acknowledge the existence of an ultimate basic principle, and a generally valid criterion of moral worth). By this the Occasionalist deprives himself of any ground, principle or reason for his ultimate moral choice, which assumes a wholly gratuitous character. "It is bad enough that we have to fall back upon opinion as opposed to knowledge. It is far worse that we have to fall back on a groundless opinion." ¹⁾ This "groundless opinion" corresponds to what we have called the second function of intuition in the Rossian system. Now this intuition evoked for the very purpose of making particular decisions in particular instances, per.def. is directed towards a vast number of unique particular contents, each of which is non-recurring, inconstant, and not self-evident. Neither by its context, nor by its structure, nor by the way in which it operates, can the merit of this intuition be estimated; or the merit of one such initial decision be compared to the merit of another. That is, in the case of Bergson versus Ross, we would have no way of deciding whose intuition was right and whose wrong. And this is an extremely serious matter for a Theory of Ethics which clings to an

1) H.J.Paton: Can Reason be Practical?; p.30.

objective view of duty.¹⁾ For according to this theory one of them must be wrong, as they cannot both be right since there is only one objectively right solution. Nor can the notion of the "morally right" serve as a loophole, for neither of them can claim to have been ignorant of the possibility of the other's decision.

This consideration deprives us of the last remnants of security and certainty, and leaves us more eager than ever for some sort of assurance. But the particular intuitive decision can be neither justified²⁾ nor vindicated.³⁾ It can only be confirmed.⁴⁾ It can be confirmed by, given the same problem, the identical intuitive decisions of other people.

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- 1) The Existentialists for instance, would feel no need for an explanation since according to their theory Bergson's decision ought, one might almost be tempted to say, to differ from Ross'. It might be interesting at this point to mention W.D.Lamont's argument in "Principles of Moral Judgment" (1947), p.89, for a new definition of objective duty, which would cover the existentialist argument and still preserve a modicum of objectivity: He argues that though a particular duty may be subjective (i.e. what is the right act for me might be wrong for you,) it yet is objective in the sense that if you were me it would be right for you too, or in other words, you will agree, and everyone else will agree that for me it was the right act. In the same way a suit can be said as a matter of objective fact to be a good fit, though it be a good fit for me not for you, indeed though it can only be a good fit for me if it is not a good fit for you. But then Lamont as well as the Existentialist have certain criteria (like doing things "au nom de la liberte"), or ultimate principles which enable them to make moral decisions.
 - 2) i.e. by its content, since this is by hyp. unique, non-recurring, and not self-evident.
 - 3) i.e. by its principle or definite grounds, since by hyp. there is no principle and by the manner of its genesis it can have no grounds.
 - 4) Since by def. i.e. by Occasionalist definition there exists an objectively right solution to the given problem and this solution is sought by all who consider that problem.

The weight of the confirmatory evidence for the objective rightness of our intuitive decision can be measured either by the sheer number of identical intuitive decisions (i.e. statistically),¹⁾ or by the quality of the confirmatory intuitive decisions. Since this quality is not determined either by the content nor by the structure of the intuitive decision, it can only derive from the personality of the one whose intuition it is. The intuitive decision of the well-educated, knowledgeable man, ought therefore to be considered of superior moral worth in itself and of greater influence as confirmatory evidence because of his being well-educated and knowledgeable. "The moral convictions of thoughtful and well-educated people are the data of Ethics. The existing body of moral convictions of the best-people are the foundations on which we must build".²⁾ Being first made, confirmed or advised by a "thoughtful and well-educated" man, is the non-plus-ultra ground for the moral rightness of an intuitive decision and the ultimate reason why it should be preferred above all others. The final ground of moral rightness lies in its being accepted by the elect few who thus are installed as the Autocrats of Morality, who hold all constitutive and all legislative power in their hands, and whom one cannot call to account and whose decisions cannot be put to a test since theirs is the only moral authority and their decisions the only norm.

This conclusion is open to so many objections on so many grounds

1) This possibility Ross rejects tacitly for the obvious and I think conclusive reasons.

2) D.W.Ross: The Right and the Good; p.40.

that I am tempted to pause for a moment in order to quote a passage from Bergson, which for all its apparent irrelevancy at this point may yet prove most useful in the course of this discussion:

"The beliefs to which we most strongly adhere are those of which we should find it most difficult to give an account, and the reasons by which we justify them are seldom those which have led us to adopt them. In a certain sense we have adopted them without any reason, for what makes them valuable in our eyes is that they match the colour of all our other ideas and that from the very beginning we have seen in them something of ourselves: the intellect has its instincts".¹⁾

Let us quickly pass in review the more obvious objections to the rather startling results of the Rossian exposition. First of all the arbitrary limitation of the data to be analysed, and the decisions to be respected and emulated, is contrary to what Ross himself has admitted to be the initial and necessary assumptions of all enquiries into Ethics by which alone such Enquiries are made possible.²⁾ This alone should give us pause. As far as the limitation of what should be considered, relevant data is concerned such limitation runs counter the elemental requirements of any investigation with any pretension to methodical integrity. This is so obvious that I shall be satisfied to quote two relevant remarks and leave it at that: The first from Lamont has been aimed against this very passage by Ross and runs "all moral judgments are

1) Bergson: *Essai sur les données immédiates de la conscience*, II, p.101.

2) Particularly to what is postulated in the second assumption i.e. that moral experience be accessible to every man-qua-man.

relevant to our enquiry, those of plain, foolish and even vicious men with those of the educated, wise and virtuous".¹⁾ The second from Samuel Clarke may possibly furnish a convincing reason why this should be so: "For Men may dissemble and conceal from the world the judgement of their own conscience, may by a strange partiality even impose upon and deceive themselves (For who is there that does not sometimes allow himself, nay and even justify himself in that wherein he condemns Another?) But Men's judgment concerning the Actions of others especially where they have no relation themselves or repugnance to their interest, are commonly impartial and from this we may judge what unerring sense Men naturally have of the unalterable difference between Right and Wrong".²⁾

Our objections to the limitation of the decisions to be respected and emulated, to those reached by the "thoughtful and well-educated", because "being reached by thoughtful and well-educated men" is what gives them their moral validity, are as follows:³⁾

Let us assume that to be "thoughtful and well-educated" is to be morally sensitive i.e. good. Then what people of this description choose is right. But how shall we know which people are morally sensitive? Obviously by seeing them choose the right. That is, in order to recognise them when we come across them we must first know what is right, and so, by seeing them choose it, know that they are the ones we sought. But how can we know what is right? Ex hyp. by seeing the

1) W.D.Lamont: Principles of Moral Judgment; p.12.

2) Samuel Clarke: On Natural Religion; In Selby Bigge Br.M. of the XVIIIth C. & 490.

3) They are mainly recapitulations of or inferences from what has already been pointed out in another connection.

morally sensitive people choose it. And so on. In short, unless we recur to an outside principle we can neither recognise the "thoughtful people" nor know what is "right". The assumption "thoughtful and educated = morally sensitive = habitual maker of right decisions" - brings us into the *circulus vitiosus* first noted by Aristotle in the *Nicomachean Ethics*. Besides Ross never intended to lead us into that *circulus vitiosus*. His *arbitri moralis*, his thoughtful and well-educated people, are not "thoughtful and well-educated" because they intuitively choose the objectively right solution. They are "thoughtful and well-educated" in the first place, as a matter of fact. And they possess by education or by nature the same pre-accepted¹⁾ valuational approach to moral problems. It is this instinctive knowledge that these people are likely to confirm his own inclinations, his own intuitively accepted¹⁾ scale of values, which makes Ross plump for them as *arbitri moralis*. But having one's own instincts confirmed cannot be accepted as an objectively valid and sufficient proof for the moral rightness of that which satisfies them. Unless of course, one's instincts were such that they are only satisfied by what is morally right... And so on. But "thoughtful and well-educated people" are not necessarily morally more sensitive than others. We have already noted that greater knowledge, subtler intellectual reasoning is by no means a guarantee for a finer moral sensibility. Indeed, one might almost be tempted to say, contrariwise. Moreover, acute moral sensibility is not an exclusive quality,

1) Both terms need to be explained.

dependent on knowledge, education, breeding and reserved for the few. By the basic postulate of morality¹⁾ it is potentially in the possession of every man, and in a way is actualised and realised by every man if not in his practical decisions at least in his moral judgments;²⁾ i.e. every man is by def. a qualified arbiter moralis. The concept of qualified arbiter moralis if arbitrarily limited to a single group, is therefore, morally speaking, self-contradictory. The intuitive decisions and choices of the thoughtful and well-educated have no more moral significance than any other such decisions and choices; (If their moral worth is to be ascertained, it will have to be by some outside principle.) whilst we must despair altogether of the possibility of evaluating the moral worth of particular decisions. In other words, we despair of the possibility of knowing our duty in any given situation; or guessing at it; or grasping it intuitively, or learning it from the lips of another.

Nevertheless it seems to me that if we consult moral experience we have in most cases a reasonable certainty about our actual duty, and that without this reasonable certainty we should in practice be tempted to set aside duty altogether."³⁾ This seems to me a very convincing description of our moral experience especially since it is confirmed by what we can implicitly learn from Ross; for Ross in spite of the innumerable

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- 1) i.e. that moral experience is open and accessible to every man-qua-man.
 - 2) See the quotation from S. Clarke.
 - 3) H.J. Paton: Can Reason be Practical, p.33. See also the already quoted passage from V.G. de Burgh: The Relations of Morality to Religion, Proceedings of Br. Academy 1935, p.14.

difficulties and pitfalls of his theory seems much more certain of his duty than those pitfalls and difficulties would warrant.

This is accounted for by our contention that moral opinions about what is and what is not our duty, are ultimately determined by a pre-accepted evaluational approach. This contention I hope if not to prove, at least to make sufficiently plausible and persuasive by the following reflections. In the context of the Rossian Theory, which on the face of it takes account only of what happens inside the confines of a given particular problem, and after the problem has been posed, the pre-accepted evaluational approach severed from its roots and set adrift, takes on the guise of an instinctive prejudice of no moral or other validity. Without perceivable ground, reason, principle, it makes its gratuitous choice, (ennobled by the Rossian term of intuition), of the concrete given possibilities; and once the situation ceases to exist, so does it, only to be reborn with a completely different concrete content the moment the next problem comes up. The infinite number of its appearances, makes us despair of learning something about it or from it. However this is but one side. The side presented by the Occasionalist School of Thought which wilfully atomises our moral experience. In reality though the particular moral situations and the intuitive decisions resolving them be innumerable, there are but a small number of pre-accepted evaluational approaches¹⁾ which basically remain the same in their multiple concrete guises. The pre-accepted evaluational approach is generated and

1) Basically only two groups.

qualitatively determined by an original set of intuition. In this individual scale of values so that the moral value reigns supreme: the original act two phases are clearly discernible: the first when the other rejects it, and forms his own order with either Beauty, Truth, inner nature of different values like Beauty, Truth, Sincerity, etc. is Pleasure, or Power, etc. supreme. Roughly the one is characterized by seen and on being seen immediately and fully grasped. The second when the catchword "right", the other by the catchword "good". Thus more a valuational order is imposed on the given values, a Hierarchy roughly the one is called the moral the other the utilitarian approach established in accordance with the dictates of one's¹⁾ nature. Thus for one man Beauty becomes the supreme value, for another Truth, though both will either the same or the opposite practical decision, but they will have a similar intuitive grasp both of Beauty and of Truth in the first phase. always differ in their interpretation of it. Thus, returning to the

Our reflections on the nature of values in the first chapter led us to believe that values are not commensurable (as to their worth) and that such order as is established amongst them by a human temperament is subjective and of no general validity. On the other hand, we have found that by a certain postulate, a "Machtspruch der Vernunft",²⁾ supremacy is granted to the "Moral Value" over all other values. This "moral value" may be roughly described as "the consciousness of the unique value of a human being". And its supremacy as the injunction on all other values to respect the inviolability of the moral value unconditionally, and under all circumstances to give way to it; that is, to consider its requirements as definitely and in all cases overriding. Two possible reactions to the formulation of this postulate lead to the formation of two basic evaluational approaches. The one once and for all accepts

1) i.e. any and every man's.

2) The term is Fichte's. It is here used to denote the basic moral postulate.

this "Machtspruch der Vernunft" and in obedience orders his own individual scale of values so that the moral value reign supreme; the other rejects it, and forms his own order with either Beauty, Truth, Pleasure, or Power, etc. supreme. Roughly the one is characterised by the catchword "right", the other by the catchword "good". Even more roughly the one is called the moral the other the utilitarian approach. When faced with a concrete particular problem these two approaches might yield either the same or the opposite practical decision, but they will always differ in their interpretation of it. Thus, returning to the case of Bergson versus Ross: Ross will choose the "greatest good" and Bergson will choose the "not harming of a human being" as the overriding value. Ross not having originally accepted the postulate for the supremacy and overriding obligation of the "dignity of human beings" will claim moral value (which really means that he is conscious of having acted rightly in serving his own supreme value, of having been true to his initial intuition) for his decision; whilst Bergson will claim it for his. But should both Ross and Bergson choose the "greater good" in preference of the dignity of a human being, i.e. should their practical decisions be the same, Bergson would hold that his decision whilst necessitated by practical considerations, (i.e. the same considerations which Ross took to be of a moral nature) was morally wrong, whilst Ross would still insist that it was morally and objectively right.¹⁾

1) Similarly, Utilitarians might and probably would make the same practical decision as Bergson (an interesting point) but would substantiate it with the same reasons which Ross uses to vindicate the opposite decision.

In addition Bergson would be conscious of his pre-accepted
valuational approach, and would measure the moral worth of his practical
decision by it. Ross would not be conscious of this pre-accepted
valuational approach and would insist that he had taken his decision
after the problem had been presented, and inside its confines in accord-
ance with the sole principle of comprehensiveness. That this is not so
can be seen from the following: the very choice of the principle of
comprehensiveness as a moral criterion is very significant. By virtue
of its quantitative nature this principle tends to override consideration
of "the respect owed to human beings" which cannot be measured in favour
of considerations of values measurable in units, like Good, Pleasure,
etc. It therefore aids and abets a pre-accepted evaluational approach
of a Utilitarian description so that one would almost say that
comprehensiveness was part of that approach and proof of its utilitarian
nature. On the other hand 'comprehensiveness' represents no value at
all for the pre-accepted evaluational approach of a 'moral persuasion',
since before the appearance of the demand to "respect a human being" all
other values pale and obligations arising from them are declared null and
void whilst their more inclusive combinations and quantity does not
affect the issue at all. Another pertinent consideration is that the
principle of comprehensiveness is defined inside a given situation.
A given concrete situation contains many features of a non-moral
character. The principle of comprehensiveness by its very nature will
therefore tend to minimize the part played and influence exercised by the
moral factor in the ultimate decision. Therefore the comprehensiveness

of a particular decision far from increasing its moral worth, will almost always tend to diminish it.¹⁾

Another outcome of this Occasionalist evaluational approach is the "Moralisation of all material" for everything is made to partake of moral validity and worth. Whereas to the 'moral approach' practical deliberations are only material for an analysis whose aim it is to discover their moral component factor and the way in which it operates, and practical decisions are put to the test in order to measure the extent to which the moral component has influenced and prevailed in their final formulation (this being the only criterion for their objective moral worth); moral significance, validity, worth, is attributed by the Occasionalists to all decisions reached in practical deliberations (or at least to all reached by "thoughtful and well-educated people"), regardless of whether this decision might have ridden roughshod over the specifically moral obligations and in the deliberation overwhelming attention had been paid to considerations of a non-moral or amoral character. In other words, practical decisions are raised to the status of moral verdicts, almost of moral principles.²⁾ Consequently it

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- 1) If this be not acknowledged and the moral value overrun by the comprehensiveness of a solution no moral worth can be said to attach to that solution no matter how comprehensive. In other words, it is not the equal distribution of satisfaction which a situation demands that makes an act right, but the exclusive attention paid to such features of the situation as are defined as moral. We must therefore conclude that Ross' was the morally wrong contention. For morally speaking a *prima facie* duty retains its overriding obligatoriness unimpaired in whatever circumstances it appear; nay increases its validity in proportion to the strength of the conflicting considerations so as, always to be sure of prevailing over them.
 - 2) i.e. in respect of their objective not their universal validity.

becomes impossible for adherents of the Occasionalist School¹⁾ to differentiate between the entirely dissimilar processes of ethical analysis and moral deliberation. Now the aim we pursue and the method we employ in enquiring after the nature and validity of a ground of obligation is very different from the aim pursued and method used when we seek to make up our minds on how this obligation affects, applies, and in its turn is modified to meet the practical contingencies of an actual situation. The latter method is rather like that of a surgeon's scalpel which isolates and lays bare a certain tendon. To lay bare the moral component of action, to reveal the moral principle in its purity is the aim of analysis. Now this cannot be done by going over the particular traits of a given situation but only by going beyond them, as we have done in our examination of the six prima facie duties cited to something which is outside and prior to the particular modifications of which situations are capable. The moral principle is not as the Occasionalists take it the sum, or outcome of the obligations inherent in a situation but something beyond them, something which is both the ground for the initial validity of those obligations and the arbiter regulating and assigning their respective and rival claims. There is no need to decide which instances fall or do not fall under its sway, since we know that all instances, inasmuch as they are instances of the decisions and actions of a human agent, come under its jurisdiction. (What is open to

1) Here I follow closely almost word by word my arguments in "Ethics without Law?".

question is the degree to which we are able to realise the moral principle in our actual decisions and the forms it takes when modified to meet practical contingencies. These are indeed determined by the mind, the temperament and the attitude of a particular agent at a particular time.)

Now it seems to me that we refer back to this law in every single decision we take, and that we measure the value of our decisions by its norm. (This is by no means so far fetched as it sounds: we have only to observe what anyone does when deliberating on a moral decision or pronouncing a moral judgment in order to furnish the required proof. Let us recall for a moment how we actually reach a moral decision, in a given instance. We weigh the claims our nearest and dearest have on us, the obligations under which we labour, our own desires in the matter, our estimate of the facts and the possible consequences. But after we have done all this we still have to pose the moral question: Am I acting equitably (towards all men) in doing this, or am I abasing the dignity of any man?) Whatever our actual decision may finally turn out to be, the moral verdict remains unchanged. Moreover we seem to be held responsible for every failure to implement the moral law in its fullness. For is not this the ground on which we judge even the bravest of Nazi soldiers morally both responsible and guilty? He obeyed orders. He satisfied the claims of country, family, position and honour. His only fault was his refusal to accept what the late Master of Balliol terms "the challenge to perfection." He failed to satisfy the claims of the universally binding, universally valid moral law, which prior to all

situations is the unconditional duty of all men. For this he is personally responsible and of this responsibility no one can free him. It can therefore not agree with Carritt's definition of putative duty: what a man thinks his duty to be under certain circumstances, since what we really hold him responsible for is whether or not, and to what degree, he is prepared to make the upholding of the moral law his paramount duty under all circumstances. This seems to me a reasonably accurate description of what actually happens when we pronounce moral judgments on people. Of course, being human, we allow for human failings. Of course we temper the wind to the shorn lamb. But in order to do this effectively we need to consider not only the bare condition of the lamb's skin but also the fury of the wind. To compromise is one thing: to mistake this compromise for the principle, the circumstantial modification for the essential, the occasional for the law is another.¹⁾

Another result of the wholesale "moralisation" of non-moral material is the curious inability or unwillingness of the Occasionalists to discriminate between two other entirely different processes; viz. between

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- 1) Besides, a moral theory which does its best to blur the outlines of the moral law, and render indistinct the extent, mode and nature of its influence on practical decisions; a theory which in contradiction and disregard of the pertinent facts of moral experience (both as decision and as judgment) neglects to examine the distinctive function of the moral component of action errs on two different levels. It errs as a theory of morals by unaccountably neglecting some of the weightier points of its problem. And it errs as a theory of morals in that by denying the existence of the moral law, it tends to weaken the influence of that law on future practical decisions.

the logical analysis of the ground of right on which all moral judgment is based, (with all its ensuing problems of the liberty of the will, the existence of the sense of duty, etc. etc.) on the one hand and the process of action and education dealing with man in his whole psychological context on the other. Thus, the performing of right acts even if not completely done out of a right motive,¹⁾ is an important educative factor, and therefore in practice we often accept them at their face value. But from the point of view of morality the only thing that gives an act its moral value is the human will the sense of duty which informs it.

In this context it is quite irrelevant to point out as Ross does that we cannot ask of any man to possess a certain motive or a certain desire inasmuch as man is not master of his desires, and cannot command his feelings at will; we cannot for instance ask a man to feel "sorrow at the death of his aunt",²⁾ and must be satisfied if he appear duly at the funeral without showing too much glee; i.e. we cannot ask of any man that he should not only do his duty but also do it out of a sense of duty. But, though it is quite true that in actual life we cannot coerce the feelings and desires of any man, and that "if a man had no sense of duty it would be absurd to say that he ought to feel it",³⁾ morally speaking

1) I prefer to talk here of the 'sense of duty' rather than of motive since we have seen (viz. p. -) that it is not in the good motive but in the ability to rise above the best of motives that the root of morality lies.

2) D.W.Ross: Foundations of Ethics; p.122.

3) H.W.B.Joseph: Some problems in Ethics, p.49, p.131.

this is immaterial. Morally we still hold him responsible. That is, having once postulated 'man' as an at all morally responsible creature (for otherwise all moral judgment would be devoid of meaning) we are entitled in a sense to demand not only the performance of duties but also the presence of the sense of duty in every man. Any other assumption would automatically rule him out of the moral world altogether since from the point of view of morality, i.e. moral sensibility and intuition, it is this sense of duty alone which gives an act its moral value. An action performed by a Robot though it be the same in all external respects and consequential results as that done by a responsible creature, would be devoid of moral meaning; it would be ethically neutral and irrelevant. It is this last inexplicable remnant of action - the human will in its liberty, to which all Ethical demands are addressed. By insisting on this liberty of the will - and the implied responsibility of the agent - all ethical demands take on an absolute form admitting of no infringement and no degree - even when faced by incomplete, fickle, i.e. human objects of judgment. A wrong act done by an infant is just as wrong as that done by a grown up. That committed by an idiot, as that by a man in full possession of his faculties. It is only when we translate this unconditional judgment based on an assumption of absolute liberty, and full responsibility, into the actual punishment (which itself takes place in the temporal-psychological-physical - sequence of events) that "mitigating circumstances" are taken into account. Ross by continually changing from the theoretical, to the casuistical-educational treatment of Ethics and vacillating between the two complicates the issue unduly.

An even more important consequence from that pre-accepted evaluational approach which declines to bow to the postulate establishing the absolute supremacy of the moral value and insists on treating it like any others assigning to it neither a greater nor a smaller claim and always subjugating it with all the others to the principle of "comprehensiveness" are the statements: A) that the "right" and the "good" are partners of equal importance in the ethical combination, i.e. possessed of equal validity or equal rights of claim over our allegiance, and B) that the reasons which have led to the infiltration of ideas of the "right" type into systems of the "good" type, and those that have led to the opposite process were equivalent and of the same significance.

The first assumption cannot be disproved to one who does not admit of the specific meaning of the moral though it is debatable whether anything is to be gained by unduly enlarging the domain of the moral since there is no limit to which it cannot be stretched seeing that everything is material for human activities and therefore almost everything may come under the heading of good. But to anyone who has accepted the full implication of the prima facie duties and their underlying principle it is quite clear that the moral value of the "good" partner is incomparably smaller, and it remains an open question whether moral value in the strictest sense, can be attached to it at all.

Moreover, though it is a fact that almost all ethical systems up to now, are mixtures of theories of "right" and theories of "good" or theories of law and theories of end; it is by no means sure that this is necessarily so, or that these two theories are equal partners in the

combination as Ross assumes.

It is the second of these assumptions which might help us to resolve these difficulties. We have seen that the theory of good is split into innumerable systems, according to country, creed, caste or even individual temperament. Its different values are incommensurable in their own domain. It is impossible to decide without recurring to outside scales, whether wisdom is better than innocence, or courage than benevolence. Whether social virtues are higher than creative virtues, whether dynamic action is better than contemplation, whether the good of the common man in its specific European-American materialistic and activistic interpretation is preferable to having one's soul saved by having one's body burnt at the stake. But examples in this field are innumerable, for there are at least as many absolute 'goods' in the world as there are men living, and men dead who have left us their conception of the supreme good in writing. The possibility of moral gradation is given with the introduction into the system of the essentially strange and different idea (an idea not to be confounded with the idea of a good man either as aristocratic, intellectual, heroic, good hearted etc. which belongs into the domain of the good) of the dignity of man-qua-man. Thus when Mill says "an unhappy Socrates is better than a contented pig," and that "Man is possessed of dignity" this sentence is not warranted by his preceding arguments. More than that the recognition and adoption of this strange and heterogenous factor into the Utilitarian System is the sole ground and reason for such moral content and validity as it may have. I think it very probable that in most theories of "ends" the case is

similar, and the moral factor not inherent in the idea of "ends", has been taken into it from outside to provide the moral backbone of the system.

It is therefore not surprising that "theories of end" should seek to absorb some elements of the "theory of right"; the question rather is why a theory of "right" should find occasion to absorb some of the fundamentals of the theory of "good"? Does this not prove that one theory cannot stand without the other, and that recognising this we must accept however reluctantly Ross' Pluralistic Basis of Ethics? I should say, not at all. The only example of a theory of Right which we need consider is the system of Kant. What induced Kant to introduce elements of "good" into his system seems to me to have no bearing on the intrinsic need of the system for such additions. Moreover these additions did not strengthen the truly sublime morality of the system but rather lessened it by irrelevant considerations of reward and punishment.¹⁾

Secondly, whereas the "theories of good" before the more or less ex-machina introduction of the "moral element" appear more like lists of what people in a certain country at a certain time considered desirable in the double meaning of this word (i.e. as well as what was actually desired, as what in their opinion should be desired), and so appear more like anthropological enquiries than moral analyses, the "theory of right" before the introduction of the "elements of good" appears a

problem will have been solved

1) To show this will be the object of our next consideration.

Coming back to our first point, we recall the question: Were such perfectly satisfactory analysis of morality. - But since people feared additions of elements of "good" as Kant saw fit to make really that such an analysis might lack the power to move actual human beings indispensible to his critical system of ethical. Obviously, the answer to do what is right, they tried to remedy this by introducing the to this question must be sought in Kant's own exposition of his thoughts "elements of good": virtue, happiness, self-satisfaction. However, on ethics. I shall try to follow Kant's exposition as closely and as the addition of these elements does not affect the moral validity of the best I can.

analysis in the least, since admittedly they have been added in order to like every other enquiry into the principles of ethics, Kant's promote its translation into reality. Therefore these two factors are critical theory starts off with the statements: a) that moral experience not equivalent, and no such inferences from their mutual presence in the exists, b) that it is different and distinct from every other kind of different Theories of Ethics, as have been drawn by Ross are warranted. experiences; and c) that it is somehow undergone and recognized when Again though a system of Ethics based on a theory of 'good' needs the not with by all people, by the common no less than by the educated backbone of some modicum of 'right', a System of Ethics based on right

In addition Kant finds that the Primacy of Morality implicit in can perfectly well stand for itself. There is no absolute need for a all moral experience is made manifest in the concept of the "Good Will" Plutaristic Basis for Ethics and therefore, out of reverence for the and established in the explicit judgment: "The good will is the only thing principle: Entia non esse multiplicanda praeter necessitatem, we ought to the world which is absolutely and altogether good". This judgment to reject it.

Kant states to be generally, nay universally, accepted.

Thus far the proof by absence. Now if we could successfully build Statements of the type: "This is right", "This is wrong", are up a satisfactory System of Ethics on the idea of the right alone, and habitually made by all people and are always and definitely understood this would prove to cover as well as explain all the facts of our moral by those who pronounce and those who hear them to refer to a specific experience and render them intelligible; if, in addition it would seem

to possess motive power enough to fulfil its practical functions and on 1) Such as the notion of imperfect duties, the idea of the Kingdom the other hand, being built on the rigorous exacting notion of "right"

they imply.
will not lie too heavy on our consideration for human happiness, our 2) Kant: Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten; Opening problem will have been solved.

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Coming back to our first point, we recall the question: Were such additions of elements of "good"¹⁾ as Kant saw fit to make really indispensable to his critical system of ethics? Obviously, the answer to this question must be sought in Kant's own exposition of his thoughts on ethics. I shall try to follow Kant's exposition as closely and as best I can.

Like every other enquiry into the principles of ethics, Kant's critical theory starts off with the statements: a) that moral experience exists, b) that it is different and distinct from every other kind of experience; and c) that it is commonly undergone and recognized when met with by all people, by the common no less than by the educated.

In addition Kant finds that the Primacy of Morality implicit in all moral experience is made manifest in the concept of the "Good Will" and acclaimed in the explicit judgment: "The good will is the only thing in the world which is absolutely and altogether good".²⁾ This judgment Kant states to be generally, nay universally, accepted.

Statements of the type: "This is right", "This is wrong", are habitually made by all people and are always and definitely understood by those who pronounce and those who hear them to refer to a specific

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- 1) Such as the notion of imperfect duties, the idea of the kingdom of ends and the postulates of practical reason, plus all that they imply.
 - 2) Kant: Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten; Opening sentence.

¹⁾ The view of certain British Moralists like Gidworth, J. Clarke, W. Hallifax according to whose theories "To lie is wrong" is absolute morality.

quality or characteristic modality in the act¹⁾ so adjudged, different and distinct from all other given determinations of that act. This specific quality may or may not be an inherent and essential quality of the act in question. That is, this quality may or may not be dependent on the "fittingness" of the act in question; i.e. on whether the new situation established and brought about by that act fits or does not fit the overall situation in which it takes place.²⁾ Now this overall situation, this frame of objective reality in which our actions are set is liable to be described in various ways. It can be described as the Universe of Immutable Essences ordered in view of The Essence of Truth and Goodness by God the Creator.³⁾ Or it can be described in terms of

- 1) I shall assume it as understood that Kant acknowledges only human action (desires, purposes, motives, volitions, acts, habits, behaviour) to be the proper subject matter of Ethics and other "goods" (like Happiness, Wealth, etc.) only insofar as they affect human action: volitions, acts, etc.. That is, Kant does not embark on an enquiry into the nature of 'good' and 'values', in order to deduce the 'right' from them as the quality of the action most likely to bring the 'good' about; but starts on an analysis of the grounds, principles, conditions and reasons, which lead to the judgment 'right' and defines the 'good' as that which realises, incarnates, accords with, and respects the requirements of 'right'.
- 2) Certain passages in Kant are open to this interpretation: Thus Kant seems to make the rightness of acts depend on their suitability to serve as Universal Laws in a Kingdom of Ends. This, however, is incompatible with Kant's reiterated and fully demonstrated view that the rightness of acts can only be grounded in the modality (the specific manner of willing) of the will itself. The latter thesis is the more specifically Kantian being one of the mainstays of his Critical Theory of Ethics. This is but one of several ambiguities of the Kantian exposition and ought to be noted as such. I shall try to show that this ambiguity, like all others, has its deeper roots in the two-fold origin of Kant's Ethical Theory.
- 3) The view of certain British Moralists like Gudworth, S. Clarke, W. Wollaston according to whose theories "To lie is wrong" is almost a Tautology.

an ephemeral and accidental politico-social setting of restricted and respected. When I would for selfish reasons force myself to tell the exclusive validity.¹⁾ Whatever the ultimate truth of this question, the unhappy post the unpleasant truth. Both cases are sharply distinct from salient point for us, at this moment, is that statements of the type, "This is right", "This is wrong" are not merely propositions about the the moral evaluation of a lie as a breach of respect for the person of the poet" to whom I owe the truth of my sincere opinion. The word "and" objective suitability of acts. They also carry the force of evaluation. that word indicates the transition from the evaluational (i.e. static) In addition they carry the motive-power of an injunction.

Moral judgments express three sets of relations: the relations of the act to its concrete setting, (fitting or unfitting) the relation of the act to the moral scale of evaluation (right or wrong) and the relation of the act to the human will (injunction, obligation: one ought, or one ought not to do this or that.) This description appears a first blush particularly opaque and felicitous in its use of epithets. first states a certain relationship which holds between lying and objective reality, i.e. the system of relationships in which the act is set. In the Twelfth Century for instance, to hold that the Sun revolves around the Earth was not "to lie", and therefore not considered morally wrong. Secondly, the moral judgment "To lie is wrong" carries the force of an evaluation, and this evaluation is meant to be an evaluation of a specific kind different from all other kinds of aesthetic, felicific, optimific etc. evaluations, namely a moral evaluation. It may be more optimific for my character to lie occasionally out of pity for others, by telling somebody how much I loved his poems for example, especially if I incline habitually to enjoy criticizing other people's intellectual efforts. Of course the position would be reversed if I were of an

1) G. I. Strawson: Ethics and Language.

1) The view of Relative Ethics.

acquiescent nature, whose chief ambition is to be liked rather than respected. Then I should for optimistic reasons force myself to tell the unhappy poet the unpleasant truth. Both cases are sharply distinct from the moral evaluation of a lie as a breach of respect for the person of the poet¹⁾ to whom I owe the truth of my sincere opinion. The word 'owe' just used indicates the transition from the evaluational (i.e. static) function of moral judgments to their dynamic function as moral injunctions. This transition and the dynamic function of moral judgments has lately been rediscovered in America and stressed, especially by C.L. Stevenson²⁾ through the use of such descriptive terms as emotive appeal, persuasive address, imperative address etc. This description appears at first blush particularly apposite and felicitous in its use of epithets. Nevertheless we must be careful and on our guard against the tendency (rampant in America as well as in Europe) to mistake this descriptive enumeration of an accidental modality or secondary quality of moral injunctions for a stringent deduction of the grounds of their validity. Indeed these emotive appeals, persuasive addresses, etc. are not even the cause of the efficacy of moral injunctions, if moral injunctions as such become efficacious. They certainly cannot be taken (without further proof) to invalidate retroactively the claims to objective significance of moral evaluations. That is, it seems over-hasty and unwarranted to

1) Moliere's Misanthrope is an example of optimistic reasoning rather than of moral reflections, Alceste's primary interest being his own perfection and rectitude.

2) C.L. Stevenson: Ethics and Language.

assume that, because moral judgments have a dynamic function and because this dynamic function at times adopts the character of an emotive appeal, therefore moral judgments as such are nothing but expressions of emotional responses, and moreover, as is usually assumed, subjective moral responses.

The inner dynamic progress from the statement "X is wrong" to the command "One should not do X" defines a number of interim steps and stages. It may very well be that each of these steps and stages possesses strong emotive connotations, which directly appeal to conative tendencies. But these, however strong, do not provide a sufficient ground for the objective necessity of the steps or of the final injunction. Indeed, the objective necessity of these steps and stages is either directly demonstrable and justifiable, or it defines the very questions about the possible validity of moral commandments which Kant tried to elucidate by the critical method of transcendental deduction. To compound all these into the notion of "emotive appeal" used in its most equivocal sense, is to skip the question rather than to solve it. In other words: It seems extremely improbable that what I mean or anyone means when pronouncing the words "X is wrong", is merely to say that "I disapprove of X; do so likewise;"¹⁾ That is, "I disapprove of lying; do so likewise" is not equivalent to "To lie is wrong". It is, as far as I can see, a rather pointless and somehow irrelevant bit of information about someone who pronounces "To lie is wrong" and a secondary feature of

1) C.L. Stevenson: Ethics and Language; Some pragmatic aspects of meaning.

the possible effect the judgment "To lie is wrong" may have on somebody who hears it and who, for some reason or other is greatly influenced by the person who pronounces it. The important and decisive feature from a moral point of view of the judgment "To lie is wrong" lies, regardless of any incidental and subjective disapproval, in the fact that by it a certain complex situation i.e. "to lie", is connected with the predicate "wrong" in such a way as to express what we believe to be a necessary relation between the two terms. If this relation is indeed objectively necessary, "To lie is wrong" will be an objective valuational judgment.¹⁾ A valuational judgment, like a causal judgment, is the statement of a relationship, which we believe holds of necessity; this necessity being solely and wholly determined by the nature of the terms involved²⁾ and therefore universally and objectively valid. It is, in short, an universal and objective law. "To lie" is wrong and remains so whatever the circumstances, conditions, consequences. "To lie" is wrong, whether people disapprove of it or not, even when they are completely unaware of its possible existence. But the command "one should not lie" derived from it, is not the statement of an objective necessity,³⁾ but of a

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- 1) I shall not here enter into a discussion of the intrinsic nature and structure of the complex situation "to lie" nor into its fittingness or unsuitability to the objective reality in which it is set, etc; since it is not my object here to vindicate this particular moral judgment but only to point out what is meant by such a judgment, i.e. when something is proclaimed wrong.
 - 2) This necessity might be defined as a tautology (cruelty is wrong) an analytical proposition (to lie is wrong) or a synthetical proposition (to laze is wrong).
 - 3) Nor does its emotive appeal make it an objective necessity.

necessitation. It is not a law, it is an obligation. The relation expressed in an obligation, is that holding between a particular and concrete human will, and an objective valuational judgment, i.e. a moral law. The nature of this relation is to demand that the will be determined in the choice of its acts solely by the consideration of the moral laws. This relation is not a necessity because the human will, given its particular concrete nature: its subjective desires, inclinations, purposes, is not automatically determined by a consideration of the moral law. This relation is a necessitation, because the human will is motivated by its concrete and subjective desires, inclinations, purposes, apart and before moral laws can claim its allegiance, i.e. demand to motivate effectively and determine decisively and by themselves, its choice of acts. (We are for example under an obligation "not to lie" whatever the results of our action, and irrespective of the purposes this act of "not lying" might hamper, postpone or render altogether unattainable.) Obligations, if objectively valid - and this depends only on what they command - are so whatever the circumstances, conditions, consequences, or material concrete contents of the will. Obligations, if they are objectively valid, are so, whatever their emotive appeal and regardless of the existence of this emotive appeal. Indeed the emotive meaning of a moral judgment and its appeal will become the decisive and basic ground of an obligation only if it be misused deliberately to deceive; i.e. when the obligation is not objectively grounded in a valid moral judgment. Thus when I say "one ought to use perfume", because I happen to be a shareholder in a factory for cosmetics, I misuse the

emotive overtones of the word "ought", in order to make it appear, as if there were some objectively valid ground for such a command, apart from the trivial fact of my approval of the use of perfume because of some private reason of gain. In other words, though emotive overtones might help the process of necessitation, they are not the grounds for which this process has been initialled and do not replace the initial moral evaluation, unless with intent to deceive.

Now the data of everyday moral experience refer equally to the static (i.e. the evaluational or law-proclaiming) and to the dynamic (i.e. necessitating or obligation defining) function of moral judgments. In addition the data of everyday moral experience contain a distinct reference to the primacy of morality as made manifest in the concept of the good will. In other words, people pronounce "one should do X" just as habitually as they say "X is right". Moreover, people are perfectly aware of the connection between these two statements and of the nature of the obligation implied in the one, explicit in the other, under which they are put by either. In short, people are conscious, through their daily moral experiences, of having duties, and furthermore possess a sufficiently clear idea of what these duties are. "A critic of this essay has succeeded better than he realised, when he said that no new principle of morality has been established but only a new formula. Who indeed could invent a new principle of morality and announce it as his own? As though the whole world could have ignored the existence of duty or mistaken its nature until he arrived!"¹⁾ Kant holds that it is

1) Kant: "Kritik der praktischen Vernunft; Vorrede

not the purpose of an enquiry into Ethics, to invent its own subject matter: i.e. discover the existence of duty and decide the content of duty, for its subject-matter is a datum of objective and universal human experience. The purpose of an enquiry into Ethics is to explain the implications of that experience, i.e. to discover what conditions, grounds, hypotheses are necessary in order to make this experience intelligible and demonstrate its possibility. Not the "what" but the "how" and the "why" of moral experience are the questions which a theoretical enquiry into Ethics ought to pose. For, the "what", the specific content and meaning of rightness, obligation, good will, is not to be explained, but must be grasped immediately in its concrete "givenness". The "why", (the grounds and reason which demonstrate and vindicate the objective validity claimed by moral laws) and the "how" (the conditions, hypotheses, grounds which must be presupposed if the objective validity of obligation i.e. the causal connection between moral law and human particular will, is to be explained,) are questions which a theory of Ethics must solve, or at least elucidate. In short, like every other theory, a Theory of Ethics is not supposed to invent its subject, but to explain it.

It must be noted that Kant attaches far greater importance to the enquiry into "how" moral obligation is possible than to the enquiry "why" the moral law is valid. The reason for this preference becomes clear when we remember that, according to strict Kantian theory the objective moral rightness of a certain deed depends not on the content of that deed, but on the specific modality of the will. In other words, the

moral rightness of a willed action depends not on the quality of the purpose informing the will in question, but on the manner in which that will regulates itself in respect of a given moral law. In the same way, in the Critique of Pure Reason the objective reality of knowledge was grounded not in the content but in the modality of thought. As for the given law and its objective rightness, Kant tried to substantiate it in various ways. First he thought of it as derived from the Teleological nature of the universe. Later, Kant defined it as the essence of legality, i.e. as vindicated by its own cosmological or logical suitability. And finally Kant described it as a spontaneous and autonomous idea of Practical Reason. The first two definitions represent a definite threat to the ultimate autonomy of ethics. The last circumvents this, but engenders a series of new difficulties, which we shall consider later.

At present we ought to note another point which is of the greatest importance for understanding aright the peculiarities of Kant's exposition. If we wish to follow Kant's meaning all questions, and especially the question of "How moral obligation is possible?" must be referred to its setting in Kant's critical theory of ethics. In other words, when Kant asks: "How is moral obligation possible?" or "How can the bare consideration of the moral law motivate the human will?" he asks after the assumptions we must make, the conditions we must postulate in order to link up a priori the disparate terms of concrete particular will, and universal abstract law. He points out Freedom, Rationality and Autonomy as the conditions which will warrant the

objective validity of this a priori synthesis. But whether this synthesis takes place in reality, whether "the Categorical Imperative" functions indeed, is outside the scope of this method, since it is outside the scope of his method or indeed any method to demonstrate the reality of Freedom. Kant's analysis of moral experience moves inside the hypothetical circle of if ... then ... That is if objectively valid obligations exist, they must function in such and such a manner under such and such conditions. If moral experience exists, then this is how it is possible. Nowhere can Kant break from the deductive circle and prove the factual existence of that the transcendental structure of which he demonstrates.

The datum of moral experience however having been the initial starting point, the brute existence of some sort of obligation cannot be questioned. What can be questioned is the ultimate moral significance of these obligations. That is, we can ask whether obligations be not ultimately reducible to and valid because of some basic concept or proposition not itself defined as part of the moral domain? In other words, we may well ask whether the experience of moral obligation be not ultimately reducible to some extra-moral ground like the authoritative will of God, the natural purpose of mankind, the innate anxieties of the human soul, etc? Hence, when Kant says if moral experience exists, then ... etc., he sets in parenthesis not the first basic assumption of all ethical enquiry (i.e. that all people are capable of it, and all recognize it as possessing a specific character of its own), but the second (i.e. the one that states that moral experience is also ultimately

different from all other experiences). It is well to keep this distinction in mind, for it is often confused. Not the existence of moral experience but the truth or illusoriness of its moral character can be questioned. Whatever the ultimate metaphysical answer to this question, - and an answer to it must be based on metaphysical reasoning even if it were only the negation of all metaphysical reasoning of positivism, - the methodical structure of Kant's analysis remains unimpaired within its self-drawn limits. The question: "Why are moral laws valid?" retains its validity. So does the query: How can one vindicate the objective validity of the a priori synthesis between particular will and universal law which is given and carried out in the concept of moral obligation or, in Kantian terms, in the idea of the categorical imperative?

Now the moral obligation the grounds for the possibility of which we wish to examine, is moral obligation per se, moral obligation in the abstract, in short, the idea of moral obligation itself. This idea of moral obligations, even in the abstract possesses certain well defined qualifications, its most essential quality being its unconditional and objective validity. Moral obligation, obliges everyone prior to all incidental circumstances and situations. It is nothing but the injunction to respect the moral law at all times and under all circumstances. In short, it is the categorical imperative. Hence the moral law, the moral evaluation, whose dynamic function is represented by the moral obligation, cannot contain any particular, concrete, and therefore incidental features. It must be abstract, objective, universal. In

short, it must be law as such, the very essence of legality. Now the essential feature of "legality as such" is that it is 'binding', and 'binds' without exception. In other words the essential feature of "legality as such", is its absolute validity, its impartial, universal, and unexceptionable application. The law which embodies the very essence of legality defines a certain obligation in its dynamic function. The obligation it defines is an obligation to acknowledge that the moral law applies to all impartially, universally, and without exception, and to accept the practical implications and consequence of this acknowledgment. The formula expressing this obligation will be "Act only on that maxim"¹⁾ which is also fit to serve as universal law. This however is the first formulation Kant gives of the categorical imperative. As we have seen this formulation is analytically derived from the idea of "legality as such".

In addition the notion of moral obligation or categorical imperative establishes a connection between this formula and a particular human will such that this formula decisively determines (i.e. motivates) the will in its choice of actions. It does this in such a way that proposed actions whose maxims do not fit this formula are abandoned by the will, and the formula is used as a criterion for the moral rightness of maxims of acts and of acts. Under what conditions is this causal relation

1) The exact meaning of maxim will be discussed almost immediately. For the moment maxim is meant to signify the unity of the will through which motive, means and end are amalgamated into one willed action.

of Freedom, Rationality and Goodness as qualifications of will. In these between formula and will conceivable? What qualifications must a will descriptive definitions Freedom and Rationality, in so far as they are possess to be capable of being motivated by a formula? First the will qualifications of the human will, are each given two separate senses and must be free in general. It must be capable of choosing and rejecting two separate functions. In the course of the argument these are used all possible maxims of actions of which the formula is but one, as and indiscriminately by Kant, and the dangers caused by the resultant when it likes. Secondly, the will must be capable in principle to sublimity cannot be over-emphasized. The confused and confusing use of choose this formula as one of its maxims. That is, it must be amenable two senses of "Freedom" and "Rationality" throughout the critical inquiry to reason and abstract rational deliberations. Now the will cannot be into Ethics in the ground for many of the curious vacillations and swayed by rational consideration, unless it possesses a rational nature. hesitations in Kant's exposition. The concomitant misinterpretations Therefore the second condition for the possibility or moral obligation and seemingly insoluble problems are further aggravated by Kant's habit is that the will be rational in general. Thirdly the will must be of using the two senses in order to prove some 1)... about the other with- capable of choosing the formula in preference to all its other (material) out suggesting that the two senses might be unconnected, might even be maxims; it must be capable of being exclusively actuated by rational incompatible, so that a choice might have to be made as to which of two considerations. And it must be free from its material determinations, is to be kept and which discarded. This decision is easily based in the its desires, inclinations, particular purposes; that is, free to case of "Freedom", by the fact that one of the two senses is essential disregard them, subdue them, liberate itself from their bondage. A will to the critical theory of Ethics, while the other is a survival from that is exclusively rational and wholly free in this sense (not influenced Rousseau-dominated pre-critical logic. Moreover, the two senses are or determined by material and particular considerations), a will that inevitable. In the case of Rationality, Kant's insistence rests chooses the formula in preference to all other material maxims (preference= definitely on the second sense; the first being hardly mentioned, though for its own sake, for the sake of the law it embodies), is also a as an indispensable precondition it is tacitly assumed throughout. The good-will.

In order to grasp Kant's idea of the categorical imperative, we have to examine severally the definitions given by Kant for the concepts two distinctly different senses are "rightness" (of laws and of willed actions) and man-as-end-in-himself (in his moral agency 1)... i.e. for its own sake, for the sake of the formula alone.

of Freedom, Rationality and Goodness as qualifications of will. In these descriptive definitions Freedom and Rationality, in so far as they are qualifications of the human will, are each given two separate senses and two separate functions. In the course of the argument these are used indiscriminately by Kant, and the dangers caused by the resultant ambiguity¹⁾ cannot be over-emphasised. The confused and confusing use of two senses of "Freedom" and "Rationality" throughout the critical enquiry into Ethics is the ground for many of the curious vacillations and hesitations in Kant's exposition. The concomitant misinterpretations and seemingly insoluble problems are further aggravated by Kant's habit of using the one sense in order to prove something about the other without suspecting that the two senses might be unconnected, might even be incompatible, so that a choice might have to be made as to which of them is to be kept and which discarded. This decision is easily taken in the case of "Freedom", by the fact that one of the two senses is essential to the critical theory of Ethics, while the other is a survival from Rousseau-dominated pre-critical days. Moreover, the two senses are incompatible. In the case of Rationality, Kant's insistence rests definitely on the second sense; the first being hardly mentioned, though as an indispensable precondition it is tacitly assumed throughout. The root of this insistence must be sought: incidentally, in a too rigidly

1) The other concepts ambiguously and confusingly used by Kant to cover too distinctly different senses are "rightness" (of laws and of willed actions) and man-as-an-end in himself (in his moral capacity only and in the concrete whole of his material existence).

pursued parallel to the Critique of Pure Reason; and basically in Kant's attitude to the concept of Reason. This attitude is compounded in equal parts of an infinite reverence for Reason, an unshakable conviction of its identity with moral goodness, and an unhesitating faith in its redeeming power: *extra intellectum nulla salus*. Rousseau can hardly be blamed for this, for Rousseau was deeply suspicious of the moral qualities of Reason, and curiously unaffected by the *Zeitgeist* in this one point. The two senses of rationality are not incompatible. Nevertheless their confusion can be criticised inside the Kantian theory. Whereas a critique of Kant's fundamental attitude, whilst still possible within the bounds of the Critical theory, cannot be passed off as mere comment.

A) Freedom: Freedom is first deduced by Kant as a necessary precondition of the possibility of moral obligation; a postulated qualification of the will, a *sine-qua-non* as far as the explanation of moral responsibility, choice, obligation is concerned. That is, freedom as the ultimate ground and condition for the intelligibility of moral experience and as an essential feature of our very conception of will as such, is a product of the transcendental deduction. In this sense freedom is defined as the Category of Practical Reason, i.e. will; which Reason cannot conceive except as free. In the second place, freedom is described as freedom from material determinations, and equated with an exclusive and persuasive determination by the moral law i.e. with Rationality and therefore with Goodness. It is thus a direct transcription from Rousseau, who described "Virtue" actuated by an innate

can be thought at all, must be thought as freely choosing to follow natural sentiment, conquering first one's own desires which do not harmonize with the tenor of our life and then one's particular purposes which do not harmonise with the purposes of others, as liberte morale.

These two senses of freedom are not compatible. Moreover, while freedom operating in its first function already includes as a special case freedom in its second function, freedom when operative in its second function annihilates freedom in its first function. For, if freedom is a necessary and essential feature of the conception of will as such, i.e. a necessary qualification of all will, it cannot at the same time be the specific and sufficient qualification of a good will. Again, if Freedom and Goodness i.e. thoroughgoing Rationality, were the same, then a wholly reasonable will would necessarily will the good. "To will the good necessarily" is however, a proposition more suitable to describe the nature of a "Freier Bratenwender" to use a Kantian term, than apt to serve as a definition of a wholly reasonable, wholly good, and therefore, holy will. Moral decisions are possible only if they are taken in the name of our natural desires on the side of obligation and our will asserts its freedom in the face of the moral law. Thus we are faced with the circumstances of freedom which is nothing but the will being a rational-being master of its soul, and elevated above the rule of material causality.

2) A doctrine of simply willing originates for St. Paul calls excellence. Therefore even a reasonable agent habitually and effortlessly willing to good must do so in freedom. "Even God's Will if it

can be thought at all, must be thought as freely choosing to follow the laws it sets before itself. Lessing used to say "Kein Mensch muss muessen." I can but add: "Und noch weniger ein Gott".¹⁾ Freedom is the category of morality, Necessity its dissolution. This in brief, is Otto's argument for keeping the first sense of freedom and discarding the second.

The case for keeping the second sense of freedom and discarding the first depends upon the fact that the primary exercise of freedom is to overcome material desires and particular purposes in the name of the law, i.e. of Reason. There is in fact no other way in which we can exercise our freedom (motivation by material considerations is bondage!)²⁾ Indeed, we discern our freedom, test its mettle, take its measure, and above all, become conscious and most certain of it, when the obstacles on our way to the fulfilment of moral obligations, are greatest. Moreover, we can never be so certain of our freedom as when there is a conflict between our inclinations and the categorical imperative, with none of our natural desires on the side of obligation, and our will asserts its freedom in the face of all persuasion and chooses to follow the moral law. Then we are filled with the consciousness of freedom, which is nothing but the consciousness of being a rational-being, master of its soul, and elevated high above the yoke of material causality.

- 1) R. Otto: Eroerterungen in his edition (1930) of Kant's Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten; p.194.
- 2) A doctrine of clearly Pauline origins: for St. Paul calls righteousness freedom, and sin bondage.

Hence to be conscious of the freedom of the will, is to be conscious of a purely rational determination in the face of all material motivation. But rational determination of this description is the essential quality of the good will. Therefore a free will is a good will. But a "Good Will" must be good apart from the obstacles it overcomes. If it were not so, "Holiness itself would be eclipsed by our imperfect struggles towards Goodness."¹⁾ Though freedom is first exercised, discerned, and measured by the bonds it breaks and the obstacles it overcomes, the overcoming of obstacles is not an essential part of its nature. A wholly rational agent who finds no impediments in his heart, is therefore not less but more free. The good he necessarily wills is willed in freedom. The necessity to which a wholly rational agent is subject, the necessity which he cannot but accept since he knows no other being free of all natural desires, is the necessity to obey the dictates of his reason. This being so, a wholly rational agent is motivated in all his actions by rational considerations exclusively. Rational considerations however are nothing else but the considerations of the rational law. Now the rational law is the very principle of freedom. Therefore motivation by rational considerations is motivation in freedom. In Kantian terms: rational causality is the causality of freedom. A wholly rational agent, necessarily following his own rational nature, is in consequence, wholly free. A freedom not to follow his rational

1) Kant: Metaphysik der Sitten. Tugendlehre; Einleitung; X.

nature, a freedom of choice, for such an agent if it mean anything at all can only mean a diminution of his freedom,¹⁾ since something directed against the very principle of freedom cannot effect an increase of freedom. The freedom not to follow his rational nature is therefore a concept which cancels itself; in other words, it is meaningless.²⁾

Nevertheless it still remains conceivable as long as the definition of freedom as a Category of Reason in the first sense stands unchallenged. A new interpretation of freedom as a Category of Reason, to accord with the second sense of freedom and to replace and annul the old definition is needed. On the basis of the preceding considerations such a new interpretation can now be formulated, the argument being briefly this. Since only two separate causalities are known to exist, namely that of the physical universe in which man is enslaved and subjugated, and that of the intelligible world, where Practical Reason legislates and is determined by its own purely rational laws, man can only think of himself as free (as he necessarily does) in so far as he thinks himself subject to the laws of reason. Since there exists no principle of self-determination apart from these two, the rational and the material, man's freedom is entirely contained by his ability to superimpose the causality of the intelligible world on that of the physical universe and this is how man thinks himself when he thinks himself free. To superimpose the

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- 1) Compare St. Augustine's: posse non peccare magna liberta est, non posse peccare maximaxime est.
 - 2) In other words, the two senses of freedom are not compatible the operation of freedom in the second sense annuls the function of freedom in the first sense.

material laws on the rational is on the other hand defined as bondage, sin, and the root of all evil.¹⁾ Man's dual nature is therefore in a way a precondition of his liberty, since man as a member of a mundus intelligibilis is the only possible instance of a valid conception of human freedom. Any other concept of freedom one may attempt to formulate will of necessity remain empty as regards the human will, and self-cancelling as regards a wholly rational will. Now this position, though perfectly consistent, and in fact the one explicitly preferred by Kant throughout his exposition, is yet open to two extremely serious objections: (a) If freedom means being determined exclusively by rational law, then the concept of free will is redundant. For if the concept of free will is identical with the concept of a rational will, the former can, without loss of meaning, be replaced by the latter. A concept, or a principle which can be replaced should be dispensed with forthwith in the interest of intellectual economy. It seems however very improbable that a theory should be able to discard a concept defined in it as a Category of Reason. In addition, it makes no sense, and it is quite untrue, to say that Rationality is the Category of Reason with regard to will, that is, that we cannot conceive of our will except as wholly determined by rational grounds. Hence, either freedom is not a Category of Practical Reason, or it is not identical with rational determination (b) Now we cannot think of our will without thinking of it

1) Kant: Die Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der bloßen Vernunft, I:3.

as free. Moreover we conceive the will as free in its every choice and decision; when choosing between two material inclinations no less than when choosing the Categorical Imperative for its own sake, or when choosing to follow a material inclination in the face of the Categorical Imperative.¹⁾ Freedom of the will may be illusory inasmuch as its degree of reality is concerned. As a Category of Reason it has its field and function clearly defined by the data of reflective thought and neither the one nor the other can be restricted arbitrarily to a use defined as rational determination only. In other words, when I think of my will as free and when I think of my will as determined exclusively by rational grounds I think of it in two different aspects, the first being the larger. Thus, when I think of my will as wholly rational, I think of it as necessarily determined by rational law without further option. But when I think of it as free I think of it as not decisively determined by anything, in other words, as always possessed of choice. In again other words, a free will is free to choose; and the possibility of choosing one way must presuppose the possibility of choosing another way. Paton, who usually sides with Kant on this issue and continues to use the

1) Compare the decision taken by Sir David Ross, in The Right and the Good; p.23: "... an act of promise breaking is morally unsuitable insofar as it is an act of promise breaking even when in spite of this we decide it is the act we ought to do." Compare also the case of Prometheus, the first deliberately to break the law in the name of 'good' (i.e. the welfare of mankind) Prometheus knew he was breaking a law to which he subscribed. He had the power to foresee all the results of his action including his own (merited!) punishment. Yet he (gladly) chose to break that law:

ἐγὼ δὲ ταυτ' ἑαυτὶ ἤπιστάμην
ἐκὼν, ἐκὼν ἥμαρτον, οὐκ ἀρνέσσομαι
But I knew all these things would happen
yet willingly, willingly did I sin, I'll not deny it.
Aeschylus: Prometheus Bound; 265-266.

second sense of freedom, writes: "According to Kant when we say that a rational agent ought to do something we mean, whatever else we mean, that this is what a reasonable agent would necessarily do if he were not hindered by desires. The word "ought" indicates an objective necessity, a necessity which holds for all rational beings qua rational. Yet because of human irrationality this objective necessity is not also a subjective necessity, and it is possible for us to act not in accordance with reason but in accordance with desire. Hence it is legitimate to say that the word "ought" indicates a practical necessity although it also indicates something more. I am not sure that this answer is wholly satisfactory since it raises the difficult question of freedom, in particular the question, whether the freedom of a rational being to do an act does not presuppose freedom to refrain from doing the same act."¹⁾

Given two deliberate choices one in favour of the moral law for the sake of the moral law, the other in favour of some concrete end; formally both ways of choosing are possible (i.e. deliberate) both are chosen under the aegis of freedom; and both are chosen in the name of freedom. In its concrete context, the moral i.e., rational choice tends on the whole to be the "freer", since it is a more conscious, more self-conscious, less impulsive choice. This is a natural though by no means a necessary outcome of human psychology. A choice in favour of a material end in the face of a conflicting Categorical Imperative, can

1) H.J. Paton: Can Reason be Practical? p.16.

be just as conscious, self-conscious, free from impulse and deliberate as the moral choice.¹⁾ In other words, just as free. Whatever the degree of freedom of the contents of a choice, the very possibility of a choice depends on the freedom of the will to choose. Before the moral choice is possible, the will must be free, so that even if we subsequently define the moral choice as the free choice,²⁾ freedom as a necessary pre-supposition of the possibility of moral choice is a more extensive concept than the freedom represented in a moral; i.e. rationally determined choice. As the necessary manner of conceiving will-as-such Freedom is defined as an indispensable pre-condition but not as a sufficient condition for the wholly rational determination of a will, i.e. for a good will. Free will in other words, is a notion of wider denotation and narrower connotation than the notion of a good will. In addition rationality seems to be wider in denotation than moral goodness, so that a good will must be rational but a rational will need not be good.

1) viz. the moral opinions of the Occasionalist school, for ex..

2) viz. Cudworth: "The true liberty of man, as it speaks pure perfection is when the right use of the faculty of the will (together with the assistance of the Divine Grace!) he is habitually fixed in moral good but when by the abuse of free will men come to be habitually fixed in evil and sinful inclinations, then are they as Boethius well expressed in *propriae libertati captivi* - made captive and brought into bondage by their own free will". Cudworth definitely admits here of the two senses of freedom, though he thinks neither dispensable. See however also Aldous Huxley's shrewd remark about the use of "true" and "real". True and real, he says, are used as epithets only when we mean to deprive a word of its normal significance and either have it empty and meaningless or turn it into its opposite.

Kant's definition of freedom as the subjugation of desire by reason entails the equation freedom = rational determination. Similarly, Kant's definition of the good will as the will which subjugates desires to reason entails the equation: moral goodness = rational determination. In both cases Kant seems actuated by an unwarranted belief in the moral goodness of Reason as such. This belief as well as the resulting definitions can be discarded without in the least impairing the working or the validity of the critical method of transcendental deduction. The discussion of this point must however be postponed till the concept of rationality as defined by Kant has been examined more closely.

Before venturing this examination, one word on the question of "obstacles", mentioned in connection with the problem of freedom. The idea of obstacles seems particularly useful to the elucidation of the nature of a good will, though possibly not relevant to an elucidation of the nature of a free will.

A promising approach to this question would be to examine whether the "overcoming of obstacles" is not a necessary condition without which it would be impossible to experience a 'good-will', (not a free will). In addition we should enquire whether this "overcoming of obstacles"; this, in a way, negative manner of operation is not a more essential feature of the 'morally right' than Kant had allowed. That this 'negative manner of operation', is likely to prove an essential feature of the "morally right" seems indicated in the mostly negative formulation of the basic moral laws. Thus, for one thing, the decalogical "Thou shalt

not ..." persists throughout the Bible in a most remarkable manner even in very singular and detailed laws. The Socratic Daimon, for another, never urged Socrates to do anything, but only stopped him from doing things. This seems to me a point of some importance, since even the Greeks, with their fundamentally different approach to morals here testify to ours. I shall pursue the discussion of this matter at a more opportune point. For the time being I wished only to point out, that if we accept this interpretation we avoid the awkward implication of having to measure the goodness of a will by the dimensions of the obstacles it has to overcome, without having to sacrifice the fruitful idea of the overcoming of obstacles as such, or in more precise terms: the 'negative manner of operation' characteristic of the morally right.

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B) Rationality: The notion of the rationality of will (i.e. the possibility of a rational determination of the will) is defined by Kant in two ways. In the first place it is defined as an inherent feature of will as such. Thus the possibility of will being determined by a wholly rational (i.e. moral law) is allowed for. And in the second place it is defined as the exclusive determination of the will by a preference for the moral law, and, hence, as equivalent to the moral rectitude of the will, or to the good will. The two definitions are not incompatible nor is the second, the equation of the thoroughgoing rationality of the will with its goodness obviously inadequate. But bearing in mind the identification of freedom and rationality which has proved untenable, we may expect similar results here.

What is the descriptive definition of will as such? A modern psychological paper not primarily concerned with moral questions gives to an object of his outer or his inner life (motivation) by assuming the following descriptive definition of willed acts: "The process of definite line of action in connection with the given object (practical normal willed actions in daily life takes the following course: A maxim) in order to realise the original intentions of the first response motive appears in the form of any object of our inner or outer experience. (the end). The salient features of this description for our purpose are: We perceive this object and generate ideas of possible attitudes to it, that all willed actions must be sufficiently motivated, must be directed which lend the originally neutral object a provocative character. This process we call motivation. To the provocative character of this motive it sets itself with a view to its purpose. In other words, all will the 'I' corresponds with an active movement: the 'I' decides its attitude to the content of the motive, it activates itself and defines a consistent line of future conduct for itself in respect of the given object. The attitude thus assumed constitutes the objective moment, the maxim of the willed action. Its content however is determined by the content of its ideas which centred on the given object and turned it into a motive. This, the process of willed action, is followed by physical and psychological processes which translate it into physical action but no longer influence or change the initial process of willed action".¹⁾

Adopting this exposition to our more immediate needs we can say: By will subjects itself to a principle which it recognizes as necessary for the

1) Jaensch and H. Wiedling: "Grundformen Menschlichen Seins"; Experimentelle Struktur=psychologische Untersuchungen ueber das Willensleben; Einleitung zum Verstaendnis der Uebergangsformen von der integrierten zur nicht integrierten Struktur; p.347. It is interesting to note that this exposition by E.Jaensch tallies in all with the account H.J.Paton gives of "willed actions" in general in "Can Reason be Practical?" p.11, and "The Categorical Imperative"; p.60-61; 166-167.

2) H.J.Paton: 166 p.60.

vis-a-vis its natural inclinations and desires and that this has nothing in general we refer to the responsive attitude adopted by a human being to an object of his outer or his inner life (motivation) by assuming a definite line of action in connection with the given object (practical maxim) in order to realise the original intentions of the first response (the end). The salient features of this description for our purpose are: that all willed action must be sufficiently motivated, must be directed towards a clearly conceived end and must follow a definite course which it sets itself with a view to its purpose. In other words, all will insofar as it really is a will, and not a passing and ineffective whim, proceeds from a given motive with a consistency of principle and a persistency of purpose. "In all actions the will is determined by a principle and so has a maxim".¹⁾ "The maxim, as it were generalises my action, including my motive... it is the determining ground of my action, and it does not profess like an objective principle to be valid for anyone else and it may be good or it may be evil".²⁾

This is an important point, for it suggests that there is a certain amount of objective consistency, a certain amount of autonomy (the will subjects itself to a principle which it recognizes as necessary for the achievement of its purpose, only because it recognises it as necessary, i.e. according to a rational judgment) in all intelligent willing. It also suggests that every will possesses a certain amount of liberty

1) H.J.Paton: The Categorical Imperative; p.61.

2) H.J.Paton: idem ; p.60.

vis-a-vis its natural inclinations and desires and that this has nothing to do with what is willed be it morally right or be it morally wrong. It would therefore seem that the principles of consistency, autonomy and freedom do not by themselves constitute the moral worth of the will they qualify. Nor do they assure us that a will choosing in conformity with these principles will necessarily choose the "right". This however amounts to proposing that the first formula of the categorical imperative in its abstract and empty formality is no fool-proof criterion of the moral goodness of the will it informs or of the actions which conform. Now such a point against Kant could no longer be contained by the limits of interpretation. I shall therefore postpone its discussion till later.

C) The good will: What according to Kant are the specific features of the good will as distinct from all other kinds of will? Since, qua will it must be motivated, directed towards a purpose, and act according to a principle, its specific character will have to be sought not in its formal structure as a will but in the specific quality of its motive, end, and principle. Now it is a characteristic of the moral will that it never urges a wrong act. A man actuated by a good will, will never choose "to lie". His motive for "not lying" will be disinterested, taking no account of any desires, inclinations etc. he might have to the contrary; nor of any possible advantage that might accrue to him from "lying", nor of any dire results "not lying" might bring about.¹⁾ In

1) Compare Kant's paper against Benjamin Constant: *Über ein vermeintliches Recht aus Menschenliebe zu lügen*. (1793)

other words, a man of good will takes no account of any material a posteriori motives. He pays attention solely to the "rightness" of not lying, the objective unconditional rightness of the moral law which is recognized and revered by Reason. The law itself is his only motive. The reverence engendered by the law quickens that motive but is not its ground. The man of good will is entirely actuated by Reason, entirely independent of his desires. In the second place, he decides on a principle, a practical maxim solely with a view to its conformity with the law. He chooses a maximum which is objectively, universally valid, i.e. a representation of the moral law itself. Lastly the end which a man of good will proposes to himself cannot be a particular material subjective end. It must be an end proposed by reason, an end valid for every rational being, an objective end, an end which is so not in view of a particular desire, but by virtue of its essential nature recognized by reason, in short: an End in itself, an Absolute End.

Kant sets us such an end in his assertion: "Now I say man and generally every rational being exists as an end in itself - and must never be treated as a means alone".¹⁾ This assertion, expresses a fundamental intuition, but Kant tried to vindicate it nevertheless by the following formal argument: When I regard myself as a moral agent subject to the moral law and therefore possessing infinite value, I think of myself as an end to myself. But I am a moral agent subject to

1) Kant: Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten; Ch.II.

moral law only in virtue of my rational nature. But so is every other absolutely good, such supreme goodness belonging only to the will man. Therefore every other man must also regard himself as an end to himself. My subjective assumption that I am an end to myself is made by every rational agent about himself. It is therefore an objective principle valid for all. In virtue of my rational nature I am conscious of this and therefore must regard and treat all persons including myself as moral agents. That is I treat them as Ends in themselves, and therefore as necessary Ends to all men.¹⁾ Paton aware of the very superficial and dubious nature of this formalistic proof for the objective validity of Man-as-an-end-in-himself and the, in consequence, necessary universal acknowledgement of Man's Status as an End tried to puzzle out as in a jigsaw some other possible deduction: The end of the good will he argues, cannot be less perfect than the will. Let us therefore look for something that is not less perfect than the good will. There are for instance ends which are also duties like performing moral actions for the sake of duty. (M.d.S; Tugendlehre, Einl.; 111,1V.) But products of moral actions are not absolutely good, and morally good actions are not

1) This formalistic argument skates over thin ice. A discussion of its full implications must be left for later. For the moment just a few remarks. There is an unbridgeable gulf between the proposition: "Every man regards himself as an end" and the proposition "Every man regards every other man as an end". The second is in no way necessitated by the first; similarly the second formula of the Categorical Imperative far from being a mere exposition of the obligation implied in the first brings a completely new concept into the system of Ethics, a concept in itself sufficient to warrant the validity of the Categorical Imperative.

absolutely good, such supreme goodness belonging only to the will (Kr.d.Pr.V; 62-182.) Now since the end cannot be less perfect than the will, therefore only rational agents as far as they are possessed of a will itself capable of being a good will actuated by the idea of the law, can be the Ends of a Categorical Imperative.¹⁾

Now Kant puts forward his formalistic argument rather casually. Kant did not intend to convince anyone by this argument since he did not think that any man, in his capacity of rational agent, would need to be convinced by what his own Reason would tell him most plainly should he but stop to reason. All one needed to do was to make men stop in the pursuit of their desires - and make them reason. This is done by the Categorical Imperative. In his argument, Kant only meant to retrace what happens when men do stop to reason. That is, Kant thought he was merely formulating in precise terms what men think in their own slovenly way, when they declare: "Other men are human beings too." To Kant the moment someone sets up a Categorical Imperative for himself, the moment he feels bound by the moral law, he is governed by Reason. And being governed by Pure Reason, when Reason is no longer the servant of his desires but their master, he imposes certain limitations on himself. He asks himself whether he could wish other people to act in the way in which he is just proposing to act. By doing this he already assumes other men to be possessed of rationality, of free wills, in short, of a will which can be determined by the moral law. So that when he decides that a certain maxim will not do, he at the same time implies that other people, did they but stop to think, would reject it too. He acts against

1) H.J.Paton: The Categorical Imperative; p.166-172.

the background of a moral universe, where the same Reason reasons in all individuals through the same categories.¹⁾ On this view reason is what is common to all men, and if it is not forced into the service of one man's particular desires, correctly reasoned conclusions are valid for all, and would be reached by all who considered the same problem. If one man becomes aware that rational beings are Ends-in-themselves, by representing to himself the moral law, this awareness being rational is implicitly valid for all men and accessible to all men. It is therefore enough if men stop to reason, (and this they usually do) to make them realise that other men are Ends-in-themselves. The main difficulty for

1) In this argument Kant most closely follows the Stoic Doctrine as expounded by Marcus Aurelius, in εἰς ἑαυτὸν, Βιβλ. IV. 44.: εἰ τὸ νοερόν ἡμῶν κοινὸν καὶ ὁ λόγος καθ' ὃν λογικοὶ ἔσμεν κοινός: εἰ τοῦτο καὶ ὁ προσηλατικός τῶν ποιήσεων ἢ μὴ λόγος κοινός: εἰ τοῦτο, ὁ νόμος κοινός: εἰ τοῦτο πολιτεία ἔσμεν: εἰ τοῦτο πολιτεύματος τινος μετέχομεν: εἰ τοῦτο ὁ κόσμος ὡσαύτῃ νόμις ἔστιν: τίς γὰρ ἄλλου φησὶ τις τὸ τῶν ἀνθρώπων πᾶν γένος κοινὸν πολιτεύματος μετέχειν; ἐκεῖθεν δὲ, ἐκ τῆς κοινῆς ταύτης νόμιως καὶ αὐτὸ τὸ νοερόν καὶ λογικὸν καὶ νομικὸν ἡμῶν, ἢ πόθεν;

That is, "if the faculty to reason is common to us (i.e. all human beings) then Reason itself, by and through which, we are rational, must be our common possession. If that be so, then also the Reason which prescribes what ought and what ought not to be done is common (to all human beings). If that be so, then the law too is common (i.e. valid for all human beings.) If that be so, then we are citizens. If that be so, we take part in some commonwealth. If that be so the Universe itself must be in a way, a commonwealth. For in what other commonwealth, could anyone claim, that the whole of the human race take part as citizens? Thence then, from this commonwealth in which we all have part, we hold our very faculty of reasoning, and our rationality, and our being subjects to laws; or whence (else could we hold it)?

ary society denies Truth, denies the intrinsic worthlessness of man and his desperate need for god's grace, denies, in short, its faith: Christianity. Faith is the only link which holds society together, Christianity the only true Civilisation (Toda civilizacion verdadera viene de cristianismo)¹⁾ Europe has lost its faith, the germ of revolutions is destroying it, European Society is dying: La sociedad europea se muere²⁾. It is futile to hope that Truth will triumph in the end, that good must prevail: Indeed it is well known that faith once lost is hard to regain, for an individual - impossible to regain for a whole nation: Europe is lost: "No hay salvacion para Europa - dicen que vamos a la barbaria". Europe is going towards a despotism the like of which in cruelty and destructive power we have never yet seen in history. Man by trying to reform the natural order, by believing in his own dignity, and by setting himself above the need of god, has brought about his own perdition. Social reforms lead to dictatorships not to freedom. "There is no question of choosing between liberty and dictatorship. There is no liberty in Europe I would fain choose liberty could I choose it. But the given choice is between the dictatorship

1) D. Cortes: Discurso sobre la situacion general de Europa.

2) " idem.

Kant lies in making men also act by the light of their reason. It never occurred to Kant that men could, on rational grounds, refuse to treat other men as ends. He could not conceive of such an attitude except towards depraved and criminal men, who put themselves outside the moral law, who therefore do not profit by the dignity which obeying the moral law, being a moral agent, confers on men, and which indeed first constitutes a man as an End-in-himself. But even in their case Kant made provisions. Even they, as long as they are not altogether bereft of Reason, are still capable, at least potentially, of taking the moral law as their guide, and therefore even they never forfeit their human dignity altogether.

The chief account to which Kant turns this argument is not to establish the value of Man. This men must, and do, accomplish for themselves. He utilises it to prune the too rich, overflowing content of his intuition, the impulsiveness of "Now I say man exists as an End-in-himself?" to make it harmonize with the more austere climate of his usual manner of thinking. So intent was he on this that he paid no attention to the requirements of his Ethical Theory. On the contrary, Kant did his best to invalidate and retract the position reached in the quoted sentence, to erase its memory, even to deny its ever having been stated in this sense. Thus Kant explains that what he really meant to say was that man is an End-in-himself only in his moral capacity, only in so far as he is a moral agent. But what man can be said to exist in his moral capacity? Surely Kant meant more than he will admit by the quoted assertion! Indeed this can be shown by the following reflection:

If Kant meant only to imply that the value of man depends on his morality, and his aspect of a moral agent, then this value could have been deduced from the categorical imperative in its first form. The free and rational self-limitation of each moral agent determined solely by the categorical imperative would be the warrant and the source for such value as all possess. There was then no point, no need, indeed no room at all for a categorical declaration that man exists as an End-in-himself, an absolute value. Kant we must allow therefore did reach this position in a single momentary vision. That he then withdrew from it does not make this moment less but rather more real, especially when we consider Kant's overall intellectual position. Its importance or the importance of the "concept of man" it construes can hardly be overrated. This concept will later prove of the most far reaching, most decisive weight of all Ethical concepts. For the moment however, we must be satisfied to point out, that the attempt of certain interpreters to account for this concept by reminding one that this concept alone could provide a ground for the possibility of defining imperfect duties¹⁾ must assuredly fail. For, Kant as a matter of fact neglected to work out the implications and results contained in the idea of "imperfect duties", an idea, by the way, variously and repeatedly necessitated by the exigencies of his theory exactly because any elaboration of imperfect duties meant using this concept.

1) Imperfect duties according to Kant: Metaphysik der Sitten:
Einleitung; & 4.: "Welche sind Zwecke die zugleich Pflichten sind?"
can only comprise the happiness not the morality of other men. Viz.
pp. 123 - 125 where I discuss the pertinent passage at greater length.

I suppose a certain dialectical process to have been touched off by the intruding concept as it grated Kant's basic intellectual attitude, a process whose outline is still discernible. The theoretical sequence of what I suppose to have taken place, can be briefly sketched as follows: At a certain point in the argument of "Die Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten" Kant finds himself endowed or saddled with the alien concept of the intrinsic, inalienable value of man in se. That is, the entire man, not only the moral man is an object of respect. This concept, now, holds certain advantages, to which Kant was by no means indifferent, for his system. Man as valuable in himself i.e. valuable in the concrete living wholeness of his particular pursuits, at last frees the concept of man of its abstractness and defines spheres of actual interests for man, in which no less than in his bare moral person, he must be respected and not interfered with¹⁾ i.e. never treated as a mere means. The categorical imperative thus for the first time acquires a concrete content, and gains a new significance which is of great practical importance.²⁾

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- 1) Kant: Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten: Zweiter Abschnitt.
 - 2) Compare the Tenth Commandment: "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant; nor his ox nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbour's. Also Exodus xx,17: "Thou shalt not curse the deaf or put a stumbling block before the blind" and "Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart, thou shalt not avenge nor bear grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself... And if a stranger sojourn with thee ye shall not vex him... the stranger... shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself" Leviticus: xix,14, 17, 18, 33, 34.

1) i.e. Imperative...

Secondly this concept of man-as-valuable-in-himself, defines man's worth unconditionally, a priori, and therefore as exempt from fluctuations, even from the fluctuations of his own morality. It could have served as a rational ground for the validity and existence of the Categorical Imperative. This one would say, should be of inestimable advantage to Kant, who after all was out to insist on the a priori right of everyone to be respected as a person. Lastly, there were the imperfect duties which could only be established on this condition. Yet Kant made only the most cursory use of this new sense of man-as-an-end. At the cited point in "Die Grundlegung", and in the definition of imperfect duties Kant's argument on imperfect duties is as follows. Assuming man-as-an-end to be defined in its first sense i.e. man is of infinite value in so far as he is a moral agent, then for the Categorical Imperative he represents an inviolable barrier, a limiting condition, for all practical maxims which use means to an end, for nobody must use him as a mere end. He is thus an end in a negative, prohibitive sense. Perfect duties only can be defined in regard to him. But, argues Kant, prompted by the vision of man as a legislating member in a Kingdom of Ends, it seems a poor state of affairs when men merely refrain from abusing each other. From a moral point of view they should also help each other, and further each other's interests. It does not seem quite satisfactory merely to abstain from using a rational agent as a mere means, one must also treat him as an End in himself or rather as a subject of ends, which one must help him to attain by adopting them as far as possible as one's own.¹⁾

1) i.e. Imperfect duties!

Now it is a paradox of Ethics that one cannot help a man to attain his own moral perfection: for though one can urge, advise even compel a man "to perform actions directed towards certain ends one cannot compel him to adopt certain ends as his own. Moral perfection however, lies in the adoption of certain ends,¹⁾ and in the free and autonomous adoption of those ends. It follows therefore that we cannot treat man as a "positive" end in his moral and rational capacity. That is, we can have no imperfect duties towards men considered only as moral agent, whose sole end and purpose is their moral perfection, since by virtue of the specific nature of this end it is impossible to define such duties. Therefore, the only ends of other men which we can adopt as far as possible as our own, so as to further their attainment by other men, are the material, non-moral ends they pursue, in the concrete living wholeness of their being. The only pursuit of another man we can really further, is his pursuit of material goods,²⁾ irrational goods, happiness. Therefore, if imperfect duties are to be possible, man in his concrete wholeness inclusive of his material pursuits, must be considered an End-in-himself, to be respected and never abused. Infinite value will have to be attributed to man, apart from his aspect as a moral agent. Kant however is very reluctant to accept this outcome. So much so that when he wishes

1) Compare: "Thou shalt not see thy brothers ox or his sheep go astray and hide thyself from them"... "Thou shalt not see his ass or his ox fall down by the way and hide thyself from them. Thou shalt surely help it to lift up again" Deuteronomy: 22;1,4.

2) Kant: Metaphysik der Sitten; Tugendlehre, Einleitung, & 7.

to assert the inviolable dignity of everyone and the categorical prohibition against abusing any man even the most degraded, vicious, and depraved, he prefers to do this by way of supplementary formulations to the first (limited) sense of man-as-an-end in himself,¹⁾ rather than make use of the enlarged second sense which was ready to hand. Why? Because Kant's basic and fundamental attitude to all questions is that: What is reasonable, is good. What is not reasonable cannot be good, and nothing good can be unreasonable, or repugnant to Reason. "Was vernuenftig ist, ist gut."²⁾ This is the very device of Kant's "instinct of the intellect", as Bergson would say. This basic valuational attitude of Kant's results in such definitions as the second sense of freedom: To be free is to be rationally determined. To be determined by reason is to be good. To be morally good is to be rational, to be free, to possess value and worth etc. Man's worth depends on his moral perfection. The

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- 1) Altering this initial position which defines man's infinite worth as grounded in the actual goodness of his will, so as to include a capability of manifesting a good will; and even to embrace, as a third extension, a potential capability of manifesting actual goodness of will. For, Kant argues in justification of these extensions, however low a man may have sunk, he never quite loses the power to determine himself to attempt the good, and by so doing and persevering will in time achieve actual goodness of will and moral status. This inalienable capacity of man to dispose himself towards the goodness of his will, should he indeed will this with all his heart, confers an infinite worth on the very lowest among men, and entitles him to be respected as an end in himself.
 - 2) See Hegel's subsequent extension "Alles was ist, ist vernuenftig" and therefore in conscious and unconscious evocation of Kant - good.

actual degree of man's moral perfection determines the actual degree of his worth. Apart from his moral capacity, man has no worth or value. All this forms a very closely knit homogenous attitude which in all but its belief in reason (which in the end gives it a strange twist away and inimical to all truly religious inspiration)¹⁾ is reminiscent and in part directly derived from that Pauline doctrine which has been so influential and decisive for Protestant thought. Thus the view of the dual nature of man, of his material inclinations as bondage and slavery, the root of all evil and all sin; the view of freedom as the suppression of the sensual desires of the natural man, the view of moral perfection as the goal of all man's endeavours, moral perfection being this suppression of the normal (natural!) man and therefore the same as freedom; the view that in this endeavour to free himself from the bondage of his material desires man must be a law unto himself: his higher nature dictating to his lower and insofar as he is still one, autonomously;²⁾ and finally, the view that this battle must be fought by the individual in his own heart, and won by the individual in his own heart; - all these points are distinctly Pauline. But Paul depends on God's grace to awaken the heart, God's grace to give it the power to conquer and God's mysterious will to elect as it lists the recipients of His grace. Kant depends in

1) Kant: Streit der Fakultäten; Streit der Theologischen mit der Philosophischen Fakultät; Von Religionssekten.

2) Compare: "The Gentiles having not the law ... are a law unto themselves": ... εαυτοῦς νόμος εἶσιν " *Romans II. 14*

all on Reason. Man as a rational creature holds the power to determine himself towards the good. Of his own free will man adopts the ends proposed by Reason. At the same time Reason warrants that these ends can be attained by man's own efforts by the exercise of Man's Natural Powers, indeed, through them alone. For, Kant argues, if Reason proposes a certain end to Man as the very purpose for which he lives and which it is his bounden duty to pursue, then Man must be capable of attaining it. A duty to pursue an end with all our might which cannot be attained except by a gratuitous and arbitrary dispensation of Grace is not an obligation but a mockery and a deception. It is an idea utterly repugnant to Reason. To be utterly unreasonable is to be utterly immoral. But what is averse to Reason and averse to Morality can never be from God, or proved to be from God. What is good and what is bad we know for certain. Whether God inspired St. Paul¹⁾ in all things we know not. That we need a special dispensation of grace apart from and in addition to our good will before we can be governed by the moral law, is a doctrine utterly repugnant to Reason. And even more so is the doctrine that some men are vouchsafed this grace denied to others; the doctrine of election and predestination. Reason requires that a man be as righteous and as worthy as he wills to be through his sincere determination to be governed in all things by the moral law. To see a worthy man deprived of the effects of his rectitude or a less worthy attain moral perfection by an arbitrary

1) Kant: Streit der Fakultäten; etc... Von Religion^ssekten, und Friedensabschluss.

dispensation of grace is averse to Reason, to Morality, to Justice. Furthermore, since, unlike moral perfection, it is beyond our power to achieve material happiness by our own efforts, and since material happiness is indispensable to the perfect life for which we were created, Reason requires¹⁾ that God apportion Happiness in direct proportion and exact harmony with Morality. Moral Rectitude alone makes us worthy of happiness, and it is repugnant to Reason to see the worthiness of the righteous disdained and mocked. Therefore the Postulates of Practical Reason rightly demand that Happiness be allotted us in exact proportion with Morality, and that there be a God to see to it. That is, a God, who governs and orders the Universe so, as to make the reasonable at all times the actual.¹⁾

I have enlarged the argument so far, because both Kant's conflict with St. Paul, and the Postulates of Practical Reason, are part of the same complex, the same attitude which made Kant dislike and repulse at so great a cost to his theory and against his own opposing intuition the concept of the Dignity of man conceived independently of moral worth. His admiration and pride in the Promethean splendour of moral rectitude as the self-given, self-created worth of Man is matched by a strong feeling of injury whenever moral rectitude is not given its due. Kant insists as it were, on "the reasonable right of the righteous", on "justice for the worthy". The injustice of having value, worth, and

1) Kant: Critique of Practical Reason; Dialectic of Practical Reason; Ch.1. i,2,5.

dignity attributed to the righteous and unrighteous alike is¹⁾ so distasteful, so repugnant a thought that in the face of the methodical exigencies of the Critical Theory of Ethics, Kant prefers to drop the idea of imperfect duties²⁾ altogether, rather than agree that man is to be respected in his concrete wholeness no less than in his moral capacity.

At one point Kant had indeed allowed his intuition, his feeling for "Humanität" to run away with him. On realising however, just how far this upset his most cherished conviction: 'that only the reasonable is good', he had promptly withdrawn the new concept. I believe this³⁾ rather than the explanation offered by R. Otto⁴⁾ to be the more probable

- 1) Compare: "Et c'est n'estimer rien qu'estimer tout le monde... je veut qu'on me distingue..." Alceste in Moliere's Misanthrope; Act 1. Sc.1.
- 2) The need for which is thrice encountered in Kant's exposition, first in the concept of the Kingdom of Intelligible Ends; secondly, in the argument on the meaning of Autonomy and the fruitfulness of the idea of freedom which inspires men to new efforts in moral perfection; and lastly as urged again by Kant's feeling for humanity and his personal conviction that it is our duty in all to further the Ends of Humanity.
- 3) For the same reason Kant would have rejected this concept as the ultimate ground of the Categorical Imperative, and would never have agreed to R. Otto's interpretation of his theory. For Kant would never have accepted any interpretation by which morality would in the last instance and ultimately be grounded not in Reason. I shall discuss this problem in detail later.
- 4) "It seems probable that in his first draft of the Groundwork Kant had not introduced the idea of the dignity of man and had worked out his system in accordance with a formula x. In a later revision he then replaced formula x with the second imperative as we know it now urged by a richer and deeper intuition rising from his heart. He did not however draw all the consequences of the new view opened by this intuition, and returns to continue with the old argument. Afterwards Kant tried in vain to reduce the new concept to the dimensions of "the old argument.." R. Otto: Notes to Kant's "Grundlegung.."; pp.198-199. Otto also writes that Alfred Hegler was the first to propose this theory of a time lag between the inception and the revision of the "Grundlegung..." in his "Psychologie von Kant's Ethik"; Freiburg 1831.

reason why Kant did not make full use of his discovery of the unconditional worth of the human being as such. I also believe this attitude of Kant's to furnish the likeliest answer to that recurrent and plaintive question invariably voiced by mystified interpreters¹⁾ "Why did Kant not pursue his so promising idea of imperfect duties?" Kant, I believe, did not pursue the idea of imperfect duties because this would involve an acceptance without reservations of the second sense of man-as-an-End. And Kant could not accept this second sense without reservations because this would be equivalent to an admission that what is reasonable is not necessarily good, and that in consequence it may well be that the 'good' has its roots deep in the unreasonable heart, or in an arbitrary gratuitous decision of the will; in short, in something irrational. This however, would not be reasonable...

These reflections make it possible, even imperative to reconsider certain of Kant's views which are not directly determined or entailed by the method of transcendental deduction. Especially those of Kant's views which seem unduly prejudiced by his cult of reason ought to be re-examined most carefully in order to decide whether they are or are not indispensable to Kant's critical system of Ethics.

It must be pointed out that Kant sometimes uses a third sense of man-as-an-end-in-himself. In certain passages Kant speaks as though he would altogether deduce man's infinite worth from his destiny and his potential membership in a Kingdom of Ends, conceived not in its

1) viz. Paton, Cassirer, Hermann Cohen, Otto himself etc. ...

transcendent sense of an intelligible world, but in its teleological sense as the utopian future of Humanity. In this sense, only those have value who, striving for perfect rectitude in themselves, help to realise and to further the common ends of humanity. This, however, is a rare use, and of no deeper consequence for Kant's philosophy.¹⁾

Summa summarum: Man, according to Kant is of value in so far as he is moral. Man is moral in so far as he is rational. In consequence all men possess potential worth.²⁾

Actual worth, however, is directly dependent on actual moral rectitude. Thus indeed are we viewed by God: so that we stand equal in the eyes of men,³⁾ unequal before God.⁴⁾ For is it not a wondrous thing, exclaims Kant that man should set a moral law unto himself, and be governed by it, and made free by it to dwell as an intelligible being in an intelligible world, amongst beings whose worth is infinite and self-conferred!⁵⁾ The same Promethean elation and pride inform the famous

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- 1) Contrary to the views of certain of Kant's interpreters like Harold Höffding, Richard Müller, etc. which I shall discuss later.
 - 2) "Das die Menschheit in ihrer Idee zu einer Würde erhebt, die man im Menschen als Gegenstand der Erfahrung nicht vermuten soll", as Kant humorously remarks in Der Streit der Fakultäten: Streit der Theologischen Fakultät mit der Philosophischen; Von Religionssekten.
 - 3) Who do not know the heart where moral perfection dwells in the innermost goodness of the will, but only see the external and flagrant breach of law.
 - 4) Who sees the heart and its reasons.
 - 5) Kant: Kritik der praktischen Vernunft; Erster Teil, Erstes Buch.

apostrophe on duty: "Pflicht! Du erhabener grosser Name...
wo findet man die Wurzel deiner edlen Abkunft.. von
welcher abstammen die unnachlässige Bedingung all derjenigen
Wertes ist den sich Menschen allein selbst geben können" ¹⁾

and the concluding passage of the Critique of Practical Reason:

"Zwei Dinge erfüllen das Gemüt mit immer zu-
nehmender Bewunderung und Ehrfurcht; der bestimmte
Himmel über uns und das moralische Gesetz in uns" ²⁾

That is to say; nothing in the world can compare with the majesty of
the starry heavens above, unless it were "the majesty of the moral law
in our hearts."

It is probable that the emotions informing these passages eclipsed
for Kant the humbler intuition expressed in the passage: "Now I say,
man... exists as an end in himself..." ³⁾ What we have called the
Promethean elation and noble pride of it, is indeed more fittingly
combined with the apotheosis of reason; - reason which makes men like
unto Gods so that they know good and evil by its light ⁴⁾ and through it
possess the power to attain moral perfection -, than with a respect for
men accorded without reason, and without discrimination: "Qu'estimer
tout le monde"...

1) Kant: Kritik der praktischen Vernunft; Erster Teil, Erstes Buch.

2) Kant: idem ; Beschluss.

3) Compare also: "Der verblendete Vorzug des blossen Wissens verschwindet... ich
lerne die Menschen ehren" quoted by E. Cassirer (from Fragmente aus Kants Nachlass
Kants Leben und Lehre; p. 25)

4) Compare: "... sicut Deus scilicet Bonum et malum" Gen. III. 5.

At this point we must pause for a moment to sum up as best we may the results and the implications of the critical method and Kant's theory of Ethics, since from now on almost all expositions and elaborations and arguments, even though they start from concepts and ideas intrinsic to the critical philosophy transcend what is strictly speaking warranted by the critical method, egged on by what can best be termed "The humanitarian superstitions of the eighteenth century", and, which, with one notable exception, reached Kant by way of Rousseau.

Briefly, then, the critical theory starts with the data of moral experience and finds objective, universal laws and an objectively and universally valid obligation at the core of this experience. From the datum of the Categorical Imperative so defined Kant deduces the freedom of the will as its necessary pre-condition and the rationality and the autonomy of the will in dialectical discussion of the nature of the law, the imperative, and the will. The good will, itself a datum of moral experience, the Primacy of Morality personified, has been fitted into its place as the will which chooses to be motivated by the categorical imperative for the sake of the law. And man as the potential possessor of good will has been recognized as the ground of the possibility of duties and obligations and in a certain sense the ground of the possibility of freedom, and moral rectitude.

The dialectical development of ideas inherent in the critical theory along lines determined by heterogenous assumptions are: (a) The development from man-as-an-end to the Kingdom of Ends along the line of imperfect duties and the telos of humanity; (b) The development from the

good will to the postulates of Practical Reason along the lines of moral perfection as the destiny of man; (c) The development from the Freedom of the will to the Autonomy of Practical Reason remains throughout inside the limits of the theory and can be defined in its terms. So does Kant's final discussion of what has and what has not been demonstrated by the critical method and what can and what cannot be so demonstrated. I shall indicate very briefly the main line of each of these arguments before hazarding a criticism of Kant's theory of Ethics.

(a) The Kingdom of Ends: Man is an end-in-himself, a positive end for imperfect duties, duties whereby I adopt other people's ends as my own and help to further them to the best of my abilities. The idea of positive duties is further developed in the idea of the Kingdom of Ends, where all Ends-in-themselves aggregate at first only in the sense of a "next-to-each-other" i.e. as each rational agent limits his own ends so as not to use another rational agent as a means and thus a certain overall harmony is achieved. Then in the sign of "for-each-other", when each rational agent takes the personal ends of the other as his own in the sense that he tries to further them as far as possible.

(b) The postulates of practical reason: Kant starts off with the concept of the good will. The good will is the only thing in the world which can be said to be "absolutely and altogether good",¹⁾ all other goods being but conditional goods, the condition being that they do not

1) Kant: Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten. Opening sentence.

hinder or conflict with the exercise of the good will.¹⁾ Happiness though the most desired end of mankind is not judged a sufficient ground for the rightness of actions purposing to bring it about. For these actions are judged not by success in achieving their end, namely happiness, but by whether they were actions conforming to the good will.²⁾ That the good will is the supreme good we can see from the fact that humanity has been endowed with Reason: were happiness the chief end for which humanity was created, we would have no need of Reason for instinct would have been a swifter and surer way of attaining happiness. But since God has endowed us with Reason this can only be for the purpose of exercising our good will and attaining moral perfection. Kant explicitly proclaims the teleological hypothesis in the *Grundlegung* (1785), "to make this matter as clear as possible, let it be remembered that it is a fundamental position in all philosophy that no means are employed except those only most appropriate and conducive to the end and aim proposed".³⁾ This accords perfectly with what Kant had first "learned from Rousseau namely, the deep hidden Nature of Man and the secret Law according to which Providence is justified by what man learns and observes from his life."⁴⁾

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- 1) Thus Kant announces what we have previously (in Part One) called the postulate that primacy be accorded to moral worth over all other values.
 - 2) i.e. Kant finds this Primacy actually accorded to Moral Worth in our daily moral experience.
 - 3) Kant: Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten. Bk.1. Ch.1.
Kant: idem . Bk.1. Ch.8.
 - 4) Kant: News of the Theme for his Lectures of 1765: Ethics

For, according to Rousseau the Nature of Man is such as to cause him to seek his moral perfection, and to seek his moral perfection is, again according to Rousseau, man's chief moral duty: "Il'y a d'une part l'ordre qui est dans le monde et d'autre part la conscience morale qui est l'amour de cette ordre. O'ordre vient du même Dieu tout-puissant qui a créer la conscience et l'homme pour lui faire aimer l'ordre.¹⁾

What is affirmed in this "Profession of Faith" is that there actually exists a natural disposition, a sentiment, a real need: conscience, which achieves a perfect concordance between our particular persons and the universal destiny thanks to the cause and origin common both to our consciences and to that universal good.

The tenor of this corresponds exactly to Kant's contention that, since the good will in spite of being the supreme good is not the sole good nor the entirety of goodness and since God has endowed us with Reason in order that we may pursue our moral perfection and our moral perfection only, it seems absurd and repugnant to think that (a) such pursuit must needs remain unfulfilled because of the short space of time we are allotted, and (b) that good will, and morality should lack the material happiness which alone can help it to realise the summum bonum. (Good will is the supremum bonum). Therefore it seems indicated that Reason demand that Immortality be given us to work out our moral perfection and that Happiness be allotted in exact harmony with Morality, so that the

1) Rousseau: Profession de foi de Vicaire Savoyard: Emile

summum bonum be the portion of the morally perfect. The fulfilment of these demands is "possible in the world only on the supposition of a supreme Nature having a causality corresponding to Moral Character."¹⁾ (that is the Existence of God). Hence the existence of God is the third requirement²⁾ of Reason, and the condition of the first two. All these are necessary to Reason in so far as only in their light can moral obligation become altogether intelligible, altogether reasonable.

Kant had been under Rousseau's influence at the beginning of his writings to an astonishing degree.³⁾ He had however repudiated Rousseau's grounding of Morality in Human Nature right at the beginning of his critical writings. Rousseau had taken freedom to be an actual constitutive element of human nature: "Der Mensch habe in seinem Geist die Freiheit als schlechthin Absolutes, der freie Wille sei der Begriff des Menschen".⁴⁾ Rousseau had taught that the exercise of his innate freedom by one man, is limited by and indeed defined in respect of the exercise of the free wills of other men. This reciprocal limitation and determination, according to Rousseau, constitutes the "contrat social". He also held that the validity of the social contract and of all

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- 1) Kant: Kritik der Praktischen Vernunft, Bk.11.; Ch.11 & V.; (1788).
 - 2) i.e. Bedürfniss der Vernunft.
 - 3) Kant used to say that it was Rousseau "der ihn zurechtgebracht hätte" i.e. who had first shown him the path to true morality. This is quoted from Kant's Nachlass by Ernst Cassirer in his book Kants Leben und Lehre, p.251.
 - 4) Hegel: Vorlesungen ueber die Geschichte der Philosophie XV. p.527.

obligations deriving from it were ultimately grounded in the self-interest and self-love of each individual member: "Les engagements qui nous lient au contrat social ne sont obligations que parce qu'ils sont mutuels.. l'égalité du droit et la notion de la justice qu'elle produit derivent de la preference que chacun se donne et par consequence de la nature de l'homme".¹⁾

Kant on the other hand held that freedom was an indispensable condition for the very possibility of morality and obligation. According to Kant we are sufficiently justified in operating with the concept of freedom, if we can show that unless we use this concept moral experience would remain unintelligible. Once the idea of freedom has been demonstrated as a category of practical reason and as such a characteristic manner of the spontaneous operation of reason when brought to bear on moral problems, there is no need, (and therefore no justification!) to conceive freedom as an actual feature of human nature and actions.

In addition Kant tried to invalidate the appeal to sentiment and to ground morality in reason. He thereby hoped to make Ethics independent of the contingencies of human nature even when taken in its Rousseauian sense of the 'norm' of humanity. He thus hoped to gain the possibility to extend the scope of his ethical system, and render it valid for all rational agents.

1) Though in a way which I shall discuss later, the idea of human philosophy throughout and propagates it towards the pole of "Menschheit" (humanity).

1) Rousseau: Le Contrat Social; 11.24.

throughout to another idea which he had taken over, and shared with Rousseau, the teleological idea of the destiny of man, especially as this is the very idea most likely to imperil the autonomy of ethics. Possibly Kant mistook this danger by concentrating on the "reasonable" side of the teleological idea. Whatever Kant's reasons for holding fast to this idea may have been, the upshot was that in the Dialectic of practical reason, and especially in the practical postulates Kant manages to annul whatever he had achieved in the clarification of the nature of morality and the elucidation of its function in human reasoning and willing, choosing and acting. Kant had travelled a long way, a way one could somewhat daringly term the voyage from Rousseau through Kant to Rousseau. This voyage was Kant's voyage in time. Kant's later, again Rousseau dominated writings have no retro-active effect, from a methodical and theoretical point of view, on the achievements of the critical philosophy¹⁾ or on the discovery of the method of transcendental deduction. Sub specie aeternitatis the crown of Kant's moral theory is not the Kingdom of Ends and not the postulates of practical reason: immortality, the summum bonum, and the existence of God, but the idea of autonomy which is their very opposite. Even the moral ethos of Carritt whose : "Which is the purpose of our existence from the point of view of God? I do not

1) Though in a way which I shall discuss later, the idea of human destiny and the final telos of humanity informs the Critical Philosophy throughout and preponderates it towards the pole of "Menschenfreundlichkeit".

1) i.e. according to the position reached by the end of the Grundlegung.

know and as a moral philosopher I do not care"... I can but echo in a more humble way, will find no fault with the dialectical emergence of the idea of autonomy from the concept of moral obligation and its necessary precondition: the freedom of the will.

(c) The autonomy of ethics: According to Kant, as we must recall at this point, moral obligation is not primarily an obligation to do or to refrain from doing certain acts, since moral rightness lies not in the act as such but in the specific quality and modality of the will that wills the action.¹⁾ Moral obligation is therefore predominantly an obligation on the will to operate only in the specifically moral way: to choose a certain motivation for itself, (i.e. only those maxims which also are fit to serve as Universal Laws) and moreover to be motivated by the chosen motivation in a certain way. (i.e. to choose those maxims because they are fit for universal law, and only because of that.) An obligation to be motivated only by certain specific motives in a certain way, is an obligation to adopt a certain end. (i.e. the end of being so motivated.) This no law can help me do. The moral law in so far as it compels the freedom of each to harmonize with the freedom of others can be deduced from the idea of freedom itself. The moral law, in short, compels me to make a lawful use of my freedom. Obviously, one can be compelled to so limit one's freedom. In Kantian terms: "one can be compelled to perform actions which are directed towards certain

1) i.e. According to the position reached by the end of the Grundlegung.

ends".¹⁾ But no one can compel me to respect the law. No one can compel me to choose to limit the exercise of my freedom to its lawful uses. In Kantian terms: "no one can compel me to adopt any end as my own".²⁾ This I must do myself, voluntarily and deliberately, and unless I have done that I cannot be said to obey a categorical imperative, i.e. to be a moral agent. Therefore if I am to accept moral obligations at all, they must be obligations which I impose on myself, legislating for myself as my own Nomothetos. The categorical imperative I impose on myself is the decision to determine myself and set a law unto myself in accordance with the ideas of universality and duty regardless of my subjective ends. These ideas cannot be imposed on my will by any agency (whether empirical experience or a spiritual authority) other than my own reason without impairing the moral worth of my decision. I must therefore give those ideas to myself. I must produce them creatively. Autonomy of will is therefore more than just the determination of the will to be a law unto itself, consistent with itself, i.e. to choose only such maxims as are fit to become universal law. Autonomy is the capacity of will as practical reason to formulate laws for itself in view of ideas which as pure reason it produces spontaneously. Reason is no more passive in its practical function of a rationally and therefore morally determined will, than in its "pure" function of theoretical thinking. In both cases Reason is not merely receptive of the given data of inner

1) Kant: Metaphysik der Sitten; Tugendlehre, Einleitung.
2) Kant: idem.

and outer experience but imposes its own modes and modalities on these data, acknowledging, admitting and accepting them only in so far as they have been ordered, moulded and permeated by its own categories.

Autonomy is therefore equivalent to freedom as a category of practical (and pure) Reason and characterises primarily the spontaneous production of ideas. The categorical imperative itself, i.e. the moral law in its basic conception, is creatively formed and in its formation absorbed by Reason. Thus not only the choice of maxims but the moral law itself is brought under the category of autonomy.¹⁾ Autonomy, the faculty of spontaneous creation would then be the effective cause for the existence of the moral law, and the possibility of categorical imperative for wholly reasonable and free beings, and would thus in part resolve the dilemma of a holy and yet free will. For a free will being autonomous formulates its own law to himself. The law so formulated will possess the unconditional character of the categorical imperative, but not its binding, necessitating, demanding character, since a holy being automatically accepts the dictates of his own reason finding no material obstacles anywhere in himself, or any reason outside himself, to reject them. On the contrary, in the joy of its spontaneous

Further explanation for the 'fact' of freedom is required, since that

- 1) Thus the question as to the different grounds, degrees, validity of the rightness of the law and the rightness of the will is partially resolved by their common origin and genesis. It must be noted that
- 2) Kant's great innovation was the creating of Ideas, as categories, or regulative ideas by a spontaneous Reason, (what Plato defined as the discovery of existing ideatic entities.) The idea of Reason
- 3) creating ideas and laws for itself originates with St. Paul, who as we have seen defines the term of Autonomy for it: *εαυτοῦς νόμος ἐστίν...*

unopposed creativeness, the Reason of a holy being invents new "duties", new targets for its will. But so does our own Reason notwithstanding its material impediments: "Reason by itself and independent of empirical data, commands what ought to be, that is actions of which the world has perhaps never heard before and though those who base everything on their experience, doubt the sagacity of such actions, yet reason commands them insistently."¹⁾

Reason, in other words, impelled by its inner motive-power, does not rest, till it force the ideas²⁾ produced by itself, out of their transcendental unreality, and into the reality of the causal universe, there to serve as the immanent and constitutive grounds for the possibility of realising its own aims, the perfection of Morality. The idea of Freedom in particular seems well adapted to this task. By showing the way to, and not fearing to demand and insist on, "the seemingly impossible, it enlarges the domain of the possible". This indeed is the specific kind of "reality" which Freedom is capable of and which it achieves as, being a transcendental and regulative idea, it enters the willed action as an immanent and constitutive element.³⁾ Not "real" as a cause it becomes "real" as in its effects. At this point no further explanation for the "fact" of Freedom is required, since that

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- 1) Kant: Grundlegung zur ~~einer~~ Metaphysik der Sitten. Bk.11. Ch.IV.
 - 2) Kant: Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten, zweiter Abschnitt, & IV.
 - 3) By consistently acting as though (v.Vaihinger: Die Philosophie des Als Ob) we were free we in a sense become really free, since we make effective use of freedom.

which can never be explained (i.e. how freedom is objectively possible in a physical causal Universe) is given to us. The limit of understanding is not the limit of certainty: there is no greater certainty possible than that which assures us of our moral self, of the autonomous freedom of our personality.¹⁾

Now, though we are incapable of explaining the objective possibility of freedom, we are yet constrained as rational beings to try at least a subjective explanation. We cannot avoid asking ourselves how we can adjust the certainty we have of the autonomous freedom of our person, or more practically even, how to justify the categorical imperatives with which we address ourselves because of that freedom to our experience of our natural selves. Brought face to face with ourselves as parts of a natural universe, subservient like all other things to its physical causal laws, we see ourselves possessed by desires, wants, passions. We watch ourselves live under and follow laws imposed by our bodies, our unconscious fears, our anxieties. We slave under a yoke of a necessity we have not created and which we cannot escape. And in all this close web of physical cause and effect there seems no loophole to afford the most tenuous justification for our assertion of freedom, nor the slightest ground for the possibility and existence of freedom.

1) Kant: Die Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten; zweiter Abschnitt; Kritik der Praktischen Vernunft; von der Deduktion der Grundsätzen der prakt. Vernunft, and also Einleitung: Von der Idee einer Kritik der Praktischen Vernunft.

Indeed, thoroughgoing allpervading causality being a category of Reason, we must ask ourselves: How can we even conceive ourselves as free? On the other hand we must bear in mind, that we cannot conceive ourselves except as free, freedom, too, being a category of Reason. Kant's answer to this dilemma is that we think of ourselves in different capacities, we view ourselves under different aspects, once, as parts of the physical universe and, once as members in an Intelligible Kingdom of Ends. We impose moral laws on ourselves, we claim autonomy, we address ourselves with categorical imperatives, because "we arrogate freedom from the laws of causality governing nature, when, and in order to, think of ourselves as parts of an intelligible Kingdom of Ends participating in the legislation of moral laws; afterwards we find ourselves bound by these laws, because we have claimed the freedom of the will. For Freedom and self-legislation of the will are both Autonomy and therefore interchangeable."¹⁾

In other words, Kant's answer is to point out certain ontological presupposition which we must assume, (i.e. they are necessary conditions,) in order to explain the possibility of conceiving freedom and the categorical imperative. Moral obligations, he points out are defined only for beings whose wills can be freely determined, and who at the same time possess a subjective, and materially determined nature. In other words, in order to explain the possibility of freedom and the categorical imperative human beings must be viewed at one and the same time under two

1) Kant: Grundlegung zur ~~einer~~ Metaphysik der Sitten; Dritter Abschnitt.

different aspects. They must be seen, at one and the same time, as members of two different and mutually exclusive worlds.¹⁾ They must be regarded at one and the same time as law givers in the Kingdom of Intelligible Ends whose pure wills and actions are directly determined by the law, and as temporal beings swayed by desires and unreasonable impulses, whose impure wills are reluctantly 'necessitated' by the commands which as 'pure reasons' they set before themselves. By regarding man as a dual being, a being of dual nature, and yet basically one by virtue of his individuality we provide the necessary ontological conditions for the explanation of the phenomenon of moral obligation. From the point of view of psychology the possibility of moral obligation is explained by the fact that the individual perceives moral obligation as a conflict in his own heart between a higher and lower will. The ontological hypothesis of the dual nature of man, and the psychological interpretation of the source and genesis of obligation, are the conditions on which rests the possibility of conceiving the idea of freedom. They provide a subjective explanation, of the phenomenon of obligation.²⁾

This however still leaves open the questio juris, as to the sufficient reason for the legitimacy of all moral obligation, that is, the question as to the objective validity of the implied claim on the exclusive allegiance of our will: Why, for instance, should our higher

1) In this Kant follows almost to the letter the Pauline doctrine of natural man and heavenly man.

2) viz. R.Otto: Erläuterungen zu Kant's "Grundlegung..." p.154.

will claim a valid right to determine our lower will? "But this question could only be answered if there were a 'definite good', a supreme value found to supply the content of the moral imperative. But even then we should have to ask about the ground of the pre-eminence of this supreme value, and unless we were prepared to accept it as dogma, we would have to enquire into the validity of its ground and so on."¹⁾

The question of the objective validity of moral obligation as moral obligation would still stand, even if with Rudolf Otto we take the particular questio juris of the categorical imperative to have been implicitly answered by Kant if a certain interpretation of the concept of "man-as-an-end-in-himself" is accepted.²⁾ "Unconditional moral obligations are not to be justified or vindicated in any way, for each such justification would make the validity of the law depend on some ulterior ground, and would reduce it to a conditional hypothetical, instead of an unconditional command. The very nature of the fundamental certainty of moral judgments contains the impossibility of a deductive proof. No proof can be given for the validity of moral obligation itself."³⁾

In other words, it is not in the power of any Ethical Theory to demonstrate why we ought to submit our will to the restriction of moral laws, or, in the terminology of the theory of values: why we should accord the "Right" precedence and supremacy over all other values.

1) Ernst Cassirer: Kant's Leben und Lehre; p.253.

2) viz. p.216.

3) Kant: Ein Versuch ueber den klaren und bestimmten Sinn der Maximen einer natürllichen Theologie und Moral; IV Reflektion; & 2.

The answer that this is accomplished for us: "Das Unbeschreibliche ist fuer uns getan"; 1) that the existence of Reason, that its reasons, and that it is bound by its own reasoning and determined by its own ideas is a primary fact, 2) which cannot be explained, and the explanation of which it would be senseless to seek - would seem much more satisfactory and much less disturbing if we did not bear in mind that moral judgments might be illusory in the sense that they might be reducible to some heterogenous grounds, and that neither the clarity and certainty of our moral experience, nor their objective communicability affords proof to the contrary. We cannot be sure that the indescribable which is done for us is what we believe it to be, namely the assurance of the reality of our autonomous and moral personality. This is aggravated by the fact that different interpretations 3) of the "indescribable" have been put forward and most plausibly defended, both in the name of Religion and, in the name of what, for want of a better word, we shall call Maximalism. 4)

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1) Ernst Cassirer: Kant's Leben und Lehre; p.279.
2) R.Otto: Erläuterungen zu Kant's "Grundlegung..." p.113.
3) viz. additional first remark.
4) viz. additional second remark.
From Bastide's: "L'impératif de la conscience morale est: Soi au maximum une personne, c'est à dire: Soi au maximum de valeur." p.127.
Esquisse d'une axiologie de la personne; Etudes de Metaphysique et de la Morale, 1943.

1) Kant: Der Streit der Fakultäten, Streit der Philosophischen Fakultät mit der Theologischen; von Religionsakten.

Two final remarks on some of the implications of the last reflection:

A) Inside the boundaries of Kant's Critical Theory the question of the illusoriness of moral experience, and therefore the question of the reality of our autonomous and moral personality cannot be raised at all. The very structure of the Critical Method "if moral experience ... then..." excludes the possibility of defining the question of illusoriness. Nevertheless, Kant, overstepping his own methodical rules, understands this question to be answered a) on the ground of the certainty we experience when experiencing our moral self, and b) on the ground that, in virtue of the teleological order, which informs the universe we inhabit, and which assures us of our purpose: namely the attainment of Moral Perfection as the Telos of Humanity, this certainty cannot be deceptive. The extreme precariousness of this last contention is elucidated in addition by the argument of the second remark: B) Different interpretations of the "indescribable", that is, the primary fact that Reason exists, that it reasons, and that it is bound by its own reasoning, are possible, because of the fact overlooked or denied¹⁾ by Kant, that experiences other than the sensual and the moral exist. These experiences are given, commonly met with, and recognized. The critical analysis of their implications, the transcendental deduction of their primary ground, determine regulative ideas and Categories of Reason other than causality and freedom. This necessitates a revision of the Kantian assumption that

1) Kant: Der Streit der Fakultäten, Streit der Philosophischen Fakultät mit der Theologischen; von Religionssekten.

rationality as such is, eo ipso, equivalent to moral goodness. Reason, in other words, is not by virtue of its very nature and in its essence identical with goodness in the moral sense. The primary fact that Reason exists, that it reasons, and is bound by its own reasoning, is not a proof for the reality of moral experience or the validity of the moral law. For the fact that "it reasons" does not necessarily mean that it reasons the moral law, nor the fact that Reason is bound by its own reasoning, that Reason is always bound by the Moral Law. Just as it may reason the laws of causality which are incompatible with moral law, so Reason may reason a religious law, which is incompatible with either. The certainty of our moral freedom, personality, even experience (in so far as the reality of its being an ultimately moral experience is concerned) is therefore relative. We know that in it, and through it, Reason manifests itself. But we do not know, whether "Moral-causality-cum-Ideas" is the predominant modality of Reason, its innermost manifestation. (no less is demanded by Morality nor can Morality admit of less; viz. Kant's definition: overriding of physical causality by moral law is freedom, the overriding of Moral Law by physical causality is sin). We do not know, whether moral experience represents a modality of Reason at all or is a reflected and parasitical encrustation on some other modality, although this question is capable of elucidation and perhaps even proof. We do know however that it is not the only modality of Reason, and this is enough to show that the Kantian equation: rationality = goodness, is at best an unwarranted assumption in need of proof.

On studying Kant's theory of ethics certain questions and reservations arise and force themselves on one's attention. Referring these questions and reservations to our last reflections we can express them as follows:

(a) It seems probable that the formal emptiness of the formulas given by Kant for the categorical imperative impair the validity of that imperative in a certain way and to a certain degree. That is, we ask: Does the fact that an action is willed on purely rational grounds constitute a complete assurance of its moral goodness?

(b) Concepts and ideas not "given" in moral experience nor deduced by the critical analysis of this experience are used by Kant, without previous notice to impose a certain orientation on his methodical arguments. These ideas and concepts are regarded by Kant as of constitutive importance to his system of ethics and treated accordingly. The ideas in question are, briefly:

(1) A teleological conception of the Universe which postulates a pre-established harmony in the universe at the same time as it assumes (as a fact) the existence of an ultimate and supreme purpose in Human Life.

(2) The moral goodness of reason as expressed in the device: "Was vernünftig ist, ist gut". And, (3) The moral and infinite worth of the human person. Though not all of these ideas and concepts are out of place in an Ethical system, some are dispensable to a Critical Theory of Ethics whilst some others may well prove indispensable to any Ethical Theory. In any case Kant ought to have given explicit

notice¹⁾ whenever he wished to use or to postulate any of these ideas. Kant should also have examined each of these ideas and concepts as to whether its assumption is necessary to a critical Theory of Ethics and demonstrated why it is necessary and how one could justify and explain this necessity. (c) Finally concepts like: Reason, Freedom, Rightness, and Man-as-an-absolute-End, which are habitually used by Kant in two senses, ought to be re-examined and ambiguities elucidated, incompatibilities eliminated as far as possible. Especially the concept of Reason, the central and basic concept of Kant's Ethical System, indeed of his Philosophical System as a whole, needs to be re-examined and its essential features, function, and limits re-assessed in view of its claim (i.e. Kant's claim) to furnish the ultimate and self-sufficient basis for Ethics.

(A) First, then, we contend that the formal emptiness of the categorical imperative impairs the validity of that imperative as a criterion and a ground for the moral rightness of actions determined by, and conforming to, that same imperative.²⁾ This contention can be more

- 1) As he indeed did with regard to the teleological conception of human life in Die Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten; Erster Abschnitt. On the other hand, with regard to the idea of the worth of the human person, Kant thought he had derived and deduced it from the very concept of Reason itself, and therefore neglected to investigate its origins and inquire into its implications. Finally the moral goodness of what is reasonable is Kant's most fundamental most primary conviction against several attackers (Jacobi, Mendelssohn, Religious doctrine) he never analysed it critically in his major works.
- 2) The sense in which I wish this reservation against Kant understood will be elucidated a little later, it is not the sense in which this reservation is usually made.

briefly formulated thus: The rationality of an action is not a sufficient guarantee (i.e. not a sufficient condition) of the moral rightness of that action.

The argument for this contention runs as follows: Kant held that the rationality of an action was a necessary and the sufficient condition of the moral rightness of that action. He maintained this position most firmly against all attempts of encroachment, and especially against encroachments by religious doctrine. The religious argument, as a matter of fact, cunningly tackles Kant's theory at its most vulnerable point, its admitted inability to solve the problem of "how freedom is possible?". At the end of the Grundlegung Kant states this inability in clear terms, and in addition maintains that this inability holds for all human reasoning." .. how the bare principle that all the will's maxims must be capable of possessing the universal validity of laws can by itself... supply a motive to the will all human reason is totally unable to explain... How freedom is possible... how reason can be practical ... to make this comprehensible is exactly the problem we are unable to solve.¹⁾ Religious doctrine on the other hand does offer a solution to this problem by operating with the concept of divine grace. By the power of divine grace and only by it²⁾ men are enabled to overcome their sinful and subjective

1) Kant: Grundlegung...; Dritter Abschnitt.

2) The only exception is Christ himself... "Therefore does the Father love me, because I lay down my life that I may take it again ... I have power to lay it down and I have power to take it again."
John; X.17, 18. The Greek makes this point even clearer: διὰ τοῦτο με

ὁ πατήρ ἀγαπᾷ ὅτι ἐγὼ τίθημι τὴν ψυχὴν μου ἵνα λάβω
λάβω αὐτήν... ἐγὼ τίθημι αὐτήν ὑπὲρ ἐμοῦ : ἐξουσίαν γὰρ ἔχω
θεῖναι αὐτήν καὶ πάλιν λαβεῖν αὐτήν ...

inclinations, and to act efficaciously in accordance with moral laws. of this power, i.e. the supersensual in us, take it, because 1) "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to work for his very efficacy, to be something supersensual i.e. something which is not good pleasure". Obviously Kant must reject this solution if moral in our power at all and does not appertain to us but is the result of the obligation as he defines it, is to have any sense at all. He does so effective influence of another and higher being upon us. This however by the following argument: "People take it for granted that by virtue is a grave mistake. For if it is not in our power to make effective use of our rational nature we are subject to moral laws and stand under an obligation to sacrifice the amenities of life in order to obey those laws. Commonsense 2) finds this so natural, that it never doubts the validity of those laws, nor demands to know whence they come, or that we earliest youth we are urged to make use of this incomprehensible power postpone our obedience till their origin be uncovered 3) ... But that we are, in effect, capable of bringing the required sacrifices, for the sake of morality and in spite of our sensual nature, ... that is what astonishes us. That we indeed can do what we so clearly know that we ought to do, this prevalence of the supra sensual man in us over the sensual, ... this moral capacity inseparable from mankind .. is what we admire most and always anew in ourselves... It seems therefore a pardonable fault in those who misled by the incomprehensible nature of

1) Phil. II.13: θεός γὰρ ἐστὶν ὁ ἐνεργῶν ἐν ὑμῖν καὶ τὸ θέλειν καὶ τὸ ἐνεργεῖν ὑπὲρ τῆς εὐδοκίας...

2) i.e. "der gesunde Menschenverstand".

3) i.e. according to Kant, the "rightness" of the law; that is, the nature of what is right, is never questioned by any rational being. What is questioned is whether fallible men are capable of performing right actions.

4) i.e. "von der Menschheit unzertrennliche Anlage".

5) Kant: Streit der Fakultäten: Streit der Theol. Fac. mit der phil. Von Religionsakten.

6) Namely, freedom and the two separate senses of "rightness".

of this power, i.e. the supersensual in us, take it, because of its very efficacy, to be something supernatural i.e. something which is not in our power at all and does not appertain to us but is the result of the effective influence of another and higher being upon us. This however is a grave mistake. For if it is not in our power to make effective use of our moral capacity whenever we so will, then the merit of our actions is no longer attributable to ourselves, yea the very capacity no longer ours... The moral capacity however is our birthright. From our earliest youth we are urged to make use of this incomprehensible power which we possess... The whole of the Bible teaches, and enjoins nothing.. but that we make the ethical spirit of Christ ours; or rather, that we make room for it in our hearts where it dwells already in our inborn moral capacity."1) 2)

The purpose of Kant's argument is to defend the rational and moral autonomy of three basic moral concepts³⁾ against the claims of religious authority, and thereby to establish their independence and self-sufficiency. Not content with this Kant proceeds to show that religion in all its manifestations; revelation, doctrine, authority (institutions) and practice is dependent on morality. That is, the validity of religious teaching and authority is at all times subject to

1) i.e. "ursprüngliche moralische Anlage"

2) Kant: Streit der Fakultäten; Streit der theol. Fac. mit der phil.; Von Religionssekten.

3) Namely, freedom and the two separate senses of "rightness".

the test of pure reason, and the exigencies of practical reason. Since he denies the possibility of a "religious experience" as such, Kant easily maintains this position.

The first of the three concepts in question is the concept of the inborn capacity of man actually and in effect to will and to do what in the sincerity of his moral determination he sets out to will and to do. The second concept is the concept of "rightness" as the essential quality of moral laws which are formulated on wholly rational grounds and are valid for all rational agents. The third concept is the concept of "rightness" as the essential quality of wills and willed actions which conform to and are exclusively determined by moral laws.

Now, the inborn capacity of man actually to will and to do what in the integrity of his moral determination he sets out to will and to do is but a paraphrase on the freedom of the human will to choose to do or to refrain from doing as it pleases. The further discussion of the efficacy of human wills ought therefore to be included in the discussion on freedom and postponed until then. For the moment it must suffice us to note, that this capacity, being almost equivalent to "freedom", is a necessary precondition of the very possibility of moral obligation, and a necessary assumption as far as the intelligibility of moral obligation is concerned. That is, it is a category of practical reason. As such it may not be denied by religion, unless religion forego all its claims to rationality and assume the character "einer bösen Träumerei" (of an

action in question had been performed (subjectively) for the sake of the moral law, so that it possess not only rightness of fact (which is but legality) but also rightness of intention, i.e. moral worth in the way it chose its maxims", Kant: Kritik der reinen praktischen Vernunft: Methodenlehre.

evil dream).¹⁾

As for the two senses of "rightness", only the second the (subjective) sense can be regarded as possessing moral significance in a strict sense. For it is this "rightness" which qualifies the human will and signifies moral merit.²⁾ "Rightness" in its first (objective) sense is, strictly speaking, but a circumscription for a certain type of rationally necessary relationships. (Synthetic a priori propositions, for example). Moral laws, that is, are "right" in virtue of their intrinsic structure. In other words, moral laws are "right" thanks to certain relationships they establish between their respective constituent elements. And these relationships are "right" because they are rationally necessary relationships, i.e. indispensable to the practical exercise of reason. It is Kant's contention that in the first place relationships which are rationally necessary in this way cannot be morally wrong. And in the second place, Kant altogether denies the existence of relationships involving human wills and choices which are rationally determined and yet not primarily moral.

1) Compare the frightening, almost nightmarish implications of St. Paul's already cited dictum: θεός γὰρ ἐστὶν δ' ἐνεργῶν ἐν ὑμῖν καὶ τὸ θεεῖν καὶ τὸ ἐνεργεῖν ἕνεκ τῆς εὐτοκίας

2) Compare the passage: "The method of training young people in moral action takes the following course: First one inquires whether the proposed action accords (objectively) with the moral law, and with which moral law... and one learns to distinguish between essential and secondary obligations and to discriminate between them even when they are merged in one single action" (That is one learns the nature of rightness in the first sense).. "Secondly one inquires whether the action in question had been performed (subjectively) for the sake of the moral law, so that it possess not only rightness of fact (which is but legality) but also rightness of intention, i.e. moral merit in the way it chose its maxims", Kant: Kritik der reinen praktischen Vernunft; Methodenlehre.

Kant's reasons for the first contention are as follows: The morally wrong choice can be accounted for only in terms of the wrong proportional dominance which the senses, on the one hand, and reason on the other exercise over will. Moral wrongness or evil consists in the subordination of reason and the moral law it formulated to the gratification of desires, but not in the existence of those desires. For man can be held responsible for his propensity to evil, his recurrent failure to subordinate his desires to the dictates of reason, i.e. the moral laws, but not for the existence of those desires. It follows that evil is not grounded simply in the sensual nature of man, nor simply in reason but in the wrong proportion of dominance between the two. Indeed, according to Kant, it is quite impossible that evil be grounded in reason¹⁾ "... since it is absolutely impossible for reason to be corrupt. Reason which formulates the moral law cannot contradict its own law. Reason can never disown the authority of the law, or its own obligation to it... because... to conceive oneself as a freely acting being and yet released from the law which is appropriate to such a being (the moral law) would be the same as to conceive a causality operating without any law (for determination by natural laws is excluded by the assumption of freedom) and this would be a self-contradictory concept."¹⁾ In short, "was vernünftig ist, ist gut", always and of necessity. What is rationally determined can never be morally bad. Reason is incorruptible.

1) Kant: Die Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der bloßen Vernunft, I. 3.

Indeed, and here Kant comes to his second contention, there can be no rational ground on which reason might release itself from obedience to its own moral laws. Only "antagonism to the law as such could serve as the spring of action to this malignant reason (for the will cannot be determined without some spring).. But to disown the moral law for no reason but an unadulterated hatred for the moral law would bespeak a devilish, not a human being.."¹⁾ In other words reason, when disowning the moral law is prompted thereto either by an initial antagonism to that law, and is therefore devilish, or it is induced to do so by a cause which operates without any law²⁾ and is therefore no longer rational. It follows that reason when releasing itself from the moral law does so on irrational grounds, commits an act of denial and betrayal of its rational nature and in so far indeed ceases to be rational. This argument rests mainly on the assumption that no rational order other than morality can be conceived and that in consequence reason can never repudiate the moral order for the sake of some other order with which the moral is incompatible in principle or in practice. This assumption however is tantamount to an assertion that reason can not produce ideas or formulate laws which though of the same formal structure and rational order as the moral law are not identical or even not compatible with it. In other words, Kant advocates a restriction of the rational to the moral, and of

1) Kant: *idem*.
2) For freedom the law of reason and necessity the law of nature are both excluded by hyp. and Kant allows of no others.

all supersensual experience to moral experience and its exigencies.

In particular this means a denial of the autonomy of religion and the objective validity of the specific religious experiences.¹⁾ Religion in its attempts to govern and teach mankind appeals to the moral laws formulated by practical reason. But religion did not generate these laws, nor does it vindicate them, nor must it in case of clash try to override them. Indeed in doing so, religion invalidates itself as it is dependent in all on the moral laws, nay in its innermost essence derives from the fundamental needs of moral reasoning. Thus, according to Kant, God's very existence is grounded in a postulate of practical reason, generated by a need of moral reasoning. Its certainty relative to the intensity of that need, its validity determined by the rational necessity of that need²⁾ are both, according to Kant absolutely assured for: "This need³⁾ ... of practical reason is absolute since we are driven to assume the existence of God not simply because we wish to judge in a certain way, (as is the case when Theoretical (pure) reason wishes to

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- 1) As for the "maximalist" experience, Kant seems to have ignored its possibility altogether.
 - 2) According to Kant this need is so intense and so inescapable that the 'existence of God' which alone satisfies it, possesses for us the highest degree of certainty of which we are capable. Nevertheless when unrelated to the needs of moral reasoning, or when in conflict with them, it reverts to a dangerous superstition. I shall try to show that his denial of the autonomy of religious experience, and the possibility of rational orders other than the moral on the one hand, and his conception of the needs of moral reasonings on the other, are Kant's gravest mistake.
 - 3) i.e. Bedürfniss.

judge the order of the universe in respect of its purposes and is driven to assume the existence of an ordering "cosmic" god) but because in practical questions we must judge in a certain way. Indeed, the main job of practical reason is to formulate moral laws. All these laws seem to converge upon the idea of a supreme good to be achieved in this world by the exercise of freedom, i.e. morality. These laws also converge upon a different idea of the supreme good, namely a supreme good which cannot be achieved through the exercise of freedom, but must be brought about by the processes of nature. This supreme and indeed complete (summum) good is the idea of the greatest happiness, but happiness apportioned in exact proportion to morality. Reason is driven to assume this complete, though conditional supreme good. In order to assure itself of the possibility of this summum bonum, reason is driven to assume in addition a highest intelligent being as the supreme and unconditional good. These two things reason is driven to assume not, indeed, in order to derive the moral law, or its motives in obeying the moral law from them (for practical reason would possess no moral worth if it would be motivated by anything save the moral law of whose rightness and validity reason is so fully convinced) but in order to confer objective reality on the idea of the supreme good. That is, reason must needs assume the existence of god, if it wishes to avoid that together with the general idea of morality, the possibility of attaining the supreme good to be taken for a mere ideal since he¹⁾ whose idea is

1) i.e. God.

inseparable from morality exists not.. Now the rational belief (Vernunftglaube) which is generated by the requirement of reason in its practical capacity, can be called a postulate of reason, (not merely a hypothesis) since this rational belief (in morally righteous people) even though it does not satisfy all the logical requirements of objective reality is yet so strong that it does not yield in point of certainty to any other knowledge. This of course does not preclude that rational beliefs remain essentially different from objective knowledge ... The rational belief, whose origin in the requirements of practical reason I have just described is at the bottom of all religious faith, indeed all religious revelation.. The concept of god, and the convinced belief in his existence can only be grounded in reason. They must be born in reason. For we cannot apprehend them by some immediate perception, nor by hearsay however well authorised.¹⁾

In the sequel Kant tries to prove that religious experience as such is impossible, by showing that God cannot be apprehended in a direct experience: "Whoever claims divine inspiration as a means of gaining knowledge thinks of the contradictory concept of a supersensual experience. Now the concept of supersensual experience contradicts itself because that which is transcendent in its nature cannot be envisaged as immanent".²⁾

1) Kant: Was heisst sich im Denken orientieren? (1786)

2) Kant: Vorrede zu Jachmanns Prüfung der kantischen Religionsphilosophie. (1800)

Moreover since to apprehend god would be to "experience the supernatural" it would be altogether impossible to prove that this experience was indeed an experience and not merely a dream.¹⁾ Being supernatural, this experience could not be deduced from the workings and the nature of our comprehension, and, therefore, would not be vindicated by this deduction. It could at the utmost be regarded as an interpretation of certain feelings, of which one does not rightly know whether one ought to regard them as being part of our store of knowledge i.e. as possessing a real object or as sentimental day dreams. In any case, as the idea of God is grounded in reason, and in reason only, it seems both presumptuous and self-contradictory to claim that one had sensed his immediate presence and influence.²⁾ But even if an immediate experience of god were possible the main difficulty would not have been removed. "To me it seems altogether incomprehensible how a vision can provide me with something which can be thought but never directly apprehended. However, that may be, it is obvious that in order to be able to judge that what appears to me is indeed god.. I must first possess a rational concept of god to which I can refer my vision, and with which I can compare it. I do not mean that I expect a vision to be in all respects adequate to my rational concept of god's nature (which obviously it can never be) but that none of its features must conflict or contradict what I know

other aspects. (a) Finally if it be indeed true as Kant thinks, that

1) Compare: Hobbes' "If god speaks to a man in a dream then this man has dreamt that God has spoken to him".

2) Kant: Streit der Fakultäten, etc., Von Religionssekten.

(from his concept) to be essential to god's nature. In any case this rather than that certain things should be believed" (For it is "the vision, appearance, revelation, or whatever else we may be pleased to call it, can never provide proof for the existence of a being whose ultimate aim of all religious teachings), then all religious manifestations, revelations, doctrines, etc. ought to be submitted to the touchstone of morality and the moral laws. Hence, the existence of an infinite being can never be demonstrated. In consequence, no one can be absolutely certain of god's existence on the ground of a primary perception. A "rational belief" must always precede "revelation". Only thus can we know whether the revealed and immediately apprehended deserves to count as a manifestation of the divine".¹⁾

This argument entails the three following rather weighty conclusions. (a) If religious experience as such is impossible, then Kant is justified in maintaining that no religious maxims, postulates, or rules can be deduced from it, or justified by it. Moreover, no specific religious category of reason can be defined, as providing a special structure and distinct quality for an autonomous religious domain. (b) If there is no specifically religious category of reason, then reason has no specific religious capacity or application to compare with its pure, practical or aesthetic aspects. In consequence, religious concepts, maxims, rules, etc. must have been defined and constituted with the help of categories of reason borrowed from one or the other of its other aspects. (c) Finally, if it be indeed true as Kant thinks, that the primary object of religion is that "certain things should be done

1) Kant: Was heisst: sich im Denken Orientieren?

2) Kant: Streit der Fakultäten, etc. 3) Die Authentizität der Bibel.

rather than that certain things should be believed"¹⁾ (for it is "the doing not the believing which is meritorious in religion"²⁾ and the ultimate aim of all religious teachings), then all religious manifestations, revelations, doctrines, etc. ought to be submitted to the touchstone of morality and the moral laws.

This is tantamount to a demand that all religious manifestations, revelations, doctrines, traditions, etc., which do not accord with the requirements of the moral laws be regarded as ipso facto invalid and discarded forthwith. "Even if god speaks to man, man can never be certain that it is indeed god who speaks. For man is unable to perceive the infinite with his senses, unable to distinguish the infinite from other beings, and unable therefore to know the infinite being by this distinction. On the other hand in some cases man can know for certain that it is not god's voice which he hears, namely when this voice commands something which is contrary to the moral law. If this be the case, no matter how majestic or supernatural the manifestation it is a deception and must be regarded as such"³⁾ ... for example in the story of the sacrifice of Isaac, Abraham thought he was obeying the commandment of god (the poor child carried the wood without knowing the purpose) and therefore acting righteously. But the right thing for Abraham to do was to answer the seemingly divine voice and say: "That I must never

1) Kant: Streit der Fakultäten;

2) Kant: idem.

3) Kant: Streit der Fakultäten, etc. .. Die Authentizität der Bibel.

kill my good son of this I am certain. But that thou who appearest to me art indeed god of that I am not certain. Nor, though the very heavens thunder it forth, can I ever be certain of it." Morality and the moral law, however, (which are also enjoined by religion) are equivalent to the completely rational determination of the will. Therefore any religious manifestation, revelation, doctrine, etc. which is contrary to reason, and the rationally acceptable can and must be discarded. "What is contrary to reason in the revealed scriptures, reason is entitled to interpret in a way that conforms to its own maxims.. Thus, for example, St. Paul's doctrine of election by grace... originally included in the beliefs of the Protestant Church, has been discarded subsequently by a great part of that church or has been interpreted in another way because reason could not reconcile this doctrine with the ideas of freedom, and of responsibility, and, hence, with the possibility of morality".¹⁾ Accordance and conformity with the moral laws i.e. with reason, is indeed the norm by which all readings and all interpretation of the revealed word, the scriptures, ought to be evaluated. For "the holy writers of the scriptures were as men by no means exempt from certain errors as evidenced by St. Paul and his doctrine of election by grace.. But the god who speaks through our own (moral-practical) reason is a comprehensible and an altogether infallible exponent of his own revealed world. There is no more authentic and authorised (for instance,

1) Kant: Streit der Fakultäten; die Authenzität der Bibel.

historically authorized) interpreter of god's commandments.. The divine origin of any commandment enjoined by the Bible can be apprehended through the concepts of our own reason as far as it is purely moral and therefore infallible. The only guarantee for the divinity of the Bible.. is the moral content of its teachings: die G^ottlichkeit ihres moralischen Inhalts".¹⁾ Reason in other words is the test and the touchstone of religion. The very nature of god is defined and determined by the requirements of practical reason, i.e. morality. In scholastic terms: God's essence is prior to his existence and to his will: Deum ipsum non posse supplere locum causae formalis. And god's essence, according to the requirements of morality, is his perfect accord with the moral law his complete and perfect rationality. God, in short, is morality personified. As long as religion acknowledges and accepts its dependence on and subjection to the requirements of practical reason (which according to Kant is the objective and true relationship between the two domains) and is content to help and further the realisation of moral laws concentrating all its efforts on this task, understanding and mutual toleration can be maintained as between the religious camp and the moral camp. "Why indeed" writes Kant with regard to Mendelssohn and Jacobi, "this discord between two parties with but one aim, namely the aim of making humanity wiser and more righteous?... The veiled goddess before whom we both kneel is the moral law in us in all its inviolable majesty.

1) Kant: Streit der Fakultäten; die Authenzitat der Bibel.

We hear her voice indeed and understand her command. But in hearing we hesitate to decide whether it is by the sovereign autonomy of our own reason, that she speaks to Man, or whether by the intervenience of another, whose nature is unknown to us, and who speaks to us by way of our own reason. It might perhaps be better for all if we ceased our enquiries at this point since these are mere speculations. Practically the moral law remains the same, whatever its origin. But the didactic method by which the moral law is deduced from clear concepts in a logical way is the only one acceptable to philosophy. The method of personifying that law, of turning our morally law-giving reason into a veiled Isis (even if we do not attribute any other quality to her but those warranted by the methodical inquiry) is an aesthetic way of apprehension of the object previously analysed in a methodical way. Subsequently one may use the second method (i.e. after the principles have been elucidated by the first) in order to express moral ideas in a more imaginative way. But we must beware of the dangers of this method which is liable to encourage those idle dreams which are the death of all Philosophy".¹⁾ What had begun as a peace overture to the religious camp ends with the definite rejection of an autonomous religious domain: "In respect of its content the religious domain, being a religion of reason (Vernunftreligion) is identical with ethics from which it differs only in form, i.e. personification. But this form itself is not primarily a form of

"Friends of humanity and of that which is most sacred to humanity"

1) Kant: Von einem neuerdings erhobenen vornehmen
Ton in der Philosophie (1796)

the religious domain. It is derived from and reducible to a basic aesthetic operation of reason. The religious, in Kant's exposition represents therefore a new relationship between previously defined and independently determined domains and faculties of reason rather than a self-contained and autonomous domain of its own".¹⁾ On these assumptions Kant is justified in demanding that religion contain nothing save what is already contained in, and warranted by, ethics; and that its function be limited to helping and furthering morality: *theologia ancilla ethicae*.

In spite of these limitations and safeguards, the religious attitude will always represent a danger to the lovers of reason, the rational and freedom. It is an intrinsic feature of the religious to regard itself as the ultimate ground of everything: of morality, of truth, even of reason itself whose function and limits it attempts to dictate in its turn. No lover of freedom must permit or inadvertently help religion in these aspirations, this is Kant's reply to Jacobi's conception of faith, and Moses Mendelssohn's religious postulates: "Freedom of thought" he warns them, "is the subjection of reason to the laws imposed by itself on itself. Its opposite is the lawless operation of reason (intuitions, insights, revelations) ... But reason refusing to obey its own laws has to obey laws forced upon it from outside.. for reason cannot work, or even play, without rules. Hence the sole result of breaking all the rules of disciplined thinking is the loss of the freedom of thought.." Therefore "Friends of humanity and of that which is most sacred to humanity!

1) Cassirer: *Kants Leben und Lehre*; p.409.

Maintain whatever seems most convincing to you after careful consideration, whether it be some datum of experience, or some rational ground, but do not deprive reason of that which makes it the greatest boon on earth, of the privilege to be the ultimate touchstone of truth. If you do, being unworthy of freedom, you will indeed lose it, and you will bring this misfortune over those who innocently planned to make a good and lawful use of their freedom, in the service of humanity!"¹⁾

With this warning voice in our ear²⁾ and mindful of the recent barbaric triumphs of the irrational, we must yet insist on our contentions against Kant's identification of the rational and the moral. We hope thereby least deviate from the devoted service to reason.

To sum up Kant's argument and its implications for the moral status of the categorical imperative: There is no specific religious experience. There is no specific category of "religious" reason. There is no distinct rational function which determines a distinct rational law for "religious" judgments or injunctions. (Kant also ignores the "maximalist" experience and its specific laws). In consequence, the moral law is confirmed as the only conceivable rational law to govern the human will. Hence the will governed exclusively and wholly by rational considerations is wholly and perfectly moral. The good will is the wholly rational will.

1) Kant: Was heisst sich im Denken orientieren?; closing passage.

2) Compare Voltaire's: "Sur ce vaste Univers une grande voile est jeté: Mais dans les profondeurs de cette obscurité Si la raison nous luit, qu'avons nous à nous plaindre? Nous n'avons qu'un flambeau, gardons nous de l'éteindre."

The rational is in all respects coterminous with the moral. Evil is imperfect government of the rational. Reason as such is always good, it is morally incorruptible. The categorical imperative in its empty formality as the unadulterated embodiment of the rational law, is the criterion of morality and the principle of the good will.

But is this really so? Is the rational really coterminous with the moral? Is reason really incorruptible? Above all is the categorical imperative really the touchstone of the moral? I must give warning that the reservations I wish hereby to make against the empty formality of Kant's categorical imperative is in no way equivalent to the objection usually raised at this point against Kant, namely the objection that the categorical imperative in its empty formality fails to supply us with a list of concrete particular duties, fails to tell us exactly what to do, when where and how. This latter criticism is invalidated by an initial mistake in what it supposes to be the function and the purpose of a theory of ethics. "Ethics", as Nicolai Hartmann wrote "is not casuistry - not only insofar as it may not forestall the free creative resolution.. but also insofar as it has no capacity for so doing".¹⁾ The tenor of the reservation I wish to make is indeed the very opposite. For I contend that the empty formality of the categorical imperative instead of ascertaining the universal (admitting-of-no-exception) application and the objective absolute validity of the moral

1) Nicolai Hartmann: Ethics, Vol. 1. p.63.

law, permits the infringement of the universality of the imperative and its objectivity in the sense that matters most, without rendering such infringement ipso facto self-contradictory. In other words, an action which accords with the categorical imperative, even if performed for the sake of the law defined through the imperative, is not necessarily a morally right action. That is, the formulas¹⁾ of the categorical imperative are not by themselves sufficient conditions for the moral rightness of an action which they determine. They only appear so against the background of those additional ideas and concepts, which we have listed above, (as assumptions made by Kant without sufficient justification) and which keep the formulas from ever being really empty in the Kantian application. As we have seen these additional ideas and concepts were not deduced from the data of moral experience by the critical method of deduction (at least not by Kant) and therefore they do not, strictly speaking, belong into the theory of ethics as Kant envisaged it. We are therefore entitled to disregard them in our investigation into the implications of the categorical imperative. On the other hand if it were conclusively shown that with the elimination of these ideas and concepts the Kantian system of ethics would be despoiled of its moral significance, then it would be clear that the grounds and source of ethics, and ethical principles must be sought in

1) I exempt the second formulation of the Categorical Imperative for reasons which will become apparent in the course of the argument. However, even this form is open to one valid interpretation which would subject it to the same criticism pari passu with the other formulations.

those ideas and concepts and not in the formal structure of rational laws. These ideas and concepts would therefore have to be examined most carefully in order to ascertain which among them, and why and how, provides the basis of ethics. -

Now the various, formulations of the Categorical Imperative are:

I. Act only on that maxim whereby thou canst at the same time

will that it should become a universal law.

II. Act as if the maxim of thy action were to become by thy will

a Universal Law of nature.

III. Act as if by thy maxim thou werest to legislate universally

in the kingdom of ends.

These formulations I contend assure us of the consistency, freedom, autonomy, rational comprehensibility of the correlated actions they motivate. They also assure the universality and objectivity of the manner of willing. But they do not assure the moral rightness of what is willed nor the moral goodness of the will willing it. In other words, Kant's proposition "The will is a law unto itself means nothing else but a principle not to act on any other maxim than that which can also accept itself as universal law. But this is the formula of the categorical imperative and the basic principle of morality: therefore a free will and a will under moral law are one"¹⁾ does not hold. For though it is true that a will in order to be capable of morality must needs be free, i.e.

1) Kant: Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten, Zweiter Abschnitt.

freedom is a necessary precondition of morality; a free will is not necessarily moral; i.e. freedom is not a sufficient condition of morality, and additional qualifications of the will are required. Even the connecting link of rationality¹⁾ for this is in effect what Kant had in mind, does not assure us as Kant thought of the moral goodness of the will so qualified.

To illustrate this point I quote from Prof. van Holk's Lecture: Foreign occupation as an Ethical Problem: "Let us acknowledge that however necessary and glorious it was all war activity represents a deplorable item in humanity's civilisation budget. That is the very least we can say from an ethical point of view ... The worst disadvantages of occupation time morality... was manifested in another phenomenon: The splitting up of moral judgement according to friend or foe, a highly unfavourable double standard of good and bad ... From a certain point of view this might be considered a recandescence of primitive morals, of clan life. Quite so, but the difference is that in primitive clan life there is no higher standard known, that in advancing societies there dawns the possibility of higher and wider range of moral values, whence we had consciously and willingly to go down to a strata we knew to be inferior"²⁾

- 1) The argument moves in two steps: the free will is one with the moral will because it is determined by reason, and so is the moral will. That is, to be free is to be wholly rational; to be wholly rational is to be morally good. The validity of both steps as I have already pointed out seems doubtful in the extreme.
- 2) L.J. Van Holk: Foreign Occupation as an Ethical Problem; Essex Hall Lecture, p.9. (1946).

Now a double standard of morality is not necessarily incompatible with the formulas of the Categorical Imperative. For no doubt any member of the 'resistance' could have wished his maxims to become universal law, and certainly saw himself by his maxims as legislating in a "Kingdom of Ends". That is, he wished his maxims to be adopted by all Dutchmen. The vital point here is, who is and who is not considered as a member of the "Kingdom of Ends". The ultimate reason for distinguishing a "lower" or clan morality from a "higher" or total morality is the postulate that no human being be excluded from membership in the Kingdom of Ends. This, it seems to me, is the ultimate norm by which we evaluate lower and higher moral codes, indeed the basic criterion of Morality itself.

Once this is clearly grasped, a great deal of complex and confused argumentation and thinking could be avoided. An argument like the following with its confusion as to its own rational grounds would no longer be possible: "The difference between lower and higher moral codes cannot be lightly brushed aside... Of course we cannot when debating what criterion to use for moral grading, grade the criterion morally. But we can grade them by enlightenment provided that the disputants have an agreed set of criteria of enlightenment... Now the misery of slaves for example is surely a potent cause for the rejection of a moral code as enlightened in which a slaveowner or a trader is a good man. The Health, Wealth and Happiness of people living under different moral codes cannot prove the superiority of one code over another, but it does seem a

1) J.O. Hanson: On Grading: Mind, 1926, p. 163.

2) How and why are questions to be considered later.

criterion of enlightenment".¹⁾ Now, in the first place it is obvious that moral codes could never be graded by enlightenment if the criterion of enlightenment, i.e. "Health, Wealth and Happiness" does not assure a superiority of moral goodness. Secondly it is obvious that the writer does not think the slaveowner's moral code less enlightened simply because there is less "Health, Wealth and Happiness" in a slave-owning Society than in a non-slave-owning Society, (for all we know there may be more) but because this "Health, Wealth and Happiness" is not distributed (the misery of slaves!) in a manner fitting the postulate of the totality of membership in the Kingdom of Ends.

Now the postulate that no human being is to be excluded from the Kingdom of Ends, is not contained in the formulas of the categorical imperative. It cannot be deduced by analysis from the concept of obligation. More than that, this postulate is not (contrary to Kant's view) a necessary idea of reason, i.e. a necessary mode of conscious and reflective thought. The proof for this last contention must be left to a later occasion. But a few comments seem appropriate at this point: The act of reflectively perceiving myself as a rational and free being, a being whose worth is given in its very existence, though it may lead me to suspect that other people regard their being in a like manner, does not involve a rational necessity for me to think of others in the same way, or to endorse their self-evaluation. This I must choose to do freely and deliberately.²⁾ In other words the "total" application of the

1) J.O. Urmson: On Grading: Mind, 1950, p.168.

2) How and why are questions to be considered later.

categorical imperative is not given in the idea of the imperative itself, "wrong" is possible. That is, that evil and rational are not mutually exclusive concepts. nor is it a category of reason. Rather is it an appeal which one may choose not to follow, without the least risk of friction with one's reason or one's freedom.

The first contention however - the contention that the formulas of the categorical imperative and the concept of obligation do not contain the postulate of totality and in consequence, cannot serve as criteria of moral rightness - might be substantiated by the following reflections: According to Kant, the essential and differentiating quality of the good will is its exclusive determination by the categorical imperative, i.e. its utter rationality. Again, according to Kant, the utter rationality of the will entails the consistency, freedom and autonomy of the will, as well as the universality¹⁾ of what is willed and its capacity to impose a definite rational order on the practical world (i.e. society). Now if we could show that a will bent on evil could possess the same qualities we would have adduced proof against Kant's identification of the rational and the moral. That is, we should have shown that the assertion: "if rational... then moral..." is not necessarily true. This we shall try to do in two steps. The first step will be to show that a will bent on evil can be consistent, free, autonomous, universal in application, and cosmic in its effects. The second step will be to show that, contrary to Kant's view on the matter, a deliberate and purely rational²⁾ choice of

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- 1) This universality is usually mistaken for the postulate of totality. That the two are not identical will be seen in the course of this argument.
 - 2) Compare Socrates' view that evil is ignorance, knowledge virtue and that nobody knowingly chooses the bad.

"wrong" is possible. That is, that evil and rational are not mutually exclusive concepts. (a) consistent, (b) free, (c) autonomous, (d) of unity. For the purpose of this argument let us define the will of a man who seeks to establish a world dictatorship for the sake of the ideal of absolute power, as an essentially evil will. A will so defined would be determined by rational considerations to the same degree and extent as a will choosing to perform its duty for the sake of the moral law. The idea of absolute power is a purely rational idea. Its formal and functional determinations as a regulative idea of reason differ in nothing from the formal and functional determinations of the moral law as a regulative idea of reason. Even the nature of the "interest" it evokes in human hearts is not different from the "disinterested interest" in the moral law. A man who wills absolute power for its own sake is not moved by baser material interests or desires.¹⁾ And if there be some "natural inclination or desire" for absolute power it is of no different order than the "natural inclination and desire" for morality. A will choosing absolute power in preference to everything else, would therefore possess exactly the same order and degree of rationality as the will choosing its moral duty in preference to all its natural desires. The rationality of the idea of absolute power, I shall assume, is plausible enough for the requirements of the first argument.

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It can be shown that a will to absolute power, i.e. a, by definition, evil will, is also (a) consistent, (b) free, (c) autonomous, (d) of universal validity, (e) capable of imposing a definite, rationally consistent order on the world. In short, it is perfectly fit to comply with the formal requirements of the categorical imperative: "Act only on that maxim whereby thou canst at the same time will that it should become by thy will a universal law of nature"; "Act as if by thy maxim thou werest to legislate universally in the Kingdom of Ends."

(a) The will to power need never contradict itself, and can remain consistent with itself in all its manifestations. It need not swerve with every accidental and particular desire but considering the totality of all its possible determinations and their mutual compatibility imposes a prevailing conformity. The order such an unswerving will to power imposes in the life of the man who wills, is objective and homogeneous.¹⁾ Consistency, however, is not a quality reserved to free and autonomous willing. It is a qualification of every will, insofar as it is a will and not just a passing whim.

(b) The will to power is a free will. It is free in the first sense of freedom because it has freely chosen its purpose in preference to all other possible choices, and particularly in preference to the moral choice. It is free in the second sense because it was determined in its

1) Compare E. Cassirer: "So kommt das Prädikat des guten (?) derjenigen Willensakten zu die nicht von einem zufälligen und einzelnen Antrieb sondern durch die Rücksicht auf das Ganze der möglichen Willensbestimmungen und ihrer inneren Übereinstimmung geleitet wird. Der gute Wille ist der Wille zum Gesetz und damit zur Einstimmigkeit": *Kultur, Leben und Lehre*, p. 260

choice by none but rational considerations, namely its respect for and its "disinterested interest" in the idea of absolute power for its own sake. It is free of all sensual determinations subordinating them and sacrificing them for the sake of its idea. It is thus a wholly rational, and therefore wholly free will. But to be wholly rational, and wholly free according to Kant is to be wholly moral. The will which is wholly free (i.e. exclusively governed by reason) is the good will. It follows that the will to power, the evil will is at the same time a good will, which contradicts itself.

Whether Kant was justified to identify the rational and the moral is our main problem whose solution cannot be precluded. I shall therefore try to solve the present impasse by leaving the larger issue for the moment and by concentrating on the mediating identifications of freedom and rationality, and freedom and morality which have come up in the last passage. A short excursus on freedom seems indicated at this point.

Some aspects of the nature and function of freedom in Kant's theory of ethics.

Kant, as we have seen, habitually uses the notion of freedom in two widely different senses. The first sense is defined by the transcendental deduction of moral experiences. Freedom is defined as the category of practical reason, the supreme pre-condition for the lack of which moral obligation would be neither possible nor comprehensible. Incidentally, this definition of freedom is incompatible with the second

sense of freedom. The second sense is arrived at by a definition of freedom as freedom from natural motivation and as wholly rational determination. This latter definition seems rather questionable. It is questionable on theoretical grounds: if freedom is the necessary precondition of the possibility of moral obligation it cannot at the same time be the content of moral obligation. If freedom is the category of practical reason, i.e. the will it cannot at the same time be the criterion of the good will or its differentiating quality.¹⁾ The second definition of freedom, also presents certain practical difficulties. As Otto has pointed out: "Moral decisions are possible only on the condition of freedom. However a certain amount of freedom seems indispensable even to decisions motivated by desires. Not only the moral will, but all will insofar as it is will contains a moment of freedom. This becomes comprehensible enough when we stop to consider that desires as well as moral obligations are ways of determining the will in the choice of its acts, though neither are sufficient determinations. In their insufficiency lies the possibility of what we call freedom".²⁾ If in addition and for the moment we allow of the existence of rational ideas other than the moral law, the field of freedom is further enlarged. The possibilities of choice are no longer limited to actions under moral ideas and actions under desires, but will include choices between action under

1) This has been discussed already viz. pp. 188 - 198. And I shall not discuss it here again, but proceed to discuss certain other aspects of Kant's concept of freedom.

2) R. Otto: Notes to Kant's "Grundlegung...", p.6.

moral ideas and actions under other ideas. This new situation is by no means unwelcome, from a moral point of view. For it increases the odds against the moral choice and thereby enhances its merit.

We are therefore well inside the critical theory of morals nor do we transgress against any basic moral principle or interest by defining freedom as the ultimate independence of the human will face to face with all objects, (sensual, emotional or rational) which are capable of swaying it (as motives, ends, or principles). Man must be free not to follow the obligations of the moral law, not solely because he is prevented by his sensual nature, but out of a free, deliberate, and rational decision to disregard the injunctions of the moral law. Only in this way can real moral merit be attributed to the choosing to do one's moral duty in preference to all other possible actions. In this view or in its conclusions we do not deviate too widely from Kant's own stand in this matter. Except for the addition of rational motives other than the moral to the list of motives which determine man's will, we do not alter the conception nor the manner of operation of freedom as expounded by Kant. This addition however is immaterial to the present argument.

Now Kant holds that though it would be absurd to hold man responsible for his motives i.e. for their existence, we must, if morality is to have any meaning, hold him responsible for acting upon their instigation. That is, though man is not free to choose his motives as he pleases he is free to act upon them. Freedom, then, is the faculty

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- 1) This point Kant maintains most emphatically against the doctrine of the need for divine grace as a necessary condition for the exertion of a good will.

of the human will to disregard its own motives. This faculty is absolute. It is never impaired, never dormant, and always efficacious.

Concomittantly, Kant holds, that responsibility is absolute, inescapable, unabrogated, sans excuse. To the theory of morals inviolable liberty and total responsibility are the essential features of man in his role of moral agent, whose willed acts are the objects of moral judgments.¹⁾ "On examining its rational origins every morally wrong action must be viewed as though man had fallen into it directly from the state of innocence. Whatever his previous conduct, whatever the natural causes which influence a man's conduct, be they internal or external, his action is still free and not determined by any causes. Therefore it both can and must be judged as an original exercise of the will. He ought to have left it undone, in whatever circumstances he may have been, for no cause in the world can stop a man from being a free agent... If a man never had been sober up to the very moment of an impending free action (even so that custom had become second nature), not only has it been his duty to be better in the past but it still is his duty to improve himself in the present. Therefore man must also be able to do so at any moment. If he fails, he is as accountable at the moment of acting as if, endowed with the natural capacity for good (which is inseparable from freedom) he had stepped into evil straight from the state of innocence. We inquire not into the temporal but into the rational

1) In his role of end-in-itself, and member in the kingdom of ends, man is allowed a more variegated, comprehensive and concrete nature.

origin of this act..."¹⁾

The drunkard, whom Aristotle considers merely indirectly responsible for his drunken actions because he ought not to have taken to drink in the first place, Kant considers directly and simultaneously responsible for his initial choice of taking to drink, for all subsequent repetitions and (hence) confirmations of that initial choice, and for all actions committed in his inebriated state. As far as morality is concerned, Kant holds man can never be deprived (or saved!) from the efficacious integrity of his will, his freedom, or his responsibility.

So far so good. But this view of freedom, if maintained with a modicum of consistency inevitably leads to a position not essentially different from that of Sprenger and Kremer, the celebrated witch-hunters. It may even (inevitably!?) lead to conclusions not less inhuman, though less drastically concrete, than the inquisitorial stake.

Let us examine the Sprenger-Kremer position more closely. Our interest will not seem entirely misplaced when we remember that religious doctrine,²⁾ fighters in the cause of human dignity³⁾ and lately

1) Kant: Die Religion innerhalt, etc.... I. & II.

2) That is in its more cheerful catholic aspects. In its more sombre (Protestant) moments religious doctrine holds that man's will being corrupt since original sins man cannot freely determine himself towards the good unless helped by the efficacious grace of God. viz. Calvin's Institutiones, Ch.II, Art.IX & XII. Without this, grace he would not be capable even of the wish to direct himself towards the good. Compare St. Paul, Phillipians, II, 13, cited on page 241. However, as a descendant of Adam, man is still responsible for everything including the grace not accorded to him, and the original sin of his grandsire. Both aspects are most forcefully brought to light in Jean Bodin's simple-minded exposition in De Magorum daimonomia, which I shall quote at the appropriate point.

3) From Pico de Mirandola to Kant.

existentialist thinkers¹⁾ do not differ fundamentally in their tenets from the inquisitorial view of human freedom. In perfect accord with Kant's view that man is always free not to act upon his motives,²⁾ and that, no matter what his actual state of depravation (and its concomittant inabilities and delusions) every bad action is to be judged as though he had committed it straight from a state of innocence³⁾ - Sprenger

^(Institou's) and Kremer argue thus: Some people think " *Maleficium nihil esse in mundo nisi in existimatione hominum et non credunt esse Daemones nisi in existimatione vulgi tantum, ut errore quos homo sibi ipsi facit imputet Daemoni. Et quod etiam ex imaginatione vehementi aliquae figurae apparent in sensu tales quales homo cogitat, quod et tunc creduntur Daemones videri dicimus vel etiam Malefici...*" Others again though not denying the natural powers of daemons: " *sed inter se quo ad effectum Maleficalem et ipsam Maleficam dissidentes in quantum unus concedit Maleficam realiter cooperari ad effectum non tamen verum sed fantasticum. Alter vero per contrarium effectum realem in laeso concedens sed Maleficam fantastice putat cooperari*"⁴⁾

All views which try to explain witchcraft as a figment of imagination can be proved false on the authority of the Scriptures and the Fathers. But granted even that in some cases women suffering from delusions imagine themselves to perform actions which in reality they never

1) Those who are religiously inclined like Lavelle no less than the irreligious like Sartre.

2) Kant: Die Religion ... 1 teil & 11.

3) Kant: idem.

4) Malleus Maleficarum, Frankfurt edition of 1580; pp.3-4.

performed, the very fact that these women have such delusions stamps them as witches. Witches are also: "*Mulieres quae credunt se cum Dianam vel Herodiam nocturnis horis equitare... cum Dianam vel Herodiam equitare est cum Diabolo (qui se ita pingit et nominat) transire... talis equitatura est tunc fantastica quem Diabolus mentem per infidelitatem sibi subjectam agitat taliter ut ea quae solo spiritu fiunt corporaliter fieri creduntur*"¹⁾

That is, even delusions recognised as such do not excuse the women concerned from being treated as witches i.e. from being held responsible for the very perversions of their mind. The belief in the free will is here brought to its most terrifying, but consistent and inescapable conclusions. Man, whatever he does, even if he "succumbs to an illness which perverts his perceptions, imagination, intellectual functions does it of his own free will. He voluntarily bows to the wishes of Satan. The devil does not lure and trap man. Man chooses to succumb to the devil and he must be held responsible for his free choice".²⁾ In less mediaeval terms the same view is expressed by existentialists in such statements as: "la liberte est un fait. Il faut y deduire les consequences... l'homme est sa choix.. l'homme est ce qu'il se veut"³⁾... le propre de la realite humaine c'est qu'elle est sans excuse ... l'homme

1) Malleus maleficarum, pp. 4; 11.

2) G.Zilboorg: History of Medical Psychology, p.156.

3) Compare Pico de Mirandolla's: Oratio de dignitate homini: "O ... summam et admirandam hominis felicitatem cui datum id habere quod optat, esse quod velit."

est responsable de tout ce qu'il fait meme de sa passion..¹⁾ As we have seen it also accords with Kant's view in this matter. Are we then by the same inexorable logic driven to accept the last inevitable conclusions of our belief in free will, the stake or whatever its modern equivalent may be? It seems so. For if we hold that man is free not to act upon his natural motives, and therefore responsible when he acts upon them, we obviously hold him responsible for succumbing to harmful delusions. But if he is responsible for succumbing to harmful delusions he ought also to be punished for it. Now his delusions are primarily harmful to himself, to his soul, though they might by contagion also be harmful to the community. Therefore his soul must be protected and saved from the contamination to which man subjects it, whilst it is still in his body "held in sinful captivity by his corrupted will". This can be done only by liberating the soul from its captivity. In other words, by burning the body. The stake, or its modern equivalent, is the logical, the inevitable, the just conclusion of the belief in free will.

It remains, however, a repugnant conclusion. There is the actual horror of burnt flesh. There is Montaigne's gentle reminder that "After all it is setting a high value on one's conjectures if for their sake one is willing to burn a human being alive".²⁾ There are also the voices of men like N. Weir who already at the beginning of the sixteenth century

1) The quotations are from Lavallo and Sartre alternately.

2) Montaigne: Essais; Bk. III; Ch. XI, p.171. Paris edition of 1595. "Après tout c'est mettre ses conjectures à bien haut prix, que d'en faire cuire un homme tout vif."

argued: "Quod si quis contentio se voluntatem severius puniendam defendat is primum distinguat inter voluntatem homini, sani perfectum quae in actu vere dirigi coeperit et inter vitiatam mentis sensum... If there is anyone who contends that erratic acts must be punished yet more severely I would ask him to bear in mind the distinction between the perfectly voluntary act of a sane person who behaves with a feeling that his mind is troubled and the act of a person whose will if you permit me to say so, is so corrupted and out of control that the devil can play with it, giving the individual the appearance of being under some outside power. Such a disturbance (or defect) of one's will can also be imputed to melancholic individuals and little children... The Lord who knows the kidney and the heart does not permit that they be punished to the same extent as those whose minds are free (sane) so much the less right has man to mete out punishment on such people..."¹⁾

The idea of free will so enchantingly full of promise at first sight, seems to entail some remarkably bitter and unpalatable conclusions. We can hardly be blamed for hesitating to accept it (so like the Trojan horse) amongst our cherished beliefs. On the other hand, unless we are prepared to give up all attempts at explaining the phenomena of moral experience we cannot but commit ourselves to the ideas of free will and human responsibility. Moreover as long as we are not prepared to admit that all moral obligation is a delusion we are bound to uphold the idea of free will in spite of its more extreme implications.

1) J. Weir, Lib. 6. Cap. 23, pp. 740-41. Basel edition of 1583.

A good chance of eschewing the fangs of our particular Scylda and Charybdis is provided by the reflection that the idea of free will can be conceived in different modes. In four different modes to be exact. In the first place the idea of free will can be thought of as a deceptive illusion, whose objective impossibility mark it as suitable for banishment to the realm of metaphysical phantoms. Secondly it can be conceived as the datum of a specific experience: the direct experience of freedom. Thirdly it can be conceived as a real quality of human nature. And fourthly and finally it can be conceived as a regulative idea, a point of view, or a category of reason.

Now the first conception of freedom, entails the conclusion that moral experiences as such are a delusion and moral judgments and obligations merely illusory. We have been mocked all along by the tricks played upon us by the physical universe in order to make us pliant to Nature's hidden purposes. If one has the good fortune to be in harmony with the inexorable purposes of nature one can dispense with the illusions of free will and enjoy at one and the same time the security conferred by necessary determination and the sense of freedom which the absence of all restraint gives one. It is even probable that direct experience of freedom which is claimed by those who hold the second conception of freedom has its deeper roots in this harmonious synchronisation of the individual and the universe.¹⁾

1) At least in those cases in which it is a pleasant experience. In some cases the direct experience of freedom is described as extremely painful and full of anguish. Compare Sartre, Kirkegaard, Heidegger.

Napoleon Bonaparte and Goethe are the most celebrated examples of this attitude. Goethe indeed found his deepest ethical inspiration in the thought: "So musst Du sein, Dir kannst Du nicht entfliehen". The inescapable necessity to be himself always a source of joy and power to Goethe, seems a source of gloom and disgust to Sartre and many others. But then they might not have Goethe's reasons for liking to be what they are. - On the other hand some thinkers though not in direct and mysterious rapport with the purposes of nature, appreciate those purposes so deeply that dispensing with the idea of free will in its usual sense they seek their freedom and their moral purpose in the adoption of those hidden purposes of nature, and were it only by a willing acquiescence in the course of events which they may not and cannot change. The Stoics and Spinoza held these views. Others again actively seek to further the purposes of nature, by accepting what they consider the deceptive illusoriness of moral experience at its face value for the sake of the purposes which those deceptions serve and of which they approve. Many sociologists, historians, practising politicians hold this view. Some writers however, once they have reached the conclusion that free will is impossible and therefore all moral experience merely illusory, make this an excuse to deny all moral obligation, to debunk moral values, to render moral sentiments repulsive. This view held by many scientists, especially by sociologists and practising psychologists is I believe rapidly losing its adherents. It is mainly the refuge of those who having declined (on good grounds) to consider free will as a

real quality of human nature, have not yet found their way to the Kantian definition of freedom as a category and regulative idea of practical reason. However that may be, and an examination of these

Those who uphold the second view of freedom claim that freedom as such and apart from its role in moral experience can be apprehended as an objective entity. According to their description it is very different from that freedom of the will which is the sine qua non of deliberate decisions. "When we do an action throwing ourselves heart and soul into it and doing it with our whole being we may safely say afterwards: 'No I could not have done otherwise for there was nothing of me left out in the acting. No agent nor any motive urged me, I was free'. On the other hand if we were moved by one part of us only, whether by a desire or an emotion that was selfish or altruistic or whether by sheer reason or by a sense of duty then the answer must be: 'Yes I might have done otherwise for if not I should have acted with the whole of myself and as it was I acted only with part of myself I was not entirely free' ... It is interesting that one would have expected that when the question to the answer 'Could I have done otherwise?' was negative then we should not have experienced any freedom and when affirmative then we should have been free. It does not of course follow that because the conclusion is unexpected therefore it is unacceptable. It must be judged on its own merits..."¹⁾ In addition

1) Gr. Zilboorg: Mind, Man and Medicine; p.113,

there is the testimony of existentialist thinkers that freedom is experienced directly immediately: "L'homme se trouve face a face avec sa liberte..."¹⁾ etc. However that may be, and an examination of these phenomena and experiences will certainly not prove without interest - for our purpose it is sufficient to note that whatever other conclusions it might entail full responsibility of the agent for all his actions even those 'he could not help' is always implied in this attitude.

Nevertheless this attitude holds some danger to morality. For if freedom can be experienced immediately and directly it is conceivable that freedom might become the constitutive element of some new domain with its own laws and its own validity. This might seriously affect the autonomy of the ethical domain, since it would subordinate the primary data of this domain in which freedom is experienced only through the medium of responsibility and obligation, to those in which freedom is experienced directly. The practical importance of this will be seen clearly when in the course of our argument we shall have occasion to examine Maximalist theories and their conflicts with Kant's ethical theory.

1) Compare Sartre: It seems to me that Zilboorg description approximates to what St. Augustine meant by saying: peccare non posse maxima libertas est, i.e. the sense of freedom which comes from utter determination, whilst Sartre obviously means the freedom of utter indetermination. The pleasantness of the one and the unpleasantness of the other are interesting features which might be worth examining. Compare also Bergson: Essai sur les donnees immediates de la conscience; Ch.III. (La Liberte) p.131.

The third conception of free will, regards freedom as an objective and real quality of human nature. This view is advocated by religious doctrine on the authority of the Scriptures, by sundry fighters for the dignity of man and the welfare of humanity on various grounds,¹⁾ and by the existentialist school of thought on the basis of its metaphysical assumptions or on the basis of an immediate experience of freedom as described in the preceding paragraph.

The best example, for all its simplicity of thought, for the religious doctrine is presented by Jean Bodin. I prefer indeed to use this exposition to later and more streamlined ones, because Bodin presents the two warring and directly opposite doctrines which are nevertheless simultaneously held by the church in their full contradictoriness. He simply puts them side by side. Crude as his exposition may be it contains the kernel of all that religious doctrine has to offer on this point unadulterated by any conciliatory explanations: "As the angels are good and the devil evil, so men have the freedom to be either good or evil. For God has said to them in his law, I have given you the choice between good and evil, between life and death, choose ye the good and ye shall live... Even more clearly it is said at another point: When God created man he left him his free will and it is God who works both these things in you: the willing and the said to him: If ye will keep my laws by them shall ye be kept. I have given thee water and the fire. And it's in thy power to put thy

1) Vt. Rousseau: "Man is born free and everywhere he lies in Chains..." etc. etc.

(in ...), pp. 62-63.

hand in this or in that. Ye have good and evil, life and death before you, you can be what you will...

And so that people should know that after Adam's fall man still kept his free will, the following saying is put in God's law, and it is said there of Cain that he had power to do good or evil. Thereto writes Moses Maimon that the Hebrews all agree that man has a free will and that nobody ever doubts this and that therefore they give thanks to God.... The reader is reminded to keep well in his heart the sayings collected by the author for the contention of the freedom of the will. For to follow Holy Scripture, how can fallen man stand up by himself? What good can he choose who is evil in all his purposes and inclinations? How can flesh comprehend spirit, how can reason judge those who are bound and walk in the vanity of their senses? How can he judge what is just who lacks originally created justice and never knows what is just before God? They say they know God but in their deeds they deny Him. Therefore we must distinguish the Old man from the New, Saul from Paul... In short man must be reborn through Faith by Grace be created with the Holy Ghost, and transfigured and reborn in the Image of God and become wise in this manner. For how can he answer who is not called? St. Paul said to the Phillipians: It is God who works both these things in you: the willing and the doing as he pleases. He takes our heart and our will under the tutelage of Faith, and imprisons them there: for what husbandman will reap who has not sown before".¹⁾

1) Jean Bodin: De magorum daemomania, Strassburg edition of 1586. (in German), pp.62-63.

According to this view freedom is a demonstrable deducible real quality which is not produced but perceived by or announced to reason by the Scriptures. As far as man is concerned he labours under the responsibility the possession of freedom imposes on him, without the advantage of being able to acquire merit by its exercise in the choosing of the good. Since he has lost the power to choose the good in his own right man is dependent on God's grace for his very capability even to will the good much more to do it. Freedom thus lasts on man's shoulders like an inescapable doom, a guilt he must bear forever, a responsibility he can turn to good only by the capricious grace of God never by his own efforts.

Something of the gloomy undertones of this view persists in existentialist theories. Here too man labours under the weight of his freedom, he is condemned to be free, always full of anguish trying to make the right, the free choice, always on the brink of inescapable guilt, always thrown back on himself, always fully and totally responsible. There is no God but this does not improve the situation, it makes it worse. "Puisque Dieu n'existe pas tout est permis." Sartre quotes from Dostoyevski and adds "... partant de soi on ne trouve jamais que soi hors de soi... on est reduit a etre a soi meme sa propre transcendance... etc." It follows that "la liberte est un fait, il faut y deduire les consequences... l'homme est responsable de tout.. le propre de la realite humain c'est qu'elle est sans excuse etc. etc."

The whole argument of course leads straight back to the inquisitorial stake whence we started.

There still remains, however, the fourth conception of the idea of freedom, Kant's conception. According to this view, freedom is the category of practical reason. It is the supreme condition of the possibility of moral obligation. It is the one condition which makes moral obligation possible. It is a point of view which enables us to order the data of our experience so as to make them intelligible, in short a regulative idea. It is true that as a regulative idea, freedom in a certain sense enlarges the domain of practical reason beyond its original boundaries. Inspired by the idea of freedom we sometimes perform actions we would never have attempted otherwise. Thus, in a way, from being merely regulative the idea of freedom becomes constitutive and is partially realised through man's actions. That is, in persistently assuming ourselves to be free we in the end succeed to act as though we were indeed free. This freedom however is most precarious¹⁾ and never assumes the character of objective reality. Indeed it contradicts all the known laws of objective reality, i.e. physical causality and logical necessity, and its very possibility remains forever incomprehensible. We must never presume to deduce or demonstrate the objective reality of freedom from its practical use. For "The practical concept of freedom has nothing in common with the

1) i.e. in the sense of Raymond's: "ce qui est precare dans certaines valeurs c'est leur realisation."

speculative concept of freedom which indeed must be left to the Metaphysicians".¹⁾ In the Critique of Practical Reason Kant expressly warns against drawing any metaphysical or speculative inferences from the idea of freedom in its moral function in a section most appropriately entitled: "How it is possible to conceive of enlarging the domain of pure reason for its practical purposes without at the same time enlarging its knowledge in speculative matters... (the idea of freedom) becomes immanent and constitutive being the source of the possibility of realising the necessary purposes of pure practical reason ... whereas apart from this it remains a transcendent and merely regulative principle ... it does not necessitate reason to assume a new object beyond experience but only to bring its use in experience nearer to completeness. But when once reason is in possession of this accession it will apply the idea (of freedom) in a negative manner, that is not extending but clearing up its knowledge so as to keep off anthropomorphism as the source of superstition or seeming extension of the concept of freedom by supposed experience; and similarly to keep off fanaticism which promises the same (i.e. the reality of freedom) by means of supersensible intuitions revealed authority etc..."

1) Kant: Rezension über Schulzes Versuch einer Einleitung zur Sittenlehre für alle Menschen ohne Unterschied oder Religion (1783)

The sole point in pursuing this seeming futile argument is that some very practical results follow from this splitting of metaphysical hairs.¹⁾ There is first of all the considerable difference in emotional climate generated by these several doctrines: they make men act and react differently. Secondly if we conceive freedom as a real objective quality of our human nature of which we are assured by some universal law, in other words, as a hard indubitable fact, we shall be inclined to retaliate for every abuse of freedom, by meting out punishment in kind, i.e. in hard fact. But if we consider freedom merely a regulative idea of will, a necessary pre-assumption of moral obligation, we shall not hasten to condemn people or harshly punish them in fact for not having made the proper use of what we know merely as the prerogative of the conception men have of their own persons. We shall rather be inclined to remonstrate and exhort. We shall try to persuade people to regard themselves as free and morally responsible beings, and thus to be free. Such persuasion is effective as a matter

1) i.e. we have only considered freedom in its practical application and at the points where we can be said most nearly to touch it in responsibility and in obligation, but we have not mentioned its middle links in Bossuet's sense "La liberte est un chaine dont on tienne les deux bouts sans en voir le milieu." On these middle links, on the nature and manner of existence of freedom when it disappears from our view revolve the main metaphysical discussions. The problem of how to reconcile predestination, providence and free will applies to those middle links of which the problem declared by Kant to be insoluble, namely how to reconcile physical causality and freedom, is but a corollary.

of fact only through a prolonged process of training and education.¹⁾ Freedom being a manner of conceiving oneself cannot be brought about by drastic measures from the outside. Only if freedom is an objective real quality of human nature can it be forced to light. Fanaticism is this matter is therefore only possible on the latter assumption for only on the latter assumption can men be forced to be free. This is, I believe the tenor of Kant's warning against the dangers of an objectivation (Verdinglichung) of the idea of free will. Thus, though the validity of freedom as a regulative idea of reason covers for practical purposes much the same ground as the metaphysical doctrine of freedom, the moral extreme and repugnant implication of the latter are eschewed.²⁾

Now it is obvious that to conceive freedom as a regulative idea of reason is to conceive it in its first sense. If I cannot fulfil my moral obligations unless I presuppose myself free of all my decisions, then to be free in all my decisions cannot be one of my moral obligations. In other words when I conceive myself as a free agent and when I conceive myself as a moral agent I do not connote the identical notions. Whilst I cannot think of myself as a moral agent without thinking of myself as a free agent, I can think³⁾ of myself as a free agent without thinking

1) Compare Kant: Kritik der praktischen Vernunft:

2) Methodik der prak. Vernunft.

3) Indeed must, for freedom to choose anything cannot be identical with the compulsion to choose one thing.

of myself as a moral agent. It seems therefore probable that freedom and morality cannot be equated without further ado.

But as Kant does maintain this equation (for he contends that a free will and a will under moral law are the same) we must try to solve this impasse by an indirect proof. That is, I shall accept freedom = morality as my major premiss and try to show that the conclusions it entails are self-contradictory.

In its briefest outline this argument runs as follows:
Assume that freedom = morality. Then since freedom is the power man has, not indeed to choose his motives but to dominate them, (i.e. the ability not to act upon his motives), morality is the ability (of man) not to act upon his motives. Evil the opposite of morality is therefore man's inability to disregard his motives, man's bondage to his motives. But evil, according to Kant, is the subordination of the rational to the sensual, i.e. man's bondage to the sensual. Morality is therefore the domination of the rational. Morality, however, is the same as freedom, by hypoth. Therefore a free will and a rational will are the same. That is freedom = rationality.

The basic fallacy of this argument lies in Kant's mistake as to the nature of evil. A mere predominance of the sensual over reason can never explain the temptingness, the fascinans of evil. Evil is more than just a weakness; a "video meliora proboque deteriora sequor". It is, as we have learnt from the bitter experience of recent history, primarily a corruption of mind by ideas. The sensual weaknesses of

the libertine appear amiable and harmless in comparison with the devastations which the selfless service of men dedicated to rational ideas other than the moral law, have brought over the world. And it is a commonplace of history, that the more self-abnegating, the more a-sensual the tyrant, the crueller and more evil his oppression of men. The devil tempted only the lesser saints with the images of lovely women, Christum he tempted with all the kingdoms of the world. Even Kant himself states that the Pauline doctrine of election is a morally evil doctrine. And though Kant maintains that it is so because it is "repugnant to reason" he does not, and indeed cannot accuse the doctrine of election to be of a sensual rather than a rational origin. Evil, therefore, is not necessarily the subordination of the rational to the sensual.¹⁾ Morality in consequence is not necessarily the domination of the sensual by the rational. But as morality - freedom by hyp.; freedom it follows, is not necessarily the same as rationality: freedom \neq rationality.

In Kant's exposition freedom = morality because morality = rationality and rationality = freedom. But as we have just seen freedom \neq rationality. Therefore in order to maintain our major premiss we must assume that morality \neq rationality, and start again, bearing this condition in mind.

1) In other words on Kant's own evidence and in opposition to his explicit theories, viz. "Religion...", a certain "corruption of reason" is possible.

Assume freedom = morality. Then since morality is the opposite principle the efficacious exertion of human free will retains its of evil, freedom too will exclude the possibility of evil: "peccare regulative, limiting, i.e. 'negative' character. Nor does the choice non passe maxima liberta est". But freedom is the opposite of of one principle rather than another affect the quality or the degree necessity; and since freedom the opposite of necessity, and morality, of freedom. That is the choice of the moral principle does not make the opposite of evil, are equivalent by hyp., evil is equivalent to the man who chooses to regulate his actions by its injunctions perfectly necessity or compulsion. That is evil is not a free choice for man, free in contrast to the imperfect freedom of the man who chooses to man commits evil under the compulsion of his nature. But the essential regulate his conduct by some other principle, or who chooses not to feature of man's nature is his rationality. Therefore evil is a regulate his actions at all (as far as this is practicable) which is necessary expression of man's rational nature, a rational necessity. itself is also a rational principle of conduct. Morality is the disruption of this necessity by an irrational power, the supernatural grace of god, for instance... It follows that regulative exercise of free will. This regulative, (checking (limiting) manner of operation is characteristic of all practical nor free by his own effort and decisions. This is a result, Kant or exertions of free will. It is a mistake to monopolize it for the any other moral philosopher, cannot leave unchallenged. It can how- exercise of free will is favour of, or in accordance with, the moral ever be challenged only on condition that evil be admitted to be a principles. Finally, free will in all its exertions for practical free choice. But if evil is a free choice then morality and freedom suppose it to be regarded as a regulative idea, a category of reason, are not equivalent. Freedom \neq morality.

Now since man is not free in the choice of his motives, since A will to absolute power, we can now conclude (in a corollary to neither their nature nor their existence are subject to his decision, the preceding reflections on freedom, can be regarded as a free will freedom can only be defined as we have seen, as the ability of man to without therefore having to be considered a good will. In other rise above his motives, to check and regulate his motives and actions words a will to absolute power, i.e. a by definition evil will), can as he choose, and according to whatever principle he chooses. He can bear the attributes of a free will at the same time and without self- choose to check and regulate his actions according to moral principles, contradiction. or according to religious, maximalist etc. principles. Whatever the

principle the efficacious exertion of human free will retains its regulative, limiting, i.e. "negative" character. Nor does the choice of one principle rather than another affect the quality or the degree of freedom. That is the choice of the moral principle does not make the man who chooses to regulate his actions by its injunctions perfectly free in contrast to the imperfect freedom of the man who chooses to regulate his conduct by some other principle, or who chooses not to regulate his actions at all (as far as this is practicable) which in itself is also a rational principle of conduct.

To sum up: There is no perfect or imperfect freedom, only the regulative exercise of free will. This regulative, (checking, limiting) manner of operation is characteristic of all practical exertions of free will. It is a mistake to monopolise it for the exertion of free will in favour of, or in accordance with, the moral principles. Finally, free will in all its exertions for practical purposes is to be regarded as a regulative idea, a category of reason, rather than as a real quality or modality of human existence.

A will to absolute power, we can now conclude in a corollary to the preceding reflections on freedom, can be regarded as a free will without therefore having to be considered a good will. In other words a will to absolute power, i.e. a by definition evil will, can bear the attributes of a free will at the same time and without self-contradiction.

(c) An evil will, a will to absolute power for the sake of absolute power can be not merely a free will, but also an autonomous will; i.e. a will which is a law unto itself.

Autonomy in Kant's theory of ethics signifies something more than freedom, i.e. the freedom of choice. It signifies that the law which the will (as practical reason) adopts as its maxim, is also formulated and creatively produced in its idea by the same reason in its pure or theoretical capacity. That is, it is not discovered as an idea generated by some external agency. Now an evil will, a will to absolute power for the sake of absolute power has been defined as a wholly rational will. Through its reason it accepts the maxim of absolute power, whose very idea reason creatively produced and whose laws reason formulated at the same time as it imposed those laws on itself. This however does not yet make the will to power a good will. Autonomy, that is, is not in itself a guarantee of moral rightness. On the contrary, it is a commonplace of historical experience, that the main characteristic of tyranny is not its lawlessness but that it is a law unto itself.

(d) An evil will, can will its maxim to become universal law, without thereby contradicting itself. A will to absolute power, for instance, can will its maxims to become universal law. Indeed its supreme wish, is that its maxim should be regarded as though it were a Universal Law of Nature. For, by definition, the evil will wills

absolute dictatorship, i.e. absolute power. It wills to impose that power on everybody else, i.e. it wishes to apply its maxim universally. It wishes to impose that power so totally and so securely as though it were an inescapable Law of Nature. In short, it couldn't agree more with the categorical imperative. It also accords with the formula containing the concept of the kingdom of ends. This kingdom, however, is restricted to its lowest limit, to one member - the man who wills absolute power: "l'etat c'est moi." In other words, universality in the application of a willed principle does not necessarily imply universality, or rather totality of inclusion, of subjects applying it. Neither do the empty formulas of the categorical imperative necessitate this specific interpretation of universality. They are perfectly satisfied by practical maxims which possess the qualification of universality in the first sense.

If the second meaning is intended, or if the "kingdom of Ends" is to be extended beyond the limit of one, and every time it is so extended (for instance from clans to tribes, tribes to nations, etc. etc..) this must be explicitly and separately postulated.

(e) An evil will, a will to absolute power, imposes a pervasive, thorough and self-consistent order on the world, shaping the chaos of separate and particular determinations into a Kosmos ordered under the "idea of law for the sake of that law"... Moreover, it is obvious that an evil will being sole legislator will create a far more thorough and homogenous order, than an indefinite number of legislating wills no

matter how much in harmony with each other.

A will to absolute power, an intrinsically evil will possesses as we have seen the qualifications of consistency, free choice, autonomy, universality and capacity of imposing a definite and homogenous order on the practical universe. An intrinsically evil will, has been shown to possess all the characteristics of a will determined by the categorical imperative, insofar as this determination itself is concerned. It follows, that to be so determined is not a sufficient ground for the moral goodness of the will. The formal formulations of the categorical imperative are therefore not sufficient grounds or criteria of moral goodness. Rationality and legality it follows (which are the essential features of the categorical imperative) are not sufficient grounds or criteria of moral goodness.

To illustrate this point: The autocratic solipism of a mad Caesar, the self-imposed discipline of a band of gangsters, the double standard of morality of a people at war, are all willed through maxims which the people concerned could will as universal laws, and will, if they were legislating in a kingdom of ends. It is not true that he who cheats thereby subscribes to the moral law: Thou shalt not lie... since without it cheating would not be profitable. He simply does not include those whom he wishes to cheat, as equals to whom he owes the truth as he owes it to himself (if he did not owe it to himself he would not be conscious of cheating). In other words the cheater treats the people he cheats as mere means, and does not accord them the status of persons or ends in their own right.

If he is not just an occasional half-hearted cheat, he probably has some principle or theory which proves that the people he cheats have no right to figure as ends, or aspire to that status. A very interesting example for this attitude is found amongst the Documents of German National-Socialistic doctrine discovered and published by the American State Department: "The twelve National-Socialist commandments: commandment number nine: Treat your racial comrades as you would be treated by them"¹⁾ The position is best summed up in the formulation which Fichte proposed for Kant's categorical imperative: "Act only on that maxim which thou couldst will as an eternal law to thyself .."²⁾ A Formulation fit indeed to serve as the device of Maximalism³⁾ but not as a moral principle, not even as the moral principle of the lowest form of clan morality.

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- 1) Department of State Publication 1864, p. 194. The first and the second commandment read: The Fuehrer is always right and: Never go against discipline. The twelfth: That which promotes the movement, Germany and your people is right.
 - 2) i.e. "Handle so dass du die Maxime deines Willens als ewiges Gesetz fuer dich denken koennest." With apologies to Fichte's metaphysical theory.
 - 3) From the already quoted passage of Bastide: "L'imperatif de la conscience morale est: sois au maximum une person, c'est a dire, sois au maximum de valeur", viz page 231.

The rationality and legal consistency of a principle, and in particular of the categorical imperative do not make that principle fit to define those moral responsibilities and obligations to humanity in general which Kant had thought they insured. Crimes and transgressions are not prevented by adherence to the categorical imperative in its empty formality. It leaves the field open to the most flagrant abuses. In short it is not fit to serve as the basis of ethics.

(B) In Kant's defence it must be said that Kant himself never envisaged this possibility, never imagined that the moral character of the categorical imperative could be imperilled in any way. For at the back of Kant's mind there were always the ideas which we have termed the "humanitarian superstitions" of the eighteenth century: namely

- 1) the incorruptibility of reason, or the moral goodness of the rational,
- 2) the teleological view of the universe including the assumption of a human destiny which is in harmony with the universal order, and
- 3) the intrinsic worth and dignity of the human person.

Only in relation to these ideas, in their framework, against the background which they provided to all his thoughts, could Kant have formulated the categorical imperative in its empty formality and never doubt but that its application

would ensure the moral rightness of actions done in accordance with the categorical imperative and for the sake of the categorical imperative.

We have already noted that Kant had not explicitly stated that he was proposing to use these ideas.¹⁾ We have also conjectured that the moral content of Kant's theory might be grounded in one of these ideas that it would be worth-while to determine in which, so that the basic concept of Kant's without doubt authentically moral teachings might be clearly defined. Kant had failed to do those because he had not been aware that his basic tenets especially the incorruptible goodness of reason could be questioned by any lucid and conscientious thinker. Those ideas were so much a part of the spiritual climate, one could even say, the spiritual element²⁾ of his age, that Kant used them without being aware of the extent and the importance of this use.

These of Kant's epigones, who in the name of rational

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- 1) Except when Kant announces that he is using the teleological view of the universe in a certain argument in "Die Grundlegung. ..."
 - 2) Element, in the sense in which water is "the element of fishes out of which they cannot breathe."

... for the tacitly implied humanitarian ideas which gave direction and orientation to the application of the categorical imperative, soon found their ethical systems despoiled of that authentic moral significance which had distinguished

However, *tempora mutantur et nos mutamur in illis*. The accepted unconscious ideas, the spiritual element of one age, are the conscious problems of another age. The framework and background of one age are brought into the limelight and questioned by the next. They are questioned not only theoretically, rationally in the name of scientific and philosophical integrity, but also emotionally, as a point of faith. Those who came after Kant, were no longer unaware of the problems, which had never been problematic to Kant, of the relations holding between the categorical imperative and the "humanitarian ideas" and their respective importance as elements of the Kantian system of ethics. Opinion was soon divided amongst the epigones as to whether the categorical imperative (as the essence of legality and rationality) or the humanitarian ideas represented the true source of Kant's view of morality.

Those of Kant's epigones, who in the name of rational consistency and in their simplicity, accepted Kant's explicit theory of the empty formality of the categorical imperative at its face value and followed it up without making allowances for the tacitly implied humanitarian ideas which gave direction and orientation to the application of the categorical imperative, soon found their ethical systems despoiled of that authentic moral significance which had distinguished

Kant's theory, and their interpretations of Kant strangely at variance with Kant's own decisions in some concrete moral instances. Chief in this group can be counted Fichte, Hegel and Hermann Cohen.

Others among his successors however, were alive to the decisive influence of the tacit background ideas on Kant's moral system and interpreted his theory accordingly. Most of them plumped for the teleological conception of the universe and of human destiny as the true source of Kant's theory, encouraged thereto perhaps by the fact that it is the single one which Kant expressly admits to have used.

Ernst Cassirer, one of the most outstanding of Kantian interpreters, for instance sums up his exposition of Kant's Ethical Theory in the following manner: "To Kant the categorical imperative, is in the last resort analogous to the laws of nature. At this point Kant uses the term "nature" to indicate not the physical existence of objects but the systematic correlation of particular objects to each other and their harmonious integration in one final and collective aim... An order, like that existing in the physical universe, reigns in the moral sphere.

But whereas in the physical universe we view this order as something given and beyond our power to change, stop, influence, or further, in the moral sphere this order assumes

the character of a practical task. A practical task, that means something which can, and which is to be achieved, and realised by human efforts, through consistent moral activity under moral laws at some point in the future ... In this way, even the "kingdom of ends" loses some of its forbidding transcendental and unattainable character, and is seen to point to a future in which its actual realisation has been brought about as mankind is fulfilling its practical task of achieving moral perfection. Thus the same actions which under one aspect are considered as links in the chain of physical cause and effect, are now considered under the aspect of their ultimate purpose, their telos; namely the coming glorification of humanity the realisation of the human destiny to its full, i.e. the attainment of moral perfection by all members of the human race"¹⁾.

The teleological view of the universe is thus shown to be the ultimate ground of the Kantian theory of ethics.

A teleological view of the universe can be consistently argued²⁾ only on condition that the existence of a first

1) Thus far E. Cassirer in Kants Leben und Lehre; pp. 274 - 277, who prudently stops at this point and so remains true to Kant's intention and well inside the critical theory of ethics.

2) That is, demonstrated, not merely indulged in on emotional promptings fortified by unconscious assumptions.

cause (inclusive of the law regulating its relation to its effect) be postulated at the same time or on condition that the existence of a sovereign (provident) intelligence be postulated at the same time. Two different interpretations of Kant's theory of ethics are put forward to remedy Kant's (intentional?!) inconsequence by Harold Hoeffding and Rudolph Otto respectively.

Hoeffding decides in favour of the first alternative in an argument that runs somewhat as follows: The existence of a first cause and a stable law governing its relation to its effects, would provide a firm basis, for a teleological order in the universe. Kant's categorical imperative would make sense and be justified only against the background of such a firmly established "natural teleology". Kant himself went a little way towards this conception but failed to draw the final conclusion. That is the reason why Kant declared the existence of the categorical imperative an, in the last resort, inexplicable phenomenon. This conclusion which alone helps us to understand fully the nature of the categorical imperative and to explain its validity, can however be drawn on the basis of a comprehensive view of Kant's philosophy. In this comprehensive view attention should be paid to the underlying ideas rather than to the

surface argumentation. Hoeffding then proceeds to show how this can be done by doing it. His argument is as follows:

1) In the first place, he reminds us that in "Outline of a universal history from a cosmopolitan point of view"¹⁾ Kant expounds the following idea: The study of historical events is of value, and the course of historical events intelligible, only in so far as it may be explained as a gradual and steady evolution (towards moral perfection) of the human race. Viewed under the aspect of individual or national advantage history is a meaningless jumble of mostly brutal facts without particular philosophical interest.

2) In the second place, in his theory of ethics Kant holds that a demand is voiced in the heart of each individual human being, the demand to examine all his actions as to whether their maxims are fit to serve as laws in a universal act of legislation.

3) In the third place, in the "Principles of jurisprudence"²⁾ and in the paper "On Eternal Peace"³⁾ Kant declares it the moral duty of every human being to do his

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- 1) viz Kant: Idee zu einer allgemeinen Geschichte in Weltbuergerlicher Absicht. (1784)
- 2) viz Kant: ... metaphysischen Prinzipien der Rechtslehre (1797)
- 3) viz Kant: Zum ewigen Frieden (1795)

utmost to foster and encourage the formulation of the fundamental ideas of a World Constitution. This constitution, Kant thinks, would make Universal Peace (i.e. a harmonious accord between the separate activities of the various nations) possible at last.

4) In the fourth place, Kant holds that the formulation and attainment of such a constitution is the ultimate aim of history, (viewed as in point 1) as a gradual and steady evolution (towards moral perfection) of the human race), its directive idea.

Now, Hoeffding argues, what Kant regarded as the ultimate aim of history, i.e. Universal Peace, can be achieved only when it is anticipated as it were, or prolepted, to use the term proposed by De Burgh, in the will of men. Moral awareness is nothing but this anticipation, this proleption of the ultimate purpose of the human race¹⁾.

Thus, Hoeffding concludes, a comprehensive view of Kant's philosophy, esp. of his ethical theory and his philosophical theory of history, yields the explanation for what Kant himself had thought inexplicable, namely,

1) I have condensed Hoeffding's argument from pages 14 - 20 of his paper on Rousseau's influence on Kant: Rousseaus Einfluss auf die definitive Form der Kantischen Ethik; Kantstudien 1898, Bd. II.

the possibility of the categorical imperative. The injunction (expressed in the categorical imperative) to judge all one's actions not from an individual point of view, but from a universal point of view, remains inexplicable as long as we try to refer it back to the nature of man the individual. This is so because the categorical imperative is "au fond nothing but the proleptical of the ultimate purpose of historical evolution, the voice of the race in the individual"¹⁾. This conception both explains and proves the possibility of the categorical imperative.

Rudolf Otto bases his argument for the assumption of the second alternative (the assumption of the existence of a sovereign provident intelligence) interpretation of Kant's ethical theory on Kant's distinction of perfect and imperfect²⁾ (i.e. negative and positive) duties. Through the notion of imperfect or positive duties, a new meaning a new life is injected into the Kingdom of Ends. What had at first been merely an existence "next-to each-other", - a community whose members passively bore with each

1) H. Hoeffding: Rousseaus Einfluss auf die definitive Form der Kantischen Ethik: Kantstudien 1898, Bk II, p. 15.

2) I shall discuss the problems of imperfect duty at a later point.

other, each one limiting his own interest and liberty so as not to interfere with the interests and liberty of others; a community headed by a deity who is but the exteriorised and personified obligation to limit one's purposes in the manner described, - becomes thanks to the notion of positive duties, an existence "for-each-other", a community whose members actively seek to further each others interests and purposes, by adopting them, as it were, as their own; a community over whom a benignant deity presides, smiling upon their good-willed efforts and assuring their success (by the postulates of practical reason).

Thus far Otto but follows Kant's explicit views. But Otto argues it is impossible to stop at this point with any consistency. One must draw the consequences implied in Kant's position even where Kant inadvertently or intentionally omitted to do so. The natural, inevitable sequel to the notion of the kingdom of ends as an existence "for-each-other", is the notion of the kingdom of ends as an existence "with-each-other". The kingdom of ends in its third form is envisaged by Otto as a community whose members combine their efforts to achieve collective ends like those of the family, the guild, the class, the nation, and finally the human race. "In this comprehensive living vision of humanity harmoniously wielded into one kingdom-of-ends

Kant's great discovery achieves its natural consummation. Kant never expressed this vision in so many words. But he is humanity's torchbearer on this path to perfection"¹⁾.

In addition, Otto argues, that Kant's conception of deity is untenable and indefensible. One must not call upon a God for nothing. One ought not to postulate a god if he has nothing to do. A deus otiosus is an indefensible hypothesis²⁾. A deus tatum repensans³⁾ on the other hand is an untenable hypothesis⁴⁾. It makes no sense

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- 1) R. Otto: Notes to Kant "Grundlegung ..." p. 205.
 - 2) As the deity is conceived by Kant in Die Grundlegung..
 - 3) The term is borrowed from Lactantius.
 - 4) As the deity is conceived by Kant in "Die Kritik der praktischen Vernunft" viz book II, ch. II & 5.. "It is morally necessary to assume the existence of God. It must be noted however, that this moral necessity is subjective i.e. a need (Beduerfniss) and not objective i.e. itself a duty, for there cannot be a duty to suppose the existence of anything ... Moreover I do not mean by this that it is necessary to suppose the existence of god as a basis of all obligation in general (for this rests as has been sufficiently proved on the autonomy of reason itself). What is a matter of duty here is the endeavour to realise and promote the summum bonum ... (positive duties!) in the world, the possibility of which promotion can therefore be postulated. Since our reason cannot conceive this possibility except on the supposition of a supreme intelligence, the admission of the existence of this supreme intelligence is connected with the consciousness of our duty, although the admission itself belongs to the domain of speculative reason ..."

and it is a self-contradictory concept. For, if the existence of god makes the achievement of the summum bonum possible, and if the attainment of this summum bonum (apart from happiness proportioned to moral merit, it contains the promise of individual immortality which each man needs in order to work out his moral perfection) is humanity's ultimate purpose, then the existence of god can be a guarantee for the possibility of achieving that purpose only if god himself had originally invented and set this purpose for humanity, and in addition had so ordered the universe as to make the achievement of this purpose possible¹⁾. For otherwise god would be conceived as the guarantor or the executor of a purpose not his own, i.e. as serving the purposes of a Godless Universe, which is absurd. But God cannot be conceived as the inventor of such a destiny, unless he is at the same time conceived as creating the possibility of this destiny, i.e. creating beings which are capable of having such a destiny. Now only free and rational beings, beings who are ends-in-themselves are capable of this destiny. Therefore God must be conceived as the ultimate ground for the existence of ends-in-themselves,

1) Kant as we have seen postulates God's existence only for the second function.

their freedom, and the ability of their wills to be determined solely by their reason. That is, God is the ultimate ground of the categorical imperative, and his existence explains the possibility of its existence. "Thus the Autonomy of Ethics of an inner necessity becomes a Theonomy"¹⁾.

Hence the existence of a first cause or a sovereign intelligence whilst no doubt necessary suppositions for a consistent and systematic teleological view of the Universe, detract from the Autonomy of Ethics, nay destroy the very possibility of such an Autonomy within the teleological framework. By providing an explanation or even a proof for the possibility of the categorical imperative, these assumptions annul its categorical character and render it merely hypothetical²⁾, an outcome which obviously conflicts with the avowed position of Kant and which Kant would never accept. We must therefore conclude that at some point the cited interpreters mistook Kant's meaning, since it is altogether inconceivable that Kant did not see that the above mentioned hypotheses were presuppositions

1) R. Otto: Note to the "Grundlegung ..."; p. 206.

2) To a certain extent they thus provide proof of the illusoriness of moral experience.

necessary to any teleological view. The root of the Hoeffding-Otto mistake is to be sought in an excessive emphasis of the teleological idea, amongst all other ideas¹⁾ of the framework. Possibly also in an unduly objectivating (verdinglichende) interpretation of the teleological idea common to both Hoeffding and Otto.

No doubt, Hoeffding as well as Otto, if pressed could produce ample support (each for his own views) from the writings of Kant. Certain passages of Kant are however misleading if undue importance be attached to them. Certain passages in Kant, (especially as is but natural those which have as their theme one of the "humanitarian superstitions") should be read as ideatic²⁾ codas, or emotional cadenzes to his methodological enquiries and conclusions. One must be careful not to press them too much, or infer more from them than is compatible with Kant's fundamental position. Especially one should be wary not to draw any conclusions or build any theories which might afterwards conflict with Kant's basic tenet: the purity and autonomy of Ethics. It is very tempting, once the categorical imperative in its empty

1) There is one idea among them which by itself explains the categorical imperative preserves its categorical character and does not necessitate uniform teleological view of the universe.

2) i.e. ideatic from idea like operatic from opera.

formality has been recognised as an insufficient criterion and ground of moral rightness, to take one of the concrete elements in Kant's Ethical Theory, (i.e. one of the "humanitarian superstitions") like the idea of a teleological order of the universe, and try to derive the whole of Kantian ethics from this one idea. All such attempts however will be found to be self-destructive¹⁾.

The purity and autonomy of Kant's critical theory of ethics as we must bear in mind, is preserved by virtue of the delicate suspended balance between (his explicit theory) the empty formality of the categorical imperative²⁾ and (the tacit and at times unconscious presuppositions of the framework in which he applies the categorical imperative) the concrete content of the "humanitarian superstitions"³⁾ in the face of its many difficulties and errors⁴⁾. Perhaps because

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- 1) inasmuch as the Autonomy of Ethics is thereby reduced to Heteronomy.
 - 2) Without which the system would be heteronomous.
 - 3) without which the system would be devoid of moral significance.
 - 4) Like the difficulty inherent in the idea of teleology for instance, which Kant preferred to pass-over and disregard since he intended to make only a partial use of it, and even so never explicitly admitted it into the core of the critical analysis of moral experience. Other difficulties are those inherent in the notions of the incorruptibility of reason, the dignity of man, etc.

of them¹⁾. This particular balance is no longer possible to us once its tacit presuppositions and its implications have been pointed out.

To resolve this impasse we would need to define a system of ethics fulfilling the following three conditions:

It would have to preserve the autonomous character of ethics, inspite of and at the same time, as it defines a concrete concept to serve as its inner core and ultimate ground.

It would have to find a concrete concept which would serve as the ultimate ground of ethics without destroying its autonomous character.

It would have to avoid the difficulties and errors of the Kantian system from which it directly derives.

1) The idea of teleological order of the universe, as we have seen is particularly unsuited for serving as the ultimate ground of Ethics. For by it Ethics would be defined either as Theonomy or as Bionomy (as in Nietzsche, Darwin, Spencer, etc.). Thus the idea chosen and stressed by disciples and interpreters wishing to pay homage to Kant as the directive

1) i.e. by mistaking the extent of their importance Kant managed to disregard them.

of his system,¹⁾ is the idea most likely to prove fatal to Ethics as Kant conceived it.

We must therefore rule it out, and since we can hope for no further help in this matter from Kant's disciples we must turn to his detractors, to those who most furiously attack his ethical position²⁾. The views of opponents are at times most instructive. Thus, we find that as far as Kant opponents are concerned the centre of the stage is occupied not by the Teleological order of the universe, but by what Thomas Mann once called the "Ideal of Well-fare" and graded "second-rate"³⁾ the virtues⁴⁾ by whose exercise this ideal is attained, and the basic idea on⁵⁾ which it is grounded.

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- 1) Probably because it is the most comprehensive and includes all the others.
 - 2) By detractors I do not refer to critics of Kant's method in Ethics and the categorical imperative, on philosophical grounds. I refer to those who oppose Kant's ethical views, and attitude, from the side of the "humanitarian ideas". Enemies are usually more acutely sensitive than disciples, and more likely to be aware of the true basis of a spiritual or a moral attitude, because this attitude gets them "on the raw" at the vital point. This is especially true of 'emotional' enemies, i.e. opponents because of emotional reasons, who also justify their opposition by the same emotional reasons.
 - 3) "Das Wohlfahrtsideal ist ein Ideal zweiten Ranges," Th. Mann; Der Zauberberg.
 - 4) Justice, uprightness, faithfulness etc.
 - 5) i.e. the equality of claims, and the value which is the attribute of men qua men.

"The virtues Kant is often praised for having possessed in his life, namely those of unconditional justice, righteousness and truthfulness are no doubt to a great extent the outcome of his native timidity. For all the praise one may bestow on such qualities one cannot overlook the fact, that they do not fit a life lived greatly in the midst of the battle for power. They cannot be cherished uninterruptedly, they must often be discarded "1) "The daimonic moral power of Frederick of Prussia, or of Bismarck, which overriding all petty bourgeois moral objections, makes war and endangers the life of many for the sake of a great idea, is not to be measured by the morality of a Kant. When Kant speaks of freedom he means not the freedom of the autocratic personality making its own laws and breaking those of others, no, by freedom Kant understands the same as by morality, i.e. the reverence and the obedience towards the law. Kant needs the concept of Freedom only insofar as it is a necessary condition of moral obligation, for without it there would be for Kant no moral consciousness and no moral responsibility. Neither the concept of the 'I' nor that of Freedom as defined by Kant are evidence for a strong, confident morality born out of a strong and confident self-awareness"2).

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- 1) Richard Mueller-Freienfels: *Persoenlichkeit und Weltanschauung*; Kant; p. 264.
 2) Richard Mueller-Freienfels: *idem*; p. 268.

A similar attitude informs the following quotation:

" he still allows himself to be intimidated by the mention of Virtue The point in question is the relation of the Knighthood of the Spirit to the commonplace majority. A relation which heretofore was completely unknown, and whose very emergence is characteristic for our effeminate generation. For it consummates itself in such a way that the Knighthood of the Spirit, perturbed to its inmost by some nihilistic experience, discovers the commonplace and ordinary as a task, an aim to be attained, and in the process of striving for the commonplace, the Knighthood of the Spirit, forgets the Spirit, denies it, betrays it"¹⁾.

This attack curiously enough is directed against Thomas Mann, who no doubt himself sympathises not a little with the attitude expressed in it. I have quoted it because it so excellently characterises the attack on Kant and reveals its deeper reasons. Evidently if Kant had been nothing but a timid little teacher of philosophy in Koenigsberg it would be highly absurd and hardly worth anyone's while to accuse him of not possessing the forceful egotistic grandeur which characterises the 'great' like Frederick, Bismarck, Napoleon.

1) Rudolph Thiel: Die Generation ohne Maenner; Thomas Mann oder die Ironie aus Mangel an Stolz; p. 338.

But Kant himself is one of the great (only against this fact can the attack against him be understood) and being of this stature has deliberately denied the exceptional rights of the outstanding personality, surrendering the 'fortress of the Spirit' from within, as it were¹⁾.

This then, this denial and invalidation of the exceptional rights of the exceptional personality is, to judge by the valuable testimony of his opponents, the vital centre of Kant's ethical system. Positively expressed, this *centrum vitalis* is best circumscribed by the proposition that in the moral domain all members of the human race enjoy equality of status and hence possess a certain intrinsic worth qua human beings.

I propose to show that this idea, the idea of the intrinsic worth of human beings qua human being is capable of supplying the categorical imperative with the necessary moral content, and is capable of providing ethics with a stable basis and ground of validity without depriving it of its autonomy.

1) Compare H. J. Paton's: "We shall never understand Kant aright unless we see him as the apostle of human freedom, and the champion of the common man". H. J. Paton: *The categorical imperative*; p. 171.

First then I'd like to point out that this idea is the sole hypothesis to assure universality of the categorical imperative in the distributive sense, and to exclude all possibilities of "double standards", solipsism etc. In other words it fulfils the function for which it has been evoked in the first place, it invalidates any claim to exceptional treatment for the exceptional personality.

The universality of the categorical imperative, then lies not in its formal structure, but in the universal application of the concept of the inner worth of human beings qua human beings, and varies in direct proportion with it¹⁾.

How can we vindicate this universal application of the concept of the intrinsic worth of human beings qua human beings?

This concept we must bear in mind, has its origins, (in common with most of the other basic concepts of Kant's ideatic property) in the "humanitarian superstitions" of the Eighteenth century, and is strongly coloured by the Rousseau'ean version of these ideas. Now according to

1) When the concept is restricted in its application so as to exclude slaves, negroes, Heretics, Catholics, Jews, enemies etc., the validity of the categorical imperative is automatically restricted with it, and to exactly the same extent.

Rousseau the intrinsic worth of a human being qua human being, which for short we shall term the dignity of man - qua man, is part of man's innate nature. By the innate qualifications of their nature human beings are endowed with freedom of will and hence are capable of Virtue¹⁾. Man's innate capability of virtue²⁾ is, objectively, the reason for the worth and dignity of human beings. Subjectively it is felt and valued by a corresponding sentiment, itself innate in human nature: the natural love of man for humanity.

In his pre-critical writings Kant followed Rousseau very closely³⁾: "True virtue", he writes, "can be grown only on principles; the more universal these principles the nobler and more elevated the virtue. These principles are not speculative rules of reason, but the awareness of a feeling

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- 1) " .. la liberte morale .. seul rend l'homme vraiment maitre de lui, car l'impulsion du seul appetit est esclavage et l'obeissance a la loi qu'on se presente est liberte .. la vertu n'est que la liberte morale."
 - 2) It is only a capability for "virtue" i.e. to be pursued in the face of objection, for according to Rousseau, the actual natural goodness of man has been vitiated by the impositions of culture, and needs to be reinstated by perseverance in merely virtuous actions "until perfect artificiality becomes nature again". (Rousseau, Lettres sur la vertu et le bonheur."
 - 3) At least insofar as the manner of the recognition of the dignity of human beings is concerned, for he never shared Rousseau's mistrust of Reason, and distaste for cultural achievements.

which dwells in every human heart and which is more than mere pity and helpfulness. I think this sentiment is best described as a feeling for the Beauty and Dignity of human nature ...

Das Gefuehl von der Schoenheit und Wuerde der menschlichen Natur"¹⁾.

To be capable of Virtue, according to Kant, one must possess this feeling. This feeling, however, is innate and therefore universal. On the other hand 'Beauty and Dignity' are also innate qualities of human nature as such. But in distinction from Rousseau, Kant holds that this 'Beauty and Dignity' are grounded primarily in the rational quality of human nature. Kant also holds, that what we call the 'Beauty and Dignity of Human Nature' refers to and comprises more than the sole capability of moral virtue, namely capabilities for scientific research, philosophical speculation, artistic creation, religious inspiration, etc.

At this particular point in Kant's philosophical evolution neither the concept of the 'dignity of man' nor its (assumed) universal validity present any difficulty. Both are contained in the definition of 'man' and show therefore an almost tautological character. The 'dignity of man' is justified by its definition as an inherent, innate part of human nature indissolubly bound up with the rational qualities of that

1) Kant: Das Gefuehl des Schoenen und des Erhabenen; (1764) Ch. II & 2.

nature. Indeed those rational qualities in their various activities and modifications (in the Arts, Sciences, Philosophy etc) provide the main *raison d'être* of human dignity. The universal validity (in its distributive sense) of human dignity, on the other hand is vindicated on the basis of an universal participation of human beings in the rational, this being, by def. an essential quality of human nature.

Later, in his critical writings, Kant had to change his ground for methodological reasons. In view of the requirements of the transcendental method of deduction¹⁾, Kant had to abandon his former view of moral virtue, i.e. virtue grounded in an innate natural sentiment. In accordance with his new method Kant now grounded moral virtue, i.e. the good will, in its determination by the categorical imperative, i.e. in the determination of will by reason;²⁾ and the

1) Transferring the problem of objectivity from the critique of Pure Reason to Ethics Kant formulates his question thus: "Whether in Ethics too there might not be a pervading lawfulness, which is not dependent on the material content or the material differences and variations of what is willed, but determined solely by the manner in which it is willed, i.e. the particular modality of the will itself which thereby provides this lawfulness with objectivity in the transcendental sense of the word, i.e. provides a ground for the necessary and universal validity of ethical values." viz. Cassirer: Kants Leben und Lehre. p. 266.

2) Thus receding further away from Rousseau by grounding both virtue and its recognition in reason.

possibility of such a determination of will by reason, he deduced from the presupposed possibility of freedom. On the other hand, he viewed Human nature as split in two parts, one irrational sensual, and one rational part. Inner worth and dignity is made conditional on the domination and determination of the irrational part by the rational; i.e. ultimately in the freedom of the human will which enables man to determine himself in accordance with the dictates of his reason and regardless of his sensual desires and impulses. That is the Dignity of Man, is made to depend on the ability of Man to perform moral actions¹⁾ and bear moral responsibilities, i.e. in the last instance, on the freedom of the will.

In this new framework, the demonstration of the objective reality of the Dignity of Man, and the vindication of its objective universality are rendered extremely difficult, if not altogether impossible.

For on closer inspection Kant's deduction seems to move in a circle: He presupposes the freedom of the human will as a necessary condition for the possibility, i.e. existence and reality of moral obligation and responsibility, and then

1) Thus oddly enough re-approaching Rousseau, by relating Human Dignity solely to the moral sphere.

attributes Dignity to men because they have free will, i.e. are morally responsible. Now I cannot suppose x to be y, and y to be implied by z and then state that x is w, because z implies w¹⁾. A categorical judgement cannot be deduced from two hypothetical judgements. The objective reality of the Dignity of Man cannot be deduced from the hypothetical reality of freedom, much less can the universality of its application be so deduced.

But nothing less than such objective reality is demanded by Kant for this concept. Nor, to judge from the way in which he first introduced this concept. "Nun aber sage ich - Now I say man and every reasonable agent exists as an end in himself .."²⁾ or to judge from the vital function and crucial importance this concept possesses in his system of ethics, could Kant admit of less.

Now the only point, in Kant's system where we can break through the circle and touch reality, is in the existence of

1) x = man, y = freedom, z = moral action, w = dignity. I could however from the given certainty of x is w argue. The certainty of x is y. I could also from the certainty of z deduce the existence of y, and so the possibility of x is w, that is from the objective reality of moral experience argue the dignity of man. See next page.

2) Kant: Grundlegung ... Absch. III.

moral experience as a datum of so vivid a certainty that it excludes all doubt. "A higher certainty than that which assures us of our moral self, our autonomous personality, is not conceivable"¹⁾. This experience however is of necessity limited to my own person. It can therefore assure me of my own freedom, my own moral responsibility, and therefore of my own dignity and worth, but not of the dignity of others. It is however the Dignity of others that stands to question if I am to limit my own freedom out of a respect for theirs.

Nor can the Dignity of Others be demonstrated solely from my sense of moral responsibility and obligation and from my voluntary self-limitation, for then it would be dependent entirely on my pleasure whom I wished to honour in this way, and who are to be the recipients of Dignity conferred by me. But this is exactly the possibility Kant wishes to exclude as most detrimental to the moral rightness of an action. Therefore from a Kantian point of view it is most unsatisfactory and unacceptable that man should acquire moral dignity by being treated as though he possessed it. From a Kantian point of view man must be treated as being possessed of moral dignity because he is so possessed. A corroborating reason

1) Kant: Kritik der prakt. Vern.; Teil 1. ch. 5.

for this position is derived from Kant's view that one cannot acquire moral worth, and hence dignity by an outside grant but only by an inner effort, by an inner unshakeable decision to be determined in all one's actions by rational considerations only.

But in the first place the possession of dignity is according to Kant dependent on moral worth, i.e. the decision to allow one's will to be determined only by rational and therefore (according to Kant) moral considerations. In the second place, we have proof positive that the will of some men is hardly ever so determined and that the will of most men is rarely so determined. In the third place, dignity must, in spite of all, be regarded as the universal attribute of all men. In consequence of these considerations and in order to preserve the universal validity of dignity (in the distributive sense) Kant is compelled to define dignity as the rightful attribute of all men insofar as all men are potentially capable of moral action. Kant defends this contention as follows: No matter how low a man has sunk he may, at any moment, awaken to his moral responsibility, and rousing himself exercise his prerogative of free action, freely determined. Insofar as man never loses this capability altogether he always possesses dignity and is of infinite value.

1) Kant: Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der bloßen Vernunft
2) Which by the way we can never witness or prove, since only possible to have proof for the deliberate infringement of the categorical imperative.

Just as "every bad action must be viewed as if man had fallen into it directly from the stage of innocence"¹⁾ so at any moment man is, as it were, in this state of innocence, and starting from it, free to rise above his selfish degradation and work out his salvation in his own way. His purpose must be respected and his efforts toward it must not be restricted. Even proof positive of the continuous moral turpitude and utter worthlessness of a man does not relax my obligation to respect his person or permit me to deprive him of the universal human attribute of dignity. Hence the ultimate ground for the dignity of Man, is not the actual exercise of his moral prerogative²⁾ but his potential capability of so exercising it, should he choose. In other words the ultimate ground for the dignity of man is man's participation in the rational, his definition as a rational being.

But if this is so, then the possession of dignity is practically independent of moral worth; since to assert that man is potentially capable of acquiring such Worth, is to assert nothing more than that he is rational by nature. But if the Dignity of Man is an immediate outcome of his rationality

1) Kant: Religion innerhalb den Grenzen der blossen Vernunft: Part 1; 24.

2) Which by the way we can never witness or prove, since only God sees into the heart of men. It is however oddly enough possible to have proof for the deliberate infringement of the categorical imperative.

it seems gratuitous and indefensible to restrict (as Kant does) the validity of this concept to the Moral Domain.

A return to the pre-critical position seems therefore indicated, indeed hardly avoidable, unless Kant can show that the concept of the Dignity of Man as a Universal attribute of Man, is self-evident only within the Moral Domain. That is, Kant to uphold his position must show that unless man is considered as a member of the Moral Domain his Dignity is not immediately perceived by Reason, nor on being perceived, acknowledged without hesitation. In other words, Kant must show that only in the moral domain is the objective validity of the Dignity of Man as a universal attribute of Man necessarily implied in the concept of man.

Let us examine Kant's account of the manner in which Reason is made to acknowledge the universal application of the Dignity of Man; "This position that humanity and every intelligent being is an end in itself is not established by my observation or experience, as is seen, first, from the generality by which we have extended it to every rational being whatsoever; and second because humanity was exhibited not as a subjective end of mankind, (i.e. not as an object which it stood in their option to pursue or decline) but as their objective end, which whatever other ends mankind may have,

does as a law constitute the supreme limiting condition of such subjective ends and which must consequently take its rise from reason a priori ... "1)

Now "All mankind must of necessity thus conceive to themselves their own existence and to this extent it is a subjective principle of conduct." But "in the very same way all rational beings thus conceive their own existence by force of the same grounds of reason which determine man to think so" and therefore "the above (i.e. "Every intelligent nature exists as an End in itself) is likewise an objective principle" ... from it as the supreme practical position all laws of the will must be capable of being deduced ... "2)

Now this argument seems to me to be based on a question begging fallacy: It seems therefore unreasonable to

From the proposition: I necessarily regard myself as an "end in myself" i.e. I necessarily attribute Dignity to myself Kant first argues the limitation of the concept of Dignity to the Moral Domain, and then its extension to all rational agents. He argues as follows: I regard myself as possessing dignity, as being of infinite value, solely on the

1) Kant: Grundlegung ... Bk. 1. Ch. 111.

2) Kant: Grundlegung ... Bk. 1. Ch. 111.

ground and to the extent to which I also regard myself as capable of moral action, i.e. as a rational being whose will is capable of determining itself in accordance with an for the sake of the moral law. The certainty which characterises my direct and immediate experience of my moral responsibilities assures me that the view I have of myself as possessing dignity is fully justified.

In connection with this, and against Kant's view, it must be mentioned that men apart from their specifically moral experiences, possess other ways and means of experiencing their own dignity, their own value as persons notably in the processes of artistic creation in the pursuit of scientific truth, or in the exercise of power (i.e. a fundamentally "immoral" activity.) It seems therefore unreasonable to confine the concept of Dignity when acquired by way of an immediate experience to the moral domain.

This is besides the point however, and we may concede the moral implications of Dignity, without prejudice to our argument. We may also grant a second, more important point to Kant: Namely we may concede the plausibility of an argument, based on analogy and inductive reasoning, which from the fact that I regard myself as possessed of Dignity on certain grounds draws the conclusion that other rational beings when regarding

themselves so (i.e. as possessed of dignity) will probably do so on the same grounds. In other words, the same complex of circumstances and conditions which assures me of the certainty of my own freedom and moral responsibility, assures other rational beings of their freedom and their responsibility.

But no point in the argument necessarily implies an assurance of each other's freedom and moral capabilities. In other words, the inductive assumption, or even the fact that each rational being regards himself as possessed of dignity, on the same ground and for the same reasons that all other rational beings regard each himself as possessed of Dignity, does not involve a logical necessity for rational beings to regard each other as possessed of Dignity.

This, however, is the decisive test for a general recognition by rational beings of the universal application of the Dignity of Man. That all men are possessed of dignity can not be deduced from the concept of Human dignity itself, since universal validity in the distributive sense is not an essential qualification of the concept and therefore not implied in it. The complex and synthetic concept of the objective universality of the Dignity of Man is not self-evident i.e. immediately perceived by reason; the validity of the synthesis ~~it~~ performs is in need of proof. This proof, up to now, reason has been incapable of supplying and

we seem again driven back to the pre-critical stage of Kant's philosophy in which he admitted this synthesis to be performed by an innate sentiment. This is tantamount to giving up the autonomy of Ethics and the rationality, i.e. the objective necessity, of the categorical imperative.

Some sort of objective justification and vindication is therefore desperately needed, if we are to save the autonomy of Ethics, and not beg the moral question at the most crucial point.

Similar problems have been faced by, to name but a few, Rousseau (*la volonte generale*), J. S. Mill (General happiness) and Sartre (*l'acte individuel engage toute l'humanite*). Let us briefly examine their respective arguments and study the respective solutions offered:

Rousseau has the easiest stand: "Les engagement s qui nous lient au corps social ne sont obligatoire que parcequ'ils sont mutuels; et leur nature est telle qu'en les remplissant on ne peut travailler pour autrui sans ~~travailler~~ ~~pour autrui sans~~ travailler pour soi. Pourquoi la volonte generale est-elle toujours droite, et pourquoi tous veulent-ils constamment le bonheur de chaqu'un d'eux si ce n'est parce qu'il n'y a personne que ne s'approprie cet nom chaqu'un et qui ne songe a lui meme en votant pour tous? Ce qui prouve que l'egalite de droit et la notion de justice qu'elle

produit derivent de la preference que chaqu'un se donne et par consequence de la nature de l'homme"¹⁾. Men, according to this argument, respect each other's persons and attribute dignity to each other, because this is the only practical way to pursue their own ends in comparative safety and security. By a voluntary self-limitation, they secure a similar self-limitation in others, indeed the one is the condition of the other. "ils ne sont obligatoires que parce qu'ils sont mutuels"; and this self-limitation in retrospect confers rights and privileges and dignity on the members of the contrat social. In other words this dignity depends on the willingness, or the enforced (enforced by the very circumstances of human existence and its natural dangers) willingness to self-limitation. But if there should be a man, or a group of men whose preference for themselves need not, thanks to accidental circumstances, be limited in order to assure its own success (for instance the near extermination of the red races in North America) then there is no power in the world which can force those men to attribute dignity to the others, and therefore these others will not possess dignity. Rousseau's argument does not safeguard the objective Universality of the Dignity of Man. It provides for a comparative

1) J. J. Rouseeou: Le Contrat Social ll. 6.

generality inside closed societies only, more or less in the sense of Lindsay's "other people's behaviour is necessarily an assumed background to ours ... different social atmospheres compel us to act differently ... if one knows that people are willing to cooperate one acts differently even if one's purpose is not allowed to alter .. moreal rules ... are no use unless they are generally kept and form an effective moral code, i.e. most men are ready to **Keep** them and inforce their keeping ... "1)

Rousseau's exposition we must admit does not help us much except for being useful as a reminder that we must not allow the Dignity of Man to be reduced to a conditional status²⁾ by dint of finding our system of Ethics disintegrate into relative and ephemeral moral codes. The objectivity and autonomy whatever else it would be it would no longer be Ethics - is indisellubly bound up with the absolute validity of the Dignity of Man and unexceptionable universality of its attribution.

J. S. Mill's famous argument on general happiness runs: "the sole evidence it is possible to produce that anything

1) A. D. Lindsay: "The Two Moralities" p. 21 - 22.

2) Whether it is dependent on calculations of temporary expediency, or natural immutable innate interests which however themselves function differently in different circumstances.

is desirable is that people do actually desire it ...

No reason can be given why the general happiness is desirable except that each person so far as he believes it to be attainable desires his own happiness. This however being a fact we have not only all the proof which the case admits of, but all which it is possible to require that happiness is good; that each person's happiness is a good to that person and the general happiness, therefore a good to the aggregate of all persons"¹⁾. If analysed this argument proves a mine of problems each of which has had its day as a cause celebre of philosophical disputation²⁾. The only points which need concern us here is (a) the argument (given the relationship what is desired is desirable, what is desirable is good and therefore what is desired is good) from the goodness of each person's happiness for himself to the goodness of general happiness for the aggregate of persons and (b) the argument from the fact that each person actually desires his own happiness, to the fact (?!) that general happiness is desired by all. (i.e. desirable! or ought we to say "ought to be desired by all"). It has often been pointed out that the validity of

1) J. S. Mill: Utilitarianism, Ch. IV.

2) viz. the discussion on the logical and real relationships between the desired and the desirable, the desirable and the good, and the desired and the good resp.

Mill's argument hinges on the definition of general happiness. If the general happiness is a sum of particular happinesses then each individual desires it to exactly that degree to which his own happiness is involved. Thus, if for instance, I desire to regain my coat from a cloakroom in which hang many other coats desired by many other people, it is possible to define the concepts of all the coats, all the people, and all the desires of all the people for all their coats. Now my desire for my coat, though definable as part of the general desire for all the coats in the cloakroom is neither increased nor diminished nor affected in any other way by being part of a general desire. Nor is my coat affected in any way by hanging together with other coats. But if to regain my coat I have to queue up so as to avoid a scramble in which all coats including mine are liable to be damaged, then my desire is no longer a mechanical part of the sum total of all desires but enters into some co-ordinated system with them limiting its own intensity and accommodating itself to all the others somewhat in the same manner as that described by Rousseau in the *contrat social*. My desire is now modified in its activity by the collective desire of which it is now a "chemical" part, but it still is a desire for my own coat and for nothing else.¹⁾ I can however envisage the

1) and all my coat gains is a relative safety from damage.

possibility that my desire for my coat enters into some combination with the other people's desires for their coats. Thus, by joining in with other people I am able to pay an attendant to guard it whilst I'm away, brush it, and mend it, a thing beyond my means if I were on my own. Here my desire enters into an organic relationship with all the other desires, forming a collective system by which my coat is actually benefitted and possibilities opened up for its improvement which would not have existed had I remained on my own. But still my desire is centred on my own coat, and if through this organic relationship with other people's coats benefit as well as my own, this is as far as I am concerned of secondary importance, a mere accidental by-product of the situation. In other words, though my happiness be an organic part of the general happiness, i.e. increased, modified, even changed in its content by the whole of which it is a part, and though I be a tireless worker for the improvement and enrichment of general happiness, I am basically concerned only with my own happiness, and with general happiness only insofar as it is the precondition of my own. At no point in the rational argument leading from my own happiness to general happiness had I any reason to put the regard for other people's happiness above my own (without personal satisfaction which would only be another way of cultivating my own happiness). At no point

was I confronted by a rationally necessitated demand (arising from the argument itself) to desire general happiness for itself and regardless of my own. In other words at no point was I given the opportunity to cross the boundaries of self-centred isolation and enter the selfless generosity which is Mill's ultimate intention.

We must therefore conclude that the fact that general happiness is desired by all people or even the proposition that it ought to be desired by all people, are not sufficient to cover Mill's ethical meaning. To it must be added the demand that general happiness ought to be desired for its own sake or for the sake of the regard I have for other people and regardless of any satisfaction that might occur to me in the process. This must be so if I am to put the consideration of general happiness above the consideration for my own in case of conflict - as Mill taught. This demand however is implied in none of the concepts which appear in the original argument (my happiness, general happiness, my person, the aggregate of persons, good for me, good for all etc.) nor in the relations defined to hold between them. From the given fact of my desire for my happiness for its own sake, the dialectical process of reason can at the utmost lead to a concept of general happiness as the ultimate warrant and supreme condition of my own happiness. It can never

furnish me with the idea of general happiness as being desirable for its own sake, nor confront me with a demand to desire it for its own sake. This demand is not justified by the preceding argument nor indeed definable without a certain forcing of the concepts with which Mill operates. It must therefore be regarded as an intruder from some other domain, the eruption of some heterogeneous source which gratuitously¹⁾ disrupts the cohesion of the argument²⁾. Besides, in the given context, this demand defeats its own ends for if all people acted on the maxim that one ought to desire and pursue general happiness at the expense of one's own happiness if necessary, nobody would be happy at any time, and general gloom and misery the sole effect. This is a point to which we shall have to return when discussing perfect and imperfect (i.e. positive and negative) duties. A pursuit of Mill's argument in vindication of the idea of general happiness as a moral duty has shown that the moral obligation so defined (i.e. a regard for other people's happiness and, a fortiori, a regard for their persons) cannot be deduced from the explicit tenets of Mill's utilitarian system of Ethics. This idea has been, as it were, injected into the system by the force of some

1) gratuitous from the point of view of the argument.

2) viz Mill's dictum "an unhappy Socrates is better than a contented pig", which also represents a disruption of the utilitarian argument.

spontaneous intuition. Being incompatible with the general tenor of his philosophical theory it disrupts its ideatic cohesion.

The profit of this lesson for our study of the Kantian theory is this: Though the idea of the unconditional regard we owe to other people's persons as the core of all our moral obligations, is not an idea disruptive or inimical to the general tenor of the Kantian theory of ethics; analogy from Mill's argument brings home the suspicion that in Kant's case too, the idea in question may be the product of some intuition injected into the system by the eruptive and irrational force of that intuition, rather than the result of a rationally demonstrable deduction from rationally valid concepts which Kant took it to be. In short, what Kant had taken to be a simple case of *intellectus querens intellectum*, is really another case of an *intellectus quereus fiden*, and as such likely to be disappointed in its quest.

Let us see what we can learn from Sartre's argument in vindication of his proposition, "l'act individuel engage toute l'humanite" which runs thus: "Choisir c'est affirmer la valeur de ce que nous choisissons, parceque c'est toujours le bien que nous choisissons ... Rien ne peut etre bon pour nous sans l'etre pour tous ... Alors, choisir pour soi c'est choisir pour tous ... "

Sartre interprets both the proposition and its proof in two different senses, a metaphysical sense and a moral sense. I intend to show that the two do not accord and that the moral interpretation rests on a supplementary intuition of the intrinsic worth of human beings, which is alien to the basic metaphysical tenor of Sartre's existentialist thought and superimposed on it. Moreover the argument (quoted above) which could just pass in its metaphysical setting becomes plainly fallacious if a moral interpretation is attempted.

To expound the first interpretation of Sartre's argument we must briefly sketch in its metaphysical background. Sartre's fundamental tenet is that God does not exist. From this all other things follow. Since God does not exist, man is absolutely free to do as he pleases. Man's freedom is absolute and he can never escape it. He is condemned to be free. This liberty is not limited in any way since no objective truth, no moral principle, no religious conviction, no intrinsic value exist apart from man's choosing to believe in them. Thus man is responsible for the truth he believes in as well as for providing the proofs in its favour. Man is responsible for his very experiences, since the respective significance and interpretation of experiences is determined by the selection he makes. Man is thus responsible for his

slightest thought, his most transitory emotion, even the intensity of his natural wants. Man is solely determined by his choice, and he chooses as he wills¹⁾. For man's will is determined by nothing at all, it is absolutely free. Man becomes what he wills himself to become. However since freedom is not merely a quality of man but his very essence (la liberte est l'etoffe de son etre) any action, thought, impulse, which denies this freedom is an act of bad faith. Any attempt to appeal to a moral principle, an intrinsic value, a religious conviction when faced with a choice, is an action smacking of insincerity, cowardice, and "mauvais-foi". It is a deplorable and moreover futile attempt to evade and shift one's responsibilities. Whatever man chooses to do or to be he must choose in the consciousness of his absolute liberty and full responsibility. This is the only possible right choice (la choix au nomme de la liberte) and in choosing to choose so man sets it up as an objectively right principle of action. Thus in choosing the right way for himself, he ipso facto chooses the right way for others.

1) I have already drawn attention to the similar views of a certain number of theologians and their religious doctrines. Also to the views of Pico de Mirandola, Ficinus, etc.

Man is compelled (by the logical necessity of his metaphysical situation) to choose the freedom of others when he chooses his own¹⁾. It is factually impossible for man to pursue his own liberty without pursuing at the same time the liberty of others²⁾.

Two important conclusions must be drawn from this metaphysical theory. The first which need not concern us further for the moment, is that seen against this stark metaphysical background the implications of "l'act individuel engage toute l'humanite" become truly terrifying. For it means that man, in whatever he chooses to feel, think, or do, moulds the whole of humanity in his own image. The second which is of the greatest importance for us, is that the regard for liberty (i.e. the persons, as liberty is the essence of the human person) of others is a necessary result of a regard for my own person and therefore a compulsory not a voluntary act. As such it is morally irrelevant. The only moral duty which can be defined within the bounds of Sartre's meta-

1) Je suis obligé de vouloir en même temps que ma liberté des autres.

Je ne peux prendre ma liberté pour but que si je prends également celles des autres pour but.

2) Descartes affirmed that in this experience and through it I gain knowledge of the existence of God. But affirming however now the dependence of some separate intuition, separate from the perception of the I that is, rather than inferences from the primary datum of the cogito.

physical assumptions, is a duty to oneself¹⁾.

This however is not at all what Sartre wants. He intends to establish a moral code where such a code ought to be established namely in the relation between one man and another in the intrasubjective sphere. Sartre proceeds to do this in the following manner: He asserts that the sole datum which can be immediately and directly experienced is the reflective consciousness expressed in the declaration 'cogito ergo sum'. At the same time, through this same primary experience I gain an intuitive knowledge of the existence of l'autre, the other person. In this intuition ... "Je decouvre l'autre comme un liberte posee en face de moi qui ne veut que pour ou contre moi. Ainsi decouvrons nous tout de suite un monde qui nous appelons l'intersubjective ... " However we may regard this affirmation of a primary and intuitive perception of the "other", and the assertion that this intuition is part of the very first 'cogito', we cannot discuss it any further since Sartre explicitly declares it an intuition, and claims the sanctuary of intuition²⁾.

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- 1) In this connection it is highly unimportant whether choosing for oneself implies also choosing for others, since it is one's own salvation one works out, and in which one is primarily interested. The salvation of others is an inevitable, though not undesirable corollary to one's own.
 - 2) Descartes affirmed that in this experience and through it I gain knowledge of the existence of God. Both affirmations however seem the expression of some separate intuition, separate from the perception of the I that is, rather than inferences from the primary datum of the cogito.

For our purpose it is enough to note that the 'other' is not identical or indistinguishable from the I, nor is he compelled to live in harmony with the I. He is free to choose for or or against the I. Therefore the I must be free (from the point of view of the other) to choose for or against the other. That is, what the I chooses for itself (for itself it chooses only the good) it does not necessarily choose for the other. In other words, "To choose for oneself is to choose for others" is a moral injunction, not a law of human nature (i.e. metaphysical human nature). Therefore the proposition 'l'act individuel engage toute l'humanite' must be classified as a moral injunction¹⁾ to regard all one's actions 'as though' they were to be obligatory for all mankind, and not as a law of nature. Hence the metaphysical and the moral interpretations of Sartre's theory of choice action and responsibility, are mutually exclusive.²⁾

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- 1) equivalent to Kant's categorical imperative: Act only on that maxim which is also fit to become a universal law of nature.
 - 2) It is even questionable whether the existentialist theory allows of moral injunctions at all, since it tends to objectivate (verdinglichen) all regulative ideas, and all categories, viz next paragraph.

The disruption occurs at the very point where the intuitive perception of the other as a free and therefore dangerous being breaks the train of the argument. The 'other' is no longer something which I mould in my own image every time I make a choice, he is a person for himself, who makes his own choice irrespective and uninfluenced by the choice I make for him.

".. Jé veut pour ou contre moi." He therefore possesses the dignity of a free person, and as such I ought to respect him even as he ought to respect me. That is, we both ought to choose to respect each other's persons though we are not by virtue of our very nature compelled to do so. Thus and thus only moral decisions and acts can be defined.

"Let us illustrate this point by re-examining Sartre's proposition: 'l'act individuel engage toute l'humanite' and the argument which is supposed to vindicate it: 'Choisir pour soi c'est affirmer la valeur de ce que nous choisissons parce que c'est toujours le bien que nous choisissons. Mais rien ne peut etre bon pour nous sans l'etre pour tous alors choisir pour soi c'est choisir pour tous' from the point of view of a moral interpretation.

Since existentialist philosophy translates all modalities of expression into propositions about substances, and objectivates (*verdinglicht*) all regulative ideas (like freedom)

into existing entities, and all injunctions (like the categorical imperative) into causal laws we must discuss even the moral interpretation of Sartre's argument in terms of facts, and factual experience. That is we shall not discuss whether one ought to choose only the good for others but whether one does, since Sartre asserts exactly this by denying the existence of intentions and obligations apart from the acts which realise those intentions and obligations.

Given this initial framework for our discussion we can now affirm that 'choisir pour soi ... c'est affirmer la valeur de ce que nous choisissons' is factually correct and moreover a self-evident proposition if only value be defined loosely enough i.e. not restricted to moral value. In this sense we can also say 'que c'est toujours le bien que nous choisissons'¹⁾, i. e. if the concept of the good be also defined loosely enough to cover all possible choices: One always choose the good or what appears good and were it only the lesser of two evils. The proposition ... "Rien ne peut etre bon pour nous sans l'etre pour tous" ... on the other hand seems very questionable. There is no reason on

1) Nihil appetimus nisi sub ratione boni, nihil aversamur nisi sub ratione mali.

1) i.e. Subsequently not as the moral measure.

earth why something should not be good for me, or why I should forego something that seems good to me (and which does not harm others) simply because it is not good for everybody. As a matter of fact I can think of many good things which come under this category. In consequence, the proposition: 'choisir pour soi c'est choisir pour tous' seems quite incorrect if we are to take it as the statement of fact as which it is defined in Sartre's system. The truth of the matter is rather the very opposite. All our conscious and willed acts, all our desires, all our purposes insofar as they have not as yet been subjected to the categorical imperative and adjusted to the requirements of the moral law¹⁾ are primarily choices for us against others. If our wills are directed towards concrete ends, toward material possessions, it is the exclusive rights in this possessions which we covet most. The more desires of material things accord and agree with each other, the fiercer their battle against each other viz the pun attributed to Francis the I and cited by Kant: was mein Bruder Karl will das will auch ich (naehmlich Mailand) (i.e. what my brother Karl wills I will too, namely Milano). The bigger the difference in what we desire, the greater our chance of not getting in

1) i.e. Subsequently cut to the moral measure.

each others way. But differences in what is desired entail a mutual negation of the value of what is chosen in each case. Thus if A chooses one frock and B chooses another A certainly thinks her choice the wiser, and even though it is not directed against B in the same crude way it would be if B had chosen the same frock, it is directed against B insofar as it denies the quality of B's taste. At no point therefore can what A chooses for herself in material things, include A's choosing the same for B, let alone for all. Exclusiveness of possession dominates and directs all pursuit of material ends.

But even in the pursuit of spiritual ends and rational achievements where exclusivity of possession has no real meaning as the same spiritual content can be pursued, attained, and its possession enjoyed by many men at the same time without loss to its inner richness, exclusivity of possession is nevertheless highly valued. In the latter case, the value of exclusivity refers to the personality of him who possesses rather than to what is possessed. The cherished belief in

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- 1) If there are ten good poets living in the same Century, poetry does not suffer by it, nor is the achievement of the single poet ipso facto detrimentally effected. The value of a book is not lessened by having been read by many, nor the value of a painting by being viewed by many nor the virtue of amusical score by having been listened to by many.

the exceptionality of our persons and our pursuits is the thing dearest to our heart, and this alone is reason enough to make any choice, which is a choice for ourselves at the same time a choice against others. I think this is why, if by chance we come upon people whose ideas and pursuits completely resemble our own we are both pleased and displeased¹⁾. However great our joy in finding kindred souls a joy which is nourished chiefly by the praise implied in such agreement, the annoyance at finding our most cherished 'exceptionalities' duplicated is far greater for such duplication devalues our exceptionality²⁾: "Lebt man denn

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- 1) That I think is one of the reasons why people hasten to marry anyone they find resembles them like that: i.e. to eliminate the threat to their exceptionality by identification.

Unless of course one marries the duplicator viz footnote 1, and continues to be exceptional a deux. Compare also Thomas Mann's interesting description of his emotions when he himself was still writing his book Dr. Faustus and "From Switzerland came the two volumes of Herman Hesse's Glasperlenspiel. In far Montagnola my friend had achieved his difficult and beautiful novel, of which until this moment I had known but the introduction I often said of this introduction that its style was so near to me, as though "part of myself". Enabled to take in the whole in one comprehensive view, I felt almost terrified to see how similar it was to what had occupied me so intensely these last years. The same idea of a fictional biographer, and the same overtones of parody, which this form permits. The same emphasis on music. The same criticism of our age and our culture though more dreamy and utopian than my own ... still, there were similarities enough - more than enough, and the entry I made in my diary: "To be reminded that one is not

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wenn Andre leben?"¹⁾ "Choose for all what you would choose for yourself." The only occasion of which I can think, on which to choose for oneself is also to choose for others is when one exercises one's right to vote on polling day. But qua voter one is a priori and to a certain degree divested of one's individuality, one is part of a collective body. Furthermore one's liberty is restricted by the limited number of alternative choices, and by the pre-fabricated nature of the choices in question. If I retain my individuality, for inst. if I stand for election my 'choosing' to stand implies that I do not want any other party to gain my seat, and moreover desire my own party to support me in preference to all other acceptable candidates. In consequence, it seems fairly safe to conclude that an act of 'choosing for oneself' (choisir pour soi) does not de facto involve an act of 'choosing for all' (choisir pour tous). Translated from the status of causal laws so beloved of existentialist to its proper modality, the exhortative and imperative modality proper to moral injunctions our

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alone in the world is always annoying" bluntly expresses this facet of my feelings. It is but another version of Goethe's: "Lebt man denn wenn Andre leben?" Th. Mann: Die Entstehung des Dr. Faustus, p. 68. The Goethe quotation is from West-oestlicher Diwan, Buch des Unmutes, ll.

1) viz Goethe: West-oestlicher Diwan cited p. 358.f.2.

proposition would be: 'Choose for all what you would choose for yourselves' or rather 'Never choose for others but what you would choose for yourselves' (i.e. 'what is of value, what is good'). This, however, would in reality mean an intolerable interference with other people's personalities since not I but they must choose for themselves what they consider of value and of goodness. As for myself, I am supposed to respect those choices, I even am under an obligation not to interfere with them. At the utmost I can be said to be under an (imperfect) obligation to further the 'choices' of others "as far as in my power", i.e. I ought to adopt their ends and their attainment of their ends as my own. At no time however can I be said to be under a moral obligation to make my ends, theirs¹⁾. A fortiori, when we translate it as well as the comprehensive proposition 'l'act individuel engage toute l'humanite' back into its existentialist modality as a causal law which is valid de facto, these propositions are endowed with a determining and effective power far beyond the requirements of Ethics¹⁾. There is however nothing gained in ethics by a diminution of that sphere of interest which a man can choose for himself as he

1) Rather reminiscent of 'Sois mon frere ou je te meure' Chamfort's famous pun on the Jacobine: 'la fraternite ou la mort'.

and Sartre declares that he knows that to be so endowed by

pleases without thereby feeling that he is 'engaging' the whole world and much to be gained by extending it. Therefore even the duty to make the 'freedom of others my end at the same time that I make my own freedom my end' must not be pressed beyond an obligation not to pursue my own freedom at the expense of others. In no way can I be obliged actively to seek the freedom of others simply because such a pursuit would be self contradictory and meaningless. In Kantian terms: I cannot make the moral perfection of another man my end because moral perfection must be achieved from within as it were, it cannot be imposed from without. In terms of Sartre's philosophy the same thing holds, for if the right choice for man is the choice made in the full consciousness of his absolute liberty and accepting full responsibility for it, the liberty of another man which I make my own end is not his choice, and therefore cannot represent a right use of his essential liberty. In other words other people's liberty (in the metaphysical sense) cannot be an end for my will for I cannot bestow liberty on other people. Moreover even if I could bestow it, this itself would be a denial of their liberty, for it would make them utterly dependentt on me. Other people, however, are endowed with their own liberty, which is the intrinsic core of their human nature, and Sartre declares that he knows them to be so endowed by

an intuitive perception of 'the other' as the compliment to the I. In this intuition the 'other' appears as an independent entity, complete with his own liberty and his power 'to choose for or against me'. This independent status, this equal liberty of the 'other' compels each one of us, on a plane of mutual engagements to take each other's liberties as an end, i.e. not to violate them. This is however, tantamount to a demand, that men should respect the persons of all other men.

Once again, we are brought to conclude that the moral content of a seemingly rational demonstration of the dignity of man qua man, is provided by the eruptive and somewhat¹⁾ irrational agency of intuition.

Summing up we can say, that what have seemed at first sight rational arguments demonstrating the Dignity of Man in Others by inductive reasoning from the data of my own personality²⁾, are fundamentally only a barrage of words to hide the mental jump performed under their cover. This mental jump is occasioned by the intrusion of a logically always gratuitous³⁾, at times intrinsically incompatible idea⁴⁾

1) I shall try to justify the qualification 'somewhat' (irrational) at a later point.

2) that is in Kant and Mill, not in Sartre.

3) in Kant and Sartre.

4) in Mill.

into the argument. With its appearance previously used concepts acquire a new meaning, and a new validity. But as the word¹⁾ denoting the concept is usually not replaced by another or qualified by an epithet to evidence the inner change in content, the fallacy of seeming to prove what has really accepted²⁾ without proof (namely the intrusive idea) is made possible.

In the framework of the Kantian theory of Ethics the position can now be described as follows: The categorical imperative in its empty formality, instills the qualities of consistency, freedom autonomy and rationality³⁾ into the will it determines, since these are the qualities which are the preconditions of its efficacy. On the other hand the categorical imperative has no specifically moral significance

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- 1) i.e. 'general happiness' in Mill's, 'liberte' in Sartre's argument.
 - 2) I use 'accepted' rather than 'assumed', because intuitions and postulates, if based on intuition, possess a greater compelling power than assumptions.
 - 3) not its moral goodness, for as we have seen, rationality is not identical with moral goodness.

only when they acquire a concrete content, when they are referred to the concept of the Dignity of man; and more particularly when referred to the universal validity of this concept i.e. to the proposition that all men qua men are endowed with dignity. The objective necessity of ethics is therefore directly dependent on the universal validity of this proposition, since the definition of the categorical imperative does not entail the logical necessity of its universal validity, and since the objective necessity of the categorical imperative itself depends on the universal validity of the concept of the Dignity of Man.

What proof or assurance have we of its universal validity? In the first place the proposition: "all men-qua-men are endowed with Dignity" is not an analytical proposition (as Kant tried to prove). From the bare concept of man, only his rationality can be deduced with any certainty as to its universal validity. But the quality of rationality does not entail (by logical necessity) the quality of moral goodness nor does it entail the possession of dignity. The proposition "all men qua men are endowed with dignity" is therefore a synthetic proposition.

It is however not a synthetic proposition a posteriori for the following reasons: (1) I can experience only my own dignity as a moral being, since I can be certain only

of my own freedom and my own capability of moral action.

(2) Since morality lies in the manner of willing, and since it is beyond my power to see into the hidden motives of another man, I can never actually be certain that they perform moral actions and are capable of performing moral actions.

(3) I am on the other hand continually faced with the sight of people who disregard the moral laws and who therefore definitely do not perform moral actions. (4) Any judgement from myself to others is therefore not warranted by experience. But even if it were so justified inductive reasoning could never supply sufficient certainty for the objective and absolute necessity of this synthesis. We must however have sufficient certainty nay absolute certainty in this matter.

The proposition 'all men qua men are endowed with dignity' if it be all objectively necessary, must therefore be an a priori synthetic proposition.

Now it seems to me that if any rational necessity can be said to exist for the synthesis in question, it is not of the same kind of rational necessity as the rational necessity in which the synthesis between will and freedom finds its justification. There is no necessity to conceive all men as eo ipso endowed with dignity, similar to the necessity to think of the will as being free. In other words, the extension of the attribute of dignity to all men qua men

(i.e. to conceive of dignity as a prerogative natural to all men) is not a category of reason. But perhaps a rational justification for the a priori synthesis between man as such and dignity can be found in some middle term, in whom as a pre-condition common to both, both could be grounded?¹⁾ Now if such a term could be found, the composite concept of the dignity of all men, would derive from this term, and therefore be dependent on this term. It would be a conditioned, a hypothetical synthesis. This would lead to Ethics itself (as a discipline) being dependent on the same middle term. Ethics would thus be reduced to a heteronomy dictated by that term. Both results are unacceptable, and should be repudiated most decisively. All attempts to vindicate the proposition "all men qua men are endowed with dignity" by the authority of the scriptures, a metaphysical doctrine inclusive of a teleological view of the universe, or man's biological qualification must be repudiated as damaging to the unconditional validity of human dignity as such, and by implication, to the autonomy of ethics. All attempts to vindicate the proposition "all men qua men ... " by individual

1) All these considerations are couched in Kantian terms. This does not eo ipso invalidate the general validity of the conclusions. Naturally they would have to be formulated differently within a different setting.

and outstanding¹⁾ qualities must be repudiated as pernicious to the universal attribution of human dignity. All attempts to vindicate the proposition "all men qua men ..." by a mutual agreement to accord each other this dignity (a 'contrat social') must be repudiated as damaging to the reality of dignity.

Finally the necessity of performing the synthesis between "human being" and 'dignity' is not grounded in an emotional necessity²⁾ inherent in all human hearts. As a matter of

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- 1) as Kant did by making dignity dependent on moral capability.
 - 2) viz Rousseau's view, and also Kant's view in his pre-critical writings especially in "Das Gefuehl des Schoenen und des Erhabenen" quoted on page . Kant's latter occasional loose references to the heart as the seat of morality, must not be interpreted to mean that he had given up the view that morality is exclusively grounded in reason. He uses the term "heart" to cover those decisions prompted by reason and commonsense but not fully understood in their theoretical demonstration. At no time does he appose heart (the irrational) to reason (the rational). He opposes heart (rational reason, Eingungung des natuerlichen Verstandes) to mind (of which at times in speculative deliberation one can make unsound and incorrect use). I believe passages like the one on Herr Garve ought to be interpreted in this sense: "Hr Garve remarks (about the difference which I define between the discipline that teaches us how to become happy and that which teaches us how to be worthy of happiness) are: 'For my part I must confess that though I can understand this division of ideas with my head I cannot find this division in my heart. I cannot even comprehend how anyone can be sure that he had isolated his desire for happiness to such a degree, that his actions were indeed done for duty's sake only' In spite of Hr Garve's confession that he does not find the division (or rather separation) aforementioned in his heart I do not hesitate to contradict him and defend his heart against his head. He, the upstanding man has indeed found (this division) in his heart (i.e. in the

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fact very few people actually feel that all people are endowed with dignity. Mostly the innate emotional regard for other people's persons embraces a restricted and definite group (who are thought of as endowed with dignity in virtue of their class, profession, nationality, etc). Almost always the purely emotional respect for other people's persons excludes certain groups on more or less defensible rational reasons (madmen, criminals, the vicious and the depraved) or on irrational sometimes even unconscious grounds (profession, religion, nationality, race).

The synthetic proposition "All men-qua-men are possessed of dignity" is therefore incapable of any proof whatsoever, including the transcendental proof for the objective necessity of categories. Since it is also not

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determinations of his will), but he could not adjust it in his head to the usual explanations according to psychological principles (which are all of a physical causal nature) so as to understand what cannot be understood or explained, namely the possibility of a categorical imperative and in order to speculate on this imperative ..." Kant: "Ueber den Gemeinspruch: Das mag in der Theorie richtig sein taugt aber nicht fuer die Praxis (1793), part 11.

self-evident it cannot be the object of an intuition, in the usual sense of intuition. It can therefore be only classified as a postulate which because of the uniqueness of its nature and position can only be described by comparison. Like the postulate of freedom it is wholly implied in the given datum of moral experience and represents the ultimate reason for this experience. In another sense it resembles the postulate of the existence of God in its (i.e. the latter's) structural relationship to religious experience, for it can be taken for the effective real cause of moral experience as well as for its ultimate reason (formal cause). That means that moral experience though it is our only means of discovering this postulate, is not to be treated as though it were the cause or the ground of the postulate. On the contrary, the postulate is to be treated as though it were the cause and the ground of moral experience, on the justification that moral experience can be explained completely only by this postulate. (Note the close analogy to the postulate of the existence of God in religious experience). In short the postulate is to be treated not like a postulate. It is to be treated in all respects and to all purposes, like a statement of fact, the statement of an ultimate, irreducible, unquestionable fact. Now it so happens that the irreducible and unquestionable fact the postulate is supposed to state is not a very probable

fact. It is indeed 'a fact' denied and invalidated by the greater part of our experience and knowledge. It therefore resembles those tenets of our convictions of which it can be truthfully said: *credo quia absurdum*. An act of faith, and a gratuitous act of faith at that is needed for its acceptance. Fourthly it has a peculiar quality of its own, the power of challenging the will¹⁾. Its challenge is that the will by electing to treat the postulate as though it were a statement of fact, will in the end, prevail by creating the fact, whose statement it was supposed to be.

To sum up: the postulate that all men qua men are endowed with dignity fulfils the following four simultaneous functions:

- (a) It functions as a necessary hypothesis without which moral experience would be neither possible nor explicable.
- (b) It is a statement of fact (i.e. a statement of existence) and as such is the real and efficacious cause of moral experience.
- (c) It is an affirmation of faith in the face of clear evidence to the contrary.
- (d) It is a challenge to our wills, i.e. regulative idea.

Since it fulfils all these functions simultaneously, each of

1) Thus what Lindsay had called 'The Challenge to perfection' (*The Two Moralities*, p.5.) is now recognised more precisely as the challenge to accept the postulate that all human beings are endowed with dignity.

the four propositions correctly defines one facet of its nature¹⁾. All facets play definite and decisive roles in moral theory and practice, so that their separate description might not prove altogether useless.

Now the precise and concrete content which Kant ascribes to the concept of man is subject to considerable variations, as all his interpreters had occasion to note with justified annoyance. At times it nearly coincides with Rousseau's concept of man, i.e. man in the framework of the 'contrat social'²⁾. In this setting men (prompted according to Rousseau by the idea of their own advantage, but according to Kant prompted by a reverence for law and lawfulness³⁾), are enjoined by the categorical imperative to impose restrictions on their wilfulness in obedience to a law which actually does nothing but ensure the possibility of life in larger groups. Such value and dignity as men possess under these

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- 1) It is interesting to note that Kant explicitly uses b first part c;d; but never a. A point we have discussed already, and probably would reject b: part two for methodical reasons, an error which I shall discuss later.
 - 2) Not in nature where he has much more value in himself.
 - 3) Which we have seen is not enough to exclude the possibility of immoral conduct of the grossest kind.

circumstances accrues to them from their participation in the system of mutual obligation, and counter obligations.

At other times Kant uses a concept of man so rich in the attributes of infinite value and inviolable dignity, that to be motivated by the categorical imperative is no longer equivalent to being motivated by a reverent obedience to the law, but is rather equivalent to being motivated by a spontaneous respect for the human person, a respect perfectly expressed in the idea of human dignity. Understood in this sense, the categorical imperative, especially in its second formulation is the direct outcome of the response evoked and the respect commanded by the human person. The dignity of the human person is, here, an objective datum¹⁾ existing for itself whether it be respected or not, yet at all times commanding this respect. Both attitudes can result in the same right actions but it is one moral maxim we follow when we pay attention to another person's interests because we have set ourselves the principles of mutuality and equality of claim; and a different one we follow when we pay attention to another person's interests because we respect and honour him as a

1) According to Kant this dignity is entailed by the rationality, and therefore by the ability of the human being to be determined by the moral law.

person. Morality proper begins at this latter point for morality is nothing but the respect and regard of man for man.

The split between the two attitudes is unmistakably announced in the often cited sentence: "Now I say that man ... exists as an end in himself" and its significance gauged aright by Otto in a somewhat sentimental annotation: "It is with great inner emotion that we look upon this eruption of a deep and independent intuition, for we are privileged to witness the birth of the mightiest and most significant of all ideas that were ever pronounced in the domain of ethical enquiry: The idea of a concrete, existent value-in-and-for-itself, an idea moreover which reason can both accept and respect"¹).

The distinction so established refers however only to a difference in inner motivation. It is significant because by it a new point of view, has been gained, a change in attitude. The new attitude does not correspond to new duties, nor does it create or inspire new duties. This needs to be stressed most emphatically since the difference in inner motivation is usually confused with the difference between positive and negative duties. It is assumed, -- on the

1) R. Otto: Notes to Kant's Grundlegung p. 199.

strength of the evolution of the categorical imperative from its second formulation (the end-in-itself) to its third (the Kingdom of ends) and on the strength of Kant's distinction of two stages in the Kingdom of Ends the latter being defined as the stage at which we not only respect the ends of others but actually further them "adopting them as far as possible as our own" - that the positive duties are of a higher, more sublime order than the negative. Whenever Kant tried to avoid the implications of "imperfect duties"¹⁾ he is accused of a merely negative attitude to morals - a senseless accusation since all moral approach as such must be 'negative' as I shall try to show. The premisses on which I base this contention are the following: (a) The concept of a moral positive duty is a self contradictory concept and therefore invalid. (b) We can de facto give no consistent definition or description of a moral duty which is also a positive duty. (c) The idea of positive duties is one of those humanitarian ideas, which in the course of events have

1) Admittedly Kant's reasons in avoiding to develop the idea of imperfect duties is entirely different, viz pp. 213-215 from those I am advocating here. It is therefore doubly important for me to prove that the unconditional attribution of dignity to man in the concrete wholeness of his existence and his pursuits does not as Kant thought necessarily entail the affirmation of imperfect duties.

proved more detrimental to morality than any outright disregard of the moral law.

To take the first point first: There seems good reason to think that moral laws are by their very nature compelled to operate in a regulative limiting, i.e. 'negative' manner. This is so, because the ground of all moral obligation is the respect for other people's dignity, plus the postulate that all people are possessed of dignity. Now the dignity of the human person, as far as it is a source of moral obligations, inspires only one obligation: the obligation to treat it with proper respect i.e. not to violate in any way. In other words, it is my moral duty to refrain from treating other people as mere means to my ends (negative duty). By the nature of the situation however, the dignity of another human person cannot put me under an obligation to cultivate or foster it in any way, since strictly speaking, I have no power to do so. In other words a positive moral duties in regard to the dignity of other people's persons, are self-contradictory.

The following reflections might help to justify this contention: Let us assume that there is a positive moral duty. A positive duty is a duty not merely to refrain from doing something, but a duty to do something. That is actively to set out to bring something about. In order to

do this, I must will to bring that certain something about, i.e. I must choose a certain end. A positive duty is therefore a duty to choose a certain end. Can there be a moral duty to adopt one end rather than another? It seems most improbable. For ends as we know are the correspondents of desires or their motives. They are only free to refrain from acting on the promptings of their desires, out of a regard for other people's persons. Thus to love music, or to pursue a political career cannot be moral duties, nor does moral merit accrue from such pursuits. Now if morality is defined as the regard I owe to other people's dignity, the duty to adopt an end, would mean a duty to make other people's ends my end. On limiting people's dignity to their moral pursuits, we find (in accordance with Kant's views) that we cannot help others in their moral decisions since the change of heart which is expressed in the moral decision must be achieved by the person deciding. Moreover it would be a reflection in the sincerity of our regard for them, and a denial of the equality of status which the possession of dignity confers, were we to assume that they require our help or that we are able to provide it¹⁾.

1) The case of the priest (or any other authorised person) is different since he is endowed with the power to help by special dispensation. In his priestly status he possesses certain prerogatives and certain duties which derive directly from his status and do not appertain to him qua human being. These duties are therefore not moral duties but contractual duties, i.e. duties not defined for men as such, but for certain men in certain circumstances.

Let us however assume that dignity is not only an attribute of the moral person (i.e. man ~~in~~ as far as he obeys the moral laws) but also the attribute of man in the concrete variety of his pursuits and desires. Then man in the concrete wholeness of his existence ought to command my regard. In this case (according to Kant) my moral positive duty might be to help another man in the pursuit of his concrete ends, i.e. to adopt his happiness as my end. This maxim generally adopted would effect the utter unhappiness of everyone. For if morality is more desirable than earthly goods, by making another man's happiness my end I lay up treasures for myself in heaven whilst tempting him to forego his own perfection for the baser riches of this earth which I help him to amass. I commit in fact, the perfect moral crime. (It was Satan who showed Christ the kingdoms of the world!). If however I inform him of my real intentions in helping him to worldly happiness, and encourage him to do the same for me (i.e. to seek his morality by helping me to acquire material goods) neither of us, I believe, would have the leisure or be in the proper state of mind to enjoy the fruits of each others labour, and this labour would be so much wasted effort. We might as well sit quietly at home and cultivate our moral personalities in less elaborate ways.

This argument is valid only if I indulge in the activities outlined above (i.e. in action meant to bring about the material well-being of another person) purely as a matter of duty. The same activities indulged because of a personal love, or a natural inclination to social charity, are justified by the joy and satisfaction they bring the agent. However, as they are not performed for the sake of duty they have no moral merit and are in fact of no further interest to our enquiry. It should however be noted that a concern with other people's interests undertaken purely as a matter of duty represents an interference with the private and protected sphere of interest of another person, and insofar as it is not justified by the natural impulses of personal love, has something decidedly insulting about it¹⁾. In so far as this interference can be regarded as insulting it represents a humiliation of another man's dignity and to that extent must be counted a morally wrong action. It follows that other

1) Lamont in Principles of moral judgement pp 127 - 131, draws attention to the extremely instructive fact, that only self-regarding actions as far as they influence other people's lives, enjoy legal protection. The test of self-interest is applied to determine what a person may or may not do as regards other persons. I enjoy legal protection for instance if I demand that the pub next door be closed because it represents unfair competition to my own business, but not if I demand that it be closed because it represents a danger to the moral well being of other people. Interferences with other people's lives on philanthropic grounds are not sanctioned by the law. The law thus seems to protect the liberty of each to choose his own good.

people's happiness can never be our moral duty.

Can my own moral perfection be a moral and positive duty for me? Ought I to make my own moral perfection my end? I think not. For were I to do so I would obey the categorical imperative, and respect other people's persons as a means to my own moral perfection, and not for their own sake. I would thus defeat my own end. no less surely than if I had misused other people in some cruder way.

An alternative kind of positive duty, the one most eagerly and most often advocated is the duty to benefit humanity. Now humanity can be benefitted in various ways. One can benefit it by creating beautiful things, by discovering and promulgating truth, by improving social conditions, by teaching and preaching the good. I shall assume that all these things are my duty even if I do not naturally desire to do them. Then to use Kant's formulation I would treat myself as mere means for the benefit of humanity.

Now it is Kant's contention that it is morally wrong to use oneself as a mere means, i.e. that it is a moral duty not to treat oneself as a mere means. And though I cannot agree with Kant that it is a moral offence to use oneself as a means I cannot agree with the view advocated above that it is a moral duty to treat oneself as a mere means. It seems to me that the way I choose to treat myself is one of those things which must be left to me to decide as I please with

with no moral strings attached.

Explanation: If Kant were right then those we count greatest and most noble among men would stand convicted. Galileo Copernicus, countless others, died for Truth, the martyrs died to testify to the glory of God, Christ died to expiate the sins of men. Surely they cannot be regarded as moral offenders. The categorical imperative we conclude, can be defined only as between man and man in the intra-subjective sphere but not as between man and himself. I am morally speaking just as entitled to kill myself with drink, as to kill myself in work, or for my country. Self-sacrifice is not a moral crime. On the other hand martyrdom is not a moral duty. No matter how good the result, I am not obliged to sacrifice myself for it, to use myself as a means¹⁾. It is a deliberate preference. If I do not desire it myself, I am not obliged to create works of art, to live for others, to teach, preach or reform. It is not my duty to inform humanity of the good as I see it, or of the Truth when they are in error. Galileo for instance had no moral duty to inform people about the movements of the sun.

1) Therefore attacks like this are morally unjustified: "The criterion of right conduct (for such people) becomes not its ultimate effect on human happiness but its effect on themselves, on their own sanctity. There is a frantic desire to escape personal defilement even if the cause is to be betrayed." J. Lewis: "The Philosophy of Betrayal." p. 3.

To produce good for the world by using oneself as a means is thus a privilege not a duty. As such it is permitted though not required¹⁾. To produce good for the world at the expense of using somebody else as a means is a moral crime. It may be required but it is not permitted. No matter how desirable the result, I have no moral right to use other people as means for the benefit of yet other people, or even for their own, for example by sacrificing their happiness to their moral perfection, etc.

In other words I have no right to force other people to accept my idea of the good, nor have I a right to decide for them, what is and what is not good, even if the good in question be virtue and the moral perfection of man, or the salvation of

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- 1) The duty to die for one's country is not a privilege, nor a moral duty. It is a contractual duty. The citizen who enjoys the amenities and protection of a country has an obligation to defend that country in case it is threatened. He also has a duty to abide by the laws of that country, viz "Consider then Socrates" the laws perhaps might say "... we having given you birth, nurtured and instructed you and having imparted to you and all other citizens all the good in our power, still proclaim that anyone who is not satisfied with us may take his property and go wherever he pleases But whoever continues with us after he has seen the manner in which we administer justice and govern the city, we now say that he has in fact entered into a compact with us, to do what we order, and we affirm that he who does not obey us who gave him birth, and because he does not obey us who nurtured him, and because having made a compact that he would obey us he neither does so nor does he persuade us if we do anything wrongly, though we propose for his consideration, and do not rigidly command

(Continued on next page)

his soul. The respect for other people's persons and their free choice therefore must stop all my sincerest efforts for their good: The respect for their persons obliges me to see them err, and sin, without interfering as long as they in their turn do not interfere with others. "Man" as Kant said "must be allowed to work out his own salvation" in his own way, in his own time. However, if it gives me joy to serve the common ends of humanity I am perfectly free to do so as long as it is clearly understood that such service entitles not to trespass against the liberties, which includes the liberty to err, of those whom I claim to serve: "Ideal morality transcends justice but does not abolish it¹⁾".

To sum up: As the very essence of moral obligation is a voluntary self-limitation in the pursuit of ends (i.e. good)moral obligation can not be turned to the active pursuit of certain ends (i.e. positive duties). Moral obligation

(Continuation of footnote from previous page):

him to do what we order, but leave him the choice of one of two things either to persuade us or to do what we require..." Crito. 13. Should however his contractual duty clash with his moral duty, he is free to follow the call of morality. Even soldiers have a right to refuse commands which are "illegal" because of their inhumanity. This is the prerogative of the human person as such preserved in all subsequent engagements.

- 1) W. D. Lamont: Principles of moral judgement; p.172.
For ideal morality read imperfect or positive duties, for justice, perfect or negative duties.

must not be pressed into a service for which by the nature of things it is not suited. If nevertheless we force it to accomplish those things which it must not aspire to accomplish we may inadvertently be led to the most terrible of aberrations. Moral fanaticism because of its accompanying self-righteousness (conscience ~~begging~~ on the deed instead of serving as a brake is a most dangerous phenomenon: "Der Trieb zur kalten blutigen Grausamkeit tritt ~~unter~~ den Heroen der Weltgeschichte selten krasser hervor als bei Gruendern von Tugendstaaten. Reinste und abstrakteste Pflichtenmoral, hoechster sittlicher Idealismus sind die Leitziele Calvins und Robespierres. Weshalb blicken sie so muerrisch und finster? Weshalb steht der Henker immer neben ihnen? Sie sind die grossen Maenner die das Koepfen in ein System gebracht haben, Sie haben Hekatomben bluehender Menschen auf dem Altar der Tugend geschlachtet, die uebrigen verb~~x~~annt oder wie im Zuchthaus gezwaaengt und gequaelt - alles in Namen des Guten. Ist denn das Gute nicht Guete? Sobald das Gute mehr zu sein strebt als Guete, und das Moralische mehr ~~as~~ was sich immer von selbst versteht', sobald aendert es seine Triebgrundlagen ... Sobald die Moral einen gewissen Punkt uebersteigt wird sie zur Perversion"¹⁾.

1) N. Kretschmer: Geniale Menschen, p. 38.

The treatment of Man remains the ultimate test for any action which claims moral merit. Ethics knows no greater purpose, no higher value than man. "La personne humaine est plus qu'un valeur meme un valeur de premiere rang, elle arbitre toutes le valeurs et c'est son arbitrage, son incommensurabilite avec une valeur quelconque, son refus de se mettre sur le marche ... qu'on appelle sa dignite"¹⁾.

Morality's task is to safeguard man and his dignity, from all interference, all attempt to violate them in any way. The concepts of 'man' and his 'dignity' show mainly their forbidding aspect in Ethics. They operate only as warning boards on which the words 'Trespassers will be prosecuted', are written clearly for all to see. This is the secret of their moral power... And both the secret and the power are lost when breaking through the self-imposed austerity, they seek to inspire positive action, affirmatory deeds. The only positive action the concept of the dignity of man could inspire (the only way in which it manifests itself positively) is the formulation of the categorical imperative in the second formulation: "Never act so that by thy act thou shouldst use a human fellow, being as a means alone". But on the

1) R. Bertrand: Valeurs et verites transsubjectives, p.171.

2) ~~viz above p. 228~~

memorable occasion when this happened Kant failed to identify it (a supreme irony!) as the source of his inspiration nor did he realise the tremendous consequences for his system of ethics¹⁾. What Kant acquired in that "eruptive intuition" of which Otto speaks is nothing less than the causa iuris and the causa realis of the categorical imperative; the explanation of the inexplicable: the explanation of how a categorical imperative is possible and why it is valid. Moreover given the concept of human dignity (i.e. man as an end in itself, a person commanding respect) in the concrete wholeness of his existence the categorical imperative is no longer an empty formula and the dangers concomitant to its empty formality which we have discussed at such length above, are completely eliminated. The categorical imperative has acquired a concrete material content, but its 'categorical' character is not impaired thereby. For this content is universally, categorically valid itself, and it can be regarded as the 'end' of the categorical imperative only in the very special sense of a limiting end, an end which must never be violated. The good will retains its autonomous, free, and disinterested character. It remains its own nomothetos determining itself by the bare idea of moral rightness, with the sole distinction that the idea of moral rightness is no longer the representation of law as such, but the idea of man as a being endowed

1) *ib.* p. 217

with dignity and commanding respect. The good will thus acquires a concrete definite end, but nevertheless preserves the specific manner of motivation which provided the initial definition of its goodness, since this end is only a limiting a regulative end. The validity of the categorical imperative rests on the unconditional validity of its ultimate ground. (the dignity of the human person). The unconditional validity of this ground, however, is as we have seen assured by postulate. Now, if the proposition "all men qua men are endowed with dignity" is unconditionally and objectively valid¹⁾, then the command to respect this dignity and never misuse follows from it and is justified by it. The application of this categorical imperative no longer follows the scheme of selecting for action those among our maxims which presenting themselves to our attention in the first place on the prompting of our natural desires prove themselves fit to serve as the maxims of a universal legislation, but select for action those among our maxims which best comply with the categorical demand to respect the dignity of man and never to misuse it.

Thus the concept of the "Dignity of Man" in its universal validity, concrete of content, and the upper end amongst all ends, the Supreme Value, is the constitutive element of Ethics,

1) this condition is fulfilled thanks to the postulate.

its sole necessary basis. But it always remains a limit imposed on our natural pursuits and purposes, never a purpose in itself. Though it is the constitutive element of ethics, it is so not in its purposive capacity, i.e. in its function of 'good' but in its limiting regulative capacity, i.e. in its function of 'right'.

The categorical imperative defined by the constitutive notion of Ethics now runs: "Violate not the dignity of man in any human being at any time and/or any account." This categorical imperative is however tantamount to a demand for the Supremacy of the Moral Values over all other values. The moral value for which this Supremacy is demanded, is the Dignity of Man as an upper limit to the pursuit of all ends, i.e. in its function of right. The notion of right is thus vindicated as the only necessary basis for Ethics and this has been demonstrated by an analysis of the significance and implications of our daily moral experience without recourse to any heterogeneous hypotheses.

 The whole edifice of Ethics is thus shown to rest on a principle which we also discover as the ultimate cause of our moral experience, the ground which makes this experience both intelligible and valid. This ground is the proposition "all

men qua men are endowed with dignity". And this proposition is a free and gratuitous postulate, vindicated by its free and gratuitous acceptance.

The question as to the validity of this postulate itself is therefore indicated, not indeed in the sense that its validity as the ultimate ground of moral experience already implied in the data of moral experience can be questioned¹⁾ but in the sense that the validity of moral experience itself can be questioned. In other words the intrinsic significance of moral experience itself can be questioned in comparison with the implications of religious experience or of maximalist experience for example. That is, though the validity of moral experience is always and entirely based on the acceptance of the postulate of the intrinsic dignity of the human person, there is no rational or practical necessity to accept that postulate, i.e. to make the requirements of morality the loadstar of one's life.

As a matter of fact both it and they can be rejected without self-contradiction and life is possible without them.

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1) Which obviously it cannot.

The unanswerable question of Ethics is therefore not 'how reason can be practical or freedom possible?' but why this practical reason, and possible freedom should be used to postulate the dignity of the human person, and impose it as a limiting repressive influence on itself. The questionable synthesis of Ethics is the one between the postulate and the reasonable will and reason which is implied in all human actions. In other words not the validity (i.e. the illusoriness¹⁾) of moral experience stands to question but the validity of its content, the legitimacy of the implied demands and restrictions on human freedom, stand to question.

Also to question stands whether the notion of right by itself, though vindicated as the sole necessary basis of ethics, can also be regarded as completely sufficient for the formulation of a complete ethical system. That is, whether in order to achieve such a complete and self contained moral system, it will not be necessary to add to the *supremum bonum* (i.e. moral perfection founded on the notion of 'right') those things which make up the *consummatum bonum* i.e. 'values'

1) The illusoriness of moral experience is disproved by the specifically and distinctly moral character of its constitutive notion and ground the concept of the dignity of man. This concept is a distinctly and specifically moral concept which cannot be reduced to any elements originating from other domains.

1) René Bertrand: *Tableaux et Figures transsubjectives: Revue de métaphysique et de morale*; July 1941, p.166.

and 'good's like happiness, success, material possessions, etc.

Both questions must be postponed till our next chapter. For the moment, we must first sum up what we have learnt constitutes the nature of 'right'.

Some Reflections on the Nature of Right

From these various enquiries into and reflections on the function of Right in Ethics, emerges in retrospect a fairly clear idea of what it is that is meant by 'Right'. By reflecting on what exactly it was that was demanded when the concept of 'right' in contradistinction from the concept of 'good' was used in moral judgements the specific features and qualities of the 'right' were gradually assembled. By considering the way in which it affected the 'good', and the relations thereby established, both between itself and the 'good', and between itself, the good and moral judgements, - the manner, extent, and limits in which it operates have been delineated. The manner in which the 'Right' operates, is itself an intrinsic quality (though secondary) and specific quality of the concept of Right. As Renee Bertrand says: "une essence ou bien n'est qu'un nom ou bien se reconnaît à la manière dont elle structure les choses et les actions dont elle "fait loi":¹⁾ the best perhaps the only way in which

1) Renee Bertrand: Valeurs et Vertés transsubjectives; Revue de Metaphysique et de la Morale; July 1941, p.166.

to discover the nature of so intangible an unmeasurable¹⁾ a quality as 'right' was to consider its tangible and measurable effects. That is, if and insofar as the effects in question can themselves be said to be tangible and measurable²⁾. Now these effects are met with primarily, and recognised in the verdicts of moral judgements. An enquiry into the function of 'right' in moral judgements seems therefore vindicated as a valid and legitimate way of detecting the nature of the 'right'.

Now, the moral verdict of 'right' rests in the last instance on a test of accordance or non accordance with a law. This law we have found to be more or less identical³⁾ with Kant's second formula of the categorical imperative, and to run (in a provisional form): "Never by any act infringe the dignity of other men, by using them not as ends in themselves but as mere means". The ultimate ground for this law

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- 1) The 'good' for instance is more tangible, more measurable. It allows degrees, enters into combinations, increases, evolves, progresses. The Right is either complete and perfect, or non existent. There are no degrees. Combinations are impossible: the situation is either dominated by the Right, or devoid of Right. It admits of no increase, no progress, no betterment or indeed any change whatsoever. It is therefore very hard to demonstrate its actual presence.
 - 2) As Samuel Clarke pointed out in a passage I have already quoted in another connection if the the effects of the notion of Right are not always tangible in men's deeds, and even consciences, at least they are always present in men's judgements of other men's deeds.
 - 3) I have omitted the reference to the I: i.e. one must not use oneself as a means, because I have argued this to be an erroneous extension of the moral law to the inner sphere of a person and moral law to have no significance and no validity in this inner sphere.

is the postulated proposition: "All men-qua-men are possessed of dignity". "Right" will be the verdict on every action that accords with the law; "Wrong" on every action that disregards it. As the law can be either respected or disdained but not partly accepted in an action, there can be no intermediate grades between 'right' and 'wrong'. Right is therefore either consummate and perfect, or non-existent: 'right' is absolute. Again, since an action cannot in part accord with the law and in part reject it, but must be entirely in accord with the law, or entirely against it, right is indivisible. Similarly an action cannot accord with the law in some respect and not in others, but must altogether and wholly accord with the law. 'Right' is therefore total. The 'right' in short, either dominates a situation or does not dominate it; tertium non datur. It is therefore fixed¹⁾ and fixed unequivocally, immutably. Since there is only one law and the law must be completely accepted so as to dominate the action whatever its content (material maxim)

1) It is indeed a little like that northern star.

totality. "of whose true fixed and resting quality
 of the firmament there is no fellow in the firmament
 of these The skies are painted with un-numbered sparks,
 They all are fine and everyone doth shine;
 But there's but one in all doth hold his place.

Julius Caesar - III, 1.

the infinite variety of these contents is not reflected in the verdict, which pays attention only to the domination or non domination of all contents by the law. 'Right' is therefore changeless, one. Finally since the action is adjudged on account of its accordance with the law, and only on account of this accordance the right is also exclusive. The 'morally right' we can conclude is exclusive, one, total, indivisible, and absolute. All these qualifications are essential to the 'right' since the absence of any one of them would divest it of its quality of 'right'. All these qualities can be predicated of the moral law itself, on the formal ground that it accords with itself, but more significantly because the moral law is the perfect realisation of all that is implied by the assertion of the postulate. The specific quality of the moral law is that it is "right", The material and effective cause of the existence of the moral law and the ground of its rightness is as we have seen the basic moral postulate: "All men-qua-men are possessed of dignity". All the qualifications enumerated: exclusiveness, oneness, totality, indivisibility, and absoluteness can be predicated of the postulate. But the postulate is not 'right' because of these qualifications, but prior to and apart from them. The ground of its moral rightness lies in itself and cannot be further justified or vindicated. The moral postulate is

the last and irreducible ground of all moral rightness and it must be accepted as such, or rejected as such.

The Autonomy of Ethics cannot be maintained unless this postulate be regarded as the non plus ultra ground of all moral judgements. The rejection of this postulate as the ultimate irreducible ground of all moral rightness¹⁾ of necessity leads to Heteronomy. To sum up: Oneness, totality, exclusiveness, indivisibility and absoluteness are therefore essential i.e. indispensable qualifications of the concept of 'Right'. But they are only formal, i.e. structural qualifications, which can be predicated just as validly of logical or arithmetical 'rightness'. They gain their full moral significance only when clustered around the concrete core of the moral postulate, only when referred to the material content of that postulate. The constitutive and decisive quality of the morally right, is therefore its reference to the moral postulate. All other qualities might possibly have been inferred from the concept of 'Right' itself. The last had to be furnished by moral experience, synthetically. It is therefore possible to reject this part without vitiating the abstract structure of the 'right'¹⁾ but not without destroying the 'morally right' since the rejection of this part is the rejection of morality itself.

1) Every law, every value, without exception, establishes a sphere of "right" as its emanation. But not every law or value establishes a moral sphere viz the already cited: "That which promotes the National Socialist movement and Germany is right!"

In our consideration of moral judgements we have found that their functions in moral experience include, besides the pronouncement of moral verdicts, injunctions and demands addressed to the human will. Moral judgements then, express moral obligations as well as moral verdicts. Moral obligation is the demand that the human will submit all its purposive actions to the touchstone of the moral law. The human will which complies with its moral obligations acts rightly. It is 'right' to fulfill one's moral obligations, to comply with their demands.

The demand expressed in moral obligations is a categorical that is an unconditional and absolute demand addressed to all human wills without exception, at all times. It enjoins every single human will (i.e. every single human person) to limit, or give up all its ends and purposes, to suppress or disregard all its desires, inclinations and motives when and insofar as they do not accord with the moral law. This demand is categorical for it takes account only of the obligation expressed in the moral law 'never to misuse the dignity of a human being'. It disregards all the concrete determinations of the willed action: (Its motives, purposes, ends and probable consequences), all circumstantial variations: (How it is performed i.e. whether it is performed freely or under duress, by whom it is performed, when and where); all the causal

consequence of the action (i.e. how the changes wrought in the situation by a compliance with the categorical demand work out in the end). The categorical imperative is the demand that the human will be effectively, finally, decisively, unconditionally and without exception, i.e. universally, determined by itself, in all pertinent actions, i.e. in all action affecting other people. The categorical imperative claims an unconditional, universal, objective validity for itself, since what it commands is the unconditional, universal, objective validity of the moral law. Now it is 'right' that the moral law should be valid for all persons at all times. The essential feature of the morally 'right' in its second sense we can now sum up is the claim it puts forward for unconditional, objective, universal validity, i.e. a fiat justitia ... The will ought to be determined by the moral law

- 1) Whenever and wherever it may be: universally
- 2) regardless of consequences and circumstances) uncon-
- 3) regardless of motives and purposes) dition-
- 4) regardless of the quality of the personalities) ally.
- involved: impartially, objectively.

The right is by its very nature valid always, for everybody effectively, unconditionally, i.e. its validity is universal, objective, absolute. This is but another formal, structural qualification of the right as such which also holds for what is 'right' in logics or in arithmetics. The specific

and distinctive feature of the morally right is that it confers this validity on the concrete content of the moral postulate (i.e. on the dignity of the human person.) This it can do in two ways: First insofar as a will by a free and unconditional decision has accepted the basic postulate and all its implications, i.e. what is morally right is unconditionally, universally, objectively valied for this will. Secondly it proclaims the unconditional, universal, objective validity of the postulate for all wills: i.e. it declares the demand that every human person without exception should choose to accept the basic postulate as a moral obligation: even if the postulate itself has not accomplished this for itself. This demand is strictly speaking not definable in the ethical domain since it is not grounded in the postulate, and cannot therefore be justified or vindicated on moral grounds, except indirectly as it commands in their name, and derives its authority from them. In other words: Morality is to choose the moral postulate in itself, by itself, for itself. To accept it on some extraneous ground can no longer be defined as Morality in the true sense. To accept it on extraneous grounds, though the ground themselves be based on the moral postulate is Education towards Morality, not Morality. The right of the moral to demand can pass unquestioned as long as it is unopposed. If and when it is opposed (by some other basic choice) it must show its credentials. The validity

of these credentials, the right of the moral demand to override other basic choices must be considered separately since they are neither raised nor defined inside the Moral Domain, but in regard to other Domains. It is in short the problem of the Primacy of Ethics.

Two remarks on the nature of this Primacy: Firstly the Primacy of the Ethical Domain is at all times conceived as a Practical Primacy. It is not for Ethics to tell a painter what to paint, or a scientist what to discover, but it would if it were effective stop the one from maltreating his models and the other from misusing his inventions. The practical Primacy of Ethics is directly dependent on the affirmation of the validity of the basic postulate. If and when the postulate's unconditional, objective and universal validity is rejected the Practical Primacy of Ethics is destroyed. The Practical Primacy of Morality over all other values is the constitutive factor of the moral universe. Therefore to reject the practical primacy of Ethics is to exclude oneself from the moral sphere, to put oneself beyond the Ethical pale. Our question is now, whether and how an obligation is possible which enjoins all men to proclaim the primacy of Ethics, and if so how it is to be defined: i.e. in what its validity can be grounded seeing that it is improbable indeed impossible that ethical demands and considerations prevail in other Domains (for instance the Aesthetical) since this

would destroy the Autonomy of those Domains and therefore their specific nature. It is also impossible that Ethical demands and considerations should necessarily dominate other Domains from outside (despite their inner autonomy) since this would either make impossible a free and irreducible initial choice of the basic moral postulate, or the possibility of other such free and irreducible choices, both of which contradict the facts of our various experiences.

Secondly, the Practical Primacy of Ethics can be maintained independently of its Autonomy, (as the Utilitarians and I think Psychoanalysts do)¹⁾ and its Autonomy can be maintained independently of its Practical Primacy (as Maximalists may do). Both can be denied (as in Evolutionist and Sociological Theory). Our problem is whether it is at all possible to affirm them both tother. We shall try to examine this problem in our last chapter.

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The essential characteristics of the Right we have found to be its absoluteness, oneness, totality, indivisibility, absoluteness, and its unconditional, objective universal validity. The specific and distinctive feature of the Morally Right we have found to be its concrete content: namely the proposition: "All men-qua-men are possessed of Dignity".

1) viz. H. B. Acton: Man without conscience; II.; the Hibbert Journal, Oct. 1949.

We must now briefly describe the conditions under which the 'right' operates.

Moral judgements as we have seen pronounce verdicts on act and address injunctions and demands to wills to accord with the moral law for the sake of the moral postulate. They do not furnish the content: motives, desires, ends, purposes of the acts. They take acts in their concrete wholeness of their material determination and demand that they adjust and regulate themselves so as not to infringe the moral law. The material content is subsummed under the name of 'good', the injunction to regulate, adjust, limit the 'good' and the 'pursuit of good' so as not to infringe the law is subsummed under the name of 'right'. The 'right' therefore is not a constitutive, material element of action, it is a structural, regulative principle.

Its function is directing, limiting, regulative and in so far can be said to be negative. (Negative duties are perfect duties!) It cannot emerge from this negative manner, since by establishing itself as a constitutive element of action, (e.g. by explaining to people that they ought to accept the basic moral postulate) it loses its nature of 'right' and with all other purposes, desires, ends, no matter how and by what inspired it comes under the jurisdiction of 'good' and invalidates its claim to primacy. The negative form of most ethical laws is not an accident but a recognition

of the intrinsic nature of the 'right'. Even where laws are defined positively like in 'Love thy neighbour' their moral application is purely regulative.

What goes beyond the strictly moral application, becomes either the pursuit of 'human welfare', or the pursuit of 'mankind's moral perfection' or in a religious variation the pursuit of the 'soul's salvation'. All these pursuits are notoriously prone to excesses such as Totalitarianism, Calvinism, Jansenism, etc. Limits must be set to the pursuit of these high purposes by the moral law restored to its pristine purity and austerity. 'Love thy neighbour as thyself' morally speaking means 'Respect thy neighbour more than thyself' (Since one may use oneself as a mere means: self-sacrifice is not a moral offence! but one must never use others as mere means: the sacrificing of others is always a moral offence). This is equivalent to the results of our previous reflections on perfect and imperfect duties and the impossibility of defining imperfect duties without invalidating the moral character of the system in which they are defined. Now moral judgements are judgements about my actions or obligations to regulate my actions as far as they affect others. Kant's contention that they applied to oneself was shown to be mistaken as a result of the same previous consideration of perfect and imperfect duties. The law 'use no human being as a means alone', is not definable inside

the individual domain since (a) I may without doing wrong use myself as a means (Self sacrifice is not a moral crime) although I have nor moral duty to do so (Self-sacrifice is a privilege); and (b) I have only optimific duties towards myself, which however are not duties under the idea of right and moral law, but duties under the idea of 'good' and ends. In other words they do not come under the heading of duty but under that of the pursuit of ends. They are therefore subject to limitation and regulation by the moral law and acts done for their sake are right not by virtue of the goods pursued but by the virtue of the moral law obeyed. We can therefore further determine the conditions under which the 'Right' becomes operative, and say that its field of operation is the intersubjective domain. In this domain alone has "morally right" any significance. It is defined for this domain alone. For the moral law ordains the relations between man and man. And moral judgements are passed and obligations defined only between man and man. Moral judgements or moral obligations expressed or the actions of man which regard only himself are either an impertinence or an interference. They are only excusable on the ground of a certain Weltanschauung, like Plato's injunctions or Religious observances and injunctions, and would as such revert to the 'pursuit of good' type with which we have already dealt. Again the 'morally' right does not operate between God and man. For the moral law does not

hold between God and man. Man can never use or misuse God, and it would be more than senseless to prescribe to God how He should use man so as to be moral (An impossibility yet attempted time and again. Even Kant tried to do this in a way, but then he did not claim to tell the nature of God, he told us the nature of a postulate of practical reason).

Lastly there is one indispensable condition, or rather precondition which must be fulfilled if the 'morally right' is to operate. This is Freedom. The restrictions imposed by moral obligation must be freely and deliberately chosen and accepted, through the free and deliberate choice and decision to accept the basic postulate of morality.

The conditions under which the morally 'right' becomes operative are therefore: the intersubjective domain as the field of its operation, the regulative, limiting, directing effect as the manner of its operation, Freedom of choice, as the condition for the possibility of its operation.

Now, since the 'Right' is the constitutive concept of the Ethical domain, the nature of that domain, its extent and limits are directly determined by the nature of the right. The Ethical Domain will be a uniform, homogenous, non expandible, unchanging and exclusive Domain. It will be a strictly limited, a narrow and austere Domain. Its austerity is narrow but liberating. By this Domain a lower limit is defined below which human conduct must not sink. Human

pursuit and endeavour are however free to rise above it, without being dictated to in any way. The concept of the Right as a limiting regulative principle, does not provide a content to human lives, does not prescribe an Ideal, does not advise a certain way of life. It leaves all pursuits, to be sought or avoided, at our good pleasure. We can choose as our gifts and temperaments persuade us, free of fear, free of the anxiety that there may exist, moral obligation to choose one way of life rather than another. Pushkin in fact is as good as poetry. A happy life as a mother of eight is just as good as a happy life in cloistered contemplation and introspection. In the eyes of Ethics all pursuits are equal in that they are all subject to the moral law.

Again we may pursue our pursuits singly or combine different pursuits in any pattern we please. We may pursue them moderately, or immoderately. We are even free to pursue them to excess, to the very limits of what is humanly possible (for inst. the scientific pursuit of truth etc) provided we conflict not with and transgress not the moral law. Thus the ethical domain defines also an upper limit to purpose beyond which one may not go. Its austerity here is repressive but sublime.

The liberating function of ethics as a lower limit of conduct and the repressive function of ethics as the upper limit of aspiration have paradoxically enough the contrary

effect on our lives. By setting us free to follow our own inclinations as we please provided we do not sink below a certain level of conduct Ethics delivers us bound hand and foot to the tyranny of our characters, temperaments, in modern parlance to the tyranny of our glands. By imposing limits on our most cherished and persistently, costily pursued 'higher' aspirations Ethics provides us with a freedom no other discipline can offer us, it enables us to be free of ourselves. (In all other disciplines and domains like the aesthetic domain, the religious domain etc., we acquire the freedom to be ourselves). The power to disregard the character, the temperament, the glands which we did not choose and cannot help and the basic decisions which we did choose but still cannot help, is the power conferred on us by Ethics. Morality is the effective exercise of this power. For in Morality we can help ... and there is nothing we cannot help, since though we may not always be free to choose our 'yes'es we are always free to say 'no' to whatever violates the dignity and the liberty of the human person.

PART III

An attempt to clarify the nature and source of the constituent notion of the 'morally right': The concept of human dignity or the dignity of man qua man.

The moral law, as it emerges from all preceeding reflections and discussions, can now be formulated as follows:

"You shall not violate at any time or on any account the dignity-of-man in any human being"¹⁾.

The ultimate ground of this law is the proposition: "All men qua men are endowed with dignity" with its rider: "The universality of "all" in the above proposition allows of no exceptions"²⁾. This proposition is the basic postulate of ethical theory, and the basic maxim of all ethical practice. The concept which it defines and on which it rests is an

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- 1) i.e. in view of no end, impelled by no motive, under no circumstances. The moral law in short recognises no extenuating circumstance to its non-performance.
- ii 2) We shall discuss escapes provided by restricting definitions of 'man'. (i.e. definitions which exclude as 'subhuman' certain members of the human race) later.

irreducible, primary, though complex concept whose validity can be neither demonstrated nor vindicated. It must be accepted or rejected in toto any by itself. It is the concept of human dignity or the dignity of man qua man.

This law is the necessary condition of all moral rightness, or rather, this law taken in conjunction with its postulate and the rider to this postulate is the only necessary condition of all moral rightness. Actions which do not conform to this law are eo ipso morally wrong actions, viz: the already cited examples of 'double morality', of slavery of tyranny and dictatorships, even those committed subration~~i~~ boni by private persons in private circles. This law is also a sufficient condition of moral rightness. Actions which conform to this law are 'right' whatever their additional content may be: Push pin is as good as poetry from a moral point of view.

This formulation may be commended by enumerating the following social consequences of accepting it:

a) The formulation allows complete freedom to men to choose the ends and order the tenor of their lives as they please. It does not establish itself as an ideal way of life

or as a desirable purpose. For it is not possible to perform moral actions which are nothing but moral, one can only perform one's purposive and desire-impelled actions in a moral way. Thus it respects the natural and idiosyncratic spheres of interest which each man seeks to and has a right to establish for himself.

b) This formulation, therefore, makes the possession of dignity unconditional and independent of the quality of the sphere of interest which each man chooses for himself. On the other hand it does not impose an active (and absurd!) sympathy¹⁾ with all men in all their spheres of interest, even where this is practically possible. It is a principle of respectful and benevolent tolerance and non-interference, not a principle of charity and well-meaning intervention.

c) This law holds a priori for all situations. It embodies a simple idea, easy to grasp, easily implanted in young hearts, easy to learn. Is this also an idea which is easily accepted, easy to practice, easy to keep? There is very good reason to think this idea is, in fact, accepted by everyone as long as it stands without the rider of its universal or total application to all men without exception.

1) i.e. an (imperfect) duty of actually furthering all men, and fostering their spheres of interest.

There is indeed no man who does not apply it to at least one other man. No man if there be such a man - and there have been examples of such limit-cases - can keep this extreme position¹⁾ for any length of time without a breakdown and a submergence in madness. The more usual course, however, is to apply this principle to a limited number of men. In the arbitrary nature of this limitation lie the grounds of all immorality and such limitation is the root of all evil.

To show that all these limitations are arbitrary, and must be avoided at all costs, is the task of moral education. Indeed the ideal of moral education is the task of moral education. Indeed the ideal of moral education is to mould men who will with deep conviction echo Montesquieu's words: "If I knew of an action which would be advantageous to France but harmful to Europe or advantageous to Europe but harmful to the human race I should think it a crime", and who will act accordingly.

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1) It is an extreme position, for he, who declares himself the only man possessed of dignity, and denies this attribute to all his fellow men, declares himself a god who has no obligations and no responsibilities towards anyone, and is not accountable to anyone.

The moral law which I have formulated thus fulfils all the conditions of the morally right. It is absolute, binding, universal. It does not constitute an end for itself, but is limiting and regulative only. It has no bearing in the purely individual sphere but is defined for the intersubjective sphere alone. It is a necessary and a sufficient condition for the 'moral rightness' of actions conforming to it whatever their additional concrete content. It is a formal law and therefore universal and absolute. But because it is grounded in the concrete concept of man-endowed-with-dignity, it is not an empty law.

The validity of the moral law however depends entirely on the condition that this concept be accepted, and on the further condition that the postulate demanding that it be predicated of all men without exception, be accepted. Now this concept, which is the fons et origo of all 'moral rightness' and the central axis on which hinges the whole edifice of ethical theory and practice, is as we have seen by no means a self-evident concept. It is the ultimate paradox of Ethics that whilst experience, knowledge, science, even equity itself urge its wrongness, it is yet intuitively accepted and secretely acknowledged by most people even those who would deny it or limit it as they see fit. It is just as secretely and intuitively rejected by most people,

especially by those who most loudly proclaim and advocate its inviolable validity. Before, however, we can discuss these differences amongst basic intuitions, and all their existence implies for a theory of Ethics, we must point out another feature, another effect of our present formulation of the moral law.

Since by definition there can be no moral actions i.e. actions whose sole material is their own moral rightness, moral rightness can never be the sole factor in practical deliberations and decisions. Wills before they can limit their purposes to fit the moral law, must have purposes to limit. Therefore in practical deliberations, decisions, etc., values additional to and independent of the moral value have to be weighed, considered, decided on. It is these values which make up the content of life, the good or the bad life. There is no such thing as a moral life, there is a good life lived morally, or a bad life lived morally. Morality, and moral perfection as the ideal of life, the fulfillment of life are self-contradictory concepts. This firstly then we wish to argue against Kant's conjunction of Morality and Happiness.

In the second place, I wish to try as best I can to argue against all those Ethical Theories which, once aware of the narrow range of the moral principle and its inability to furnish an ideal of the good life, admit other

values¹⁾ to be defined in the Domain of Ethics and to claim the validity of Ethical values. This they do on the principle, that Ethics is the theory of human conduct, behaviour, actions, and therefore must take account of the purposes, desires, ends i.e. values, which inform those actions. Ethics must classify them, and order them according to merit; and accord to the deserving amongst those values the status of moral values. Any other treatment rests on an excessively abstract and artificial view of human conduct and will therefore lead to a truncated and incomplete theory of Ethics²⁾. I find it necessary to postpone the discussion of this argument till I have first considered the problem of the intrinsic difference between primary intuitive choices and whether the primacy of the moral choice can be deduced from a study of these differences or vindicated by it.

The following order seems therefore indicated for the problems yet to be discussed.

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- 1) i.e. Such other values as seem of high status and merit.
 - 2) This argument which Prof. H. B. Acton my supervisor put to me is the weightiest and most important objection to the trends of my discussion of the moral problem. It points out the most vulnerable link in my exposition. I shall try my best to answer it.

- a) Can Morality be regarded as a ground, reason, or a basis for Happiness?; and, what do we mean by the phrase "deserving of Happiness"?
- b) What are the differences between different basic intuitive choices?; and, Whether the nature of these differences vindicates the primacy of the moral choice?
- c) Can an exclusive definition of Ethics, i.e. a definition of Ethics based exclusively on the concept of the Morally Right, be vindicated against the charges of artificial narrowness, and insufficiency? Or in other words: Is the concept of the Morally Right a sufficient basis for a complete theory of Ethics?

a) Morality and happiness: Moral rectitude according to Kant and as we accept whole-heartedly, lies not in an action being of a certain sort such as, e.g. one that preserves life, provides happiness, conforms to a rule, but in an action which is performed for a certain reason, e.g. is willed in a certain manner. Moral rectitude, according to Kant and as we accept no less whole-heartedly, lies in the specific manner of willing only, irrespective of actual efficacy. It follows that it is completely up to a man himself to attain moral rectitude: for:

- a) Man always knows his duty.
- b) b) Man can always perform his duty.
- c) Man's moral obligation, and his moral merit are confined to the performance of his duty.

Explanation: Man always knows his duty since his duty is always the same: namely to ask himself whether the action he proposes to take prompted by his natural desires conforms to the requirements of the moral law (i.e. not to use another human being as a mere means for the attainment of his purposes). An error of conscience is impossible in this case. For "though I might err in the judgement in which I think I was right" I can never err in the consciousness of whether I indeed believed myself to be right, or only made believe that I believed myself to be in the right"¹⁾. Moreover the possibility of making a mistake (of fact, i.e. in mistaking a specific concrete instance of duty) is further diminished when we consider that far from approaching given situations²⁾ like so many dei-ex-machina whose duty is to unravel the knots and leave the situation better than they found it, we ourselves are part of the situation, having our own desires, ends, and interests in the matter in short, an axe to grind" ... So far from attempting to deduce

1) Kant: Ueber das Misslingen aller philosophischen Versuche in der Theodizee. (1791)

2) The view taken by the occasionalist school. Sir D.W. Ross, E. F. Carritt, Etc.

particular duties from principles we must begin by volitions suggested to us by desire, with arbitrarily chosen ends and with subjective maxims and we must use our principle as a method of selection from among them. This method has the merit of recognising that the first stimulus to actions comes from desire, that we must pass from the proposed action to a general rule, and that we must estimate the general rule in the light of our ultimate principle¹⁾. Now that the ultimate principle has been clearly formulated, the chances that we will not err too much when estimating the general rule in the light of that principle are reasonably fair. The margin of error, I should say, is surprisingly small and becomes almost negligible when the sense of duty (das moralische Feingefuehl) is brought into play. "The differences between what ought and what ought not to be regarded as our moral duty far from being as subtle as Mr. Garve supposes them to be are graven into the human heart with heavy and most legible letters. And as for his contention that these differences grow altogether indistinct once we proceed to actions, it contradicts even one's own moral experience"²⁾.

1) Paton: Can Reason be Practical?; p. 37.

2) Kant: Ueber den Gemeinspruch das mag in der Theorie richtig sein taugt aber nicht fuer die Praxis; I teil (1793) quoted at the head of the thesis.

Indeed "if we consult our moral experience we have, it seems to me, in most cases a reasonable certainty about our actual duties without this certainty we should in practice be tempted to set aside duty altogether which obviously we do not do "1)

In consequence, we can say that men always know their duty, and moreover are, in most instances, fairly certain of the actual conduct and deeds required of them in fulfilment of their duties.

b) Man can always do his duty since he can always refrain from performing actions which do not conform to the moral law. For, being a rational and free agent man is not entirely determined by his natural impulses but has the power to combine, encourage, discourage, foster or suppress each and any of them as he pleases²⁾. This feat, man, being a finite being, is forced to accomplish in every single action he performs, for the sake of various ends; and he accomplishes this feat by the exercise of his natural powers alone. It is by the exercise of the same natural powers that man is able

1) Paton: Can Reason be practical? p. 33.

2) I think this description will satisfy even the exacting demands and the criticism of the concept of freedom voiced by Prof. C. Ryle: The Concept of Mind: Chapters: On freedom and, The Bogey of Mechanism.

if he so wishes to suppress for the sake of the respect he entertains for the dignity-of-man in his human fellow beings. Whether these powers be innate in man as part of his natural state in a godless universe or whether man be endowed with these powers by a Personal Creator, or whether they be but a self-delusion necessary to the survival of the race, - is immaterial at this point. What matters is that each man qua man possessed these powers, (i.e. insofar as he is a rational and free agent) and that they are at his command whenever he cares to exercise them. Hence it is redundant to assume with St. Paul, St. Augustine, Jansen, Pascal, Calvin, etc. etc. that a special dispensation of god's arbitrary and divine grace is called for in each instance before a moral decision can be made. Moreover this assumption stands in flagrant contradiction to the basic moral postulate¹⁾ and therefore to everything which participates in the nature of the moral, therefore also with the moral teachings of the Holy Scriptures:¹⁾ The ten commandments have been given to man so that he may keep them; and he may keep them because he can keep them if he but wishes: *א/ג. א/ב. א/ד.*

א/ה. א/ו. א/ז. א/ח. א/ט. א/י. א/יא. א/יב.

1) It is indeed based on a different basic intuition, and appeals to, and is supported by a different aspect of the Holy Scriptures.

לא זכרתי לך היום ואתה לא ידעת את המצוות אשר אומר לך היום
 ואתה לא ידעת את המצוות אשר אומר לך היום ואתה לא ידעת את המצוות
 אשר אומר לך היום ואתה לא ידעת את המצוות אשר אומר לך היום
 ואתה לא ידעת את המצוות אשר אומר לך היום ואתה לא ידעת את המצוות
 אשר אומר לך היום ואתה לא ידעת את המצוות אשר אומר לך היום

"For this commandment which I command thee this day
 it is not too wonderful for thee to know nor is it far off.
 It is not in heaven that thou shouldst say: Who shall go
 up for us to heaven and bring it unto us that we may hear it
 and do it? Neither is it beyond the sea that thou shouldst
 say: Who shall go over the sea for us and bring it unto us
 that we may hear it and do it? But it is very nigh unto
 thee in thy mouth and in thy heart that thou mayest do it:
 See I have set before thee this day life and good, and death
 and evil"¹⁾.

This view is reiterated again in the conclusions of
 the book of Job in which this problem is most fully discussed.
 Man can be righteous if he wants to be righteous in the
 integrity of his heart. When man chooses righteousness and
 clings to it with all his heart, he is conscious of having
 done so, and conscious of his own rectitude. God wishes man
 to regard himself as a free and conscious being capable of
 knowing his own heart and the righteousness of his heart, and

1) Deuteronomy xxx. 11-15.

and the ability to be righteous in their own right:

" Iam summus Pater architectus deus hanc quam videmus mundanam domum divinitatis, templum augustissimum, arcanæ legibus sapientiae fabrefecerat. Super coelestem regionem mentibus decorarat, aethereos globos aeternis animis vegetarat, excrementarias ac focculentas inferioris mundi partes omnigena animalium turba complebat. Sed opere consummata, desiderabat artifex esse aliquem qui tanti operis rationem perpenderet, pulchritudinem amaret, magnitudinem admiraretur. Idcirco iam rebus omnibus (ut Moses Timaeusque testantur) absolutis, de producendo hinc postremocogitavit. Verum nec erat in architypis unde novam sobolem effingeret, nec in thesauris quod novo filio haereditarium largiretur, nec in subselliis totius orbi ubi universi contemplator iste sederet. Iam plena omnia, omnia summis mediis, infinisque ordinibus fuerant distributa. Sed non erat paternae potestatis in extrema foetura, quasi effoetam - defecisse. Non erat sapientiae consiliis inopia in re necessaria fluctuasse. Non erat benefici amoris et qui in aliis esset divinam liberalitatem laudaturus in se illam damnare cogentur.

Statuit tandem optimus opifex ut cui dari nihil proprium poterat commune esset quidquid privatum singulis fuerat. Igitur hominem. sic est alloquutus: Nec certem sedem, nec propriam faciam, nec munus ullum peculiare tibi dedimus o Adam, ut quam sedem, quam faciem, quam munera tute optaveris ea

pro voto, pro tua sententia labeas et possideas: Definita caeteris natura intra praescriptas a nobis leges coerceretur. Tu nullus angustiis coercitus pro tuo arbitrio, in cujus manu te posui, tibi illam proefinies. Medium te in mundi posui, ut circumspiceres inde commodius quidquid est in mundo: Nec te coelestem neque terrenum, neque mortalem neque immortalem fecimus, ut tu ipsius qua si arbitratius honorariusque plastes et fictor in quam malueris tute formam effingas. Potens ~~is~~ in inferiora quae sunt bruta degenerare. Poteris in superiora quae sunt divina ex tui animi sententia regenerari. O summam Dei Patris liberalitatem, summam et admirandam hominis felicitatem. Cui datum id habere quod optat id esse quod velit. Bruta simul acque nascentur id secum afferunt (ut ait Lucilius) e bulga matris quod possessura sunt. Supremi spiritus aut ab initio aut paulo mox id fuerunt, quod sunt futuri in perpetuas aeternitates. Nascente homini omnifaria semina et omnigenae vitae germina indidit Pater. Quae quisque excoluerit illa adolescent et fructos suos ferent in illo. Si vegetalia planto fiet. Si sensualia abbrutescet. Si rationalia coeleste evadet animal. Si intellectualia, angelus erit et Dei filius. Et si nulla creaturatum sorte contentus, in unitatis centrum suae se receperit, unus cum Deo spiritus factus in solitaria Patris coligine qui est supra

omnia constitutus, omnibus antestabit. Quis hunc nostrum chameleonta non admiretur; aut omnino quis alius quicquam admiretur magis? quem non immerito Asclepius Atheniensis versipellis huius et seipsam transformantis naturae argumentò per Protheum in mysteriis significari dixit. Hinc illae apud Hebraeos et Pithagoricos metamorphoses celebratae¹⁾.

Man has the freedom of all the worlds. He knows them all. He knows where his duty lies. And he has the power to choose it, and to perform it whenever he so wishes. This is his prerogative, the prerogative of a human being "cui datur id habere quod optat, esse quod velit". This is the moral view of man, indeed the only possible view if morality is to have any meaning at all. Man, we must therefore conclude, can perform his duty if he so wishes.²⁾

1) Pico de Mirandolla: Oratio de hominis dignitate.

This Contention is in fact equivalent to the assumption of free will and is therefore a necessary precondition of the very possibility of moral obligation and responsibility, in short, of moral experience. As such it cannot be denied unless the significance of our moral experience be denied at the same time. This indeed is the position taken by most Jewish theologians, interpreters and commentators: "On which Moses Maimon comments that all the Hebrews agree that God has endowed men with free will and that they never doubt this but praise and glorify god because of it and render him daily thanks." J. Bodin: De magorum Daimonomania, p.9. quoted above. This does however not prejudice the Jewish theologians' view on what is to be considered the ultimate ground of right, nor their concept of God as the incomprehensible and omnipotent, which disagrees in various points with Kant's concept of the moral

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c) Men's moral obligation and his moral merit are confined to the performance of his duty since consequences, results, even the efficacy of his own action or will are beyond man's power to control or to foretell. Man must do his duty and leave the rest to look after itself. This is bitter knowledge for the man of action, "mihi gratulabere quod audisses me pristinam meam dignitatem obtinere. Ego, autem, Si dignitas est bene de re publica sentire, obtineo dignitatem meam. Si, autem in eo dignitas est si quod sentias re efficere possis ne vestigium ullum est reliquum nobis dignitatis"¹⁾; but does not affect the moral rectitude of the action or of the will: "Faites votre devoir et laissez faire aux Dieux"²⁾.

We must therefore once again conclude with Kant that the attainment of moral righteousness rests entirely in our hands. We must however disagree with Kant on the manner in which moral righteousness is realised and moral perfection

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God, and also with Pic de Mirandollas concept of god as it merges from the preceeding quotation. This means that the basic religious view is not incompatible with the assumption of human freedom: it changes not the content of the moral experience, but invalidates its autonomy and makes it dependent on an external and not primarily moral power. I shall discuss this in detail.

- 1) Cicero: Epistulae ad familiares; IV, 14; 1.
- 2) Corneille: Horace; II; sc.8.

attained. Partly because of the manner in which we consider that moral perfection is achieved, and partly because of other considerations which we shall discuss presently, we can also not concur with Kant's view that a certain well defined relationship ought to exist between morality and happiness. Namely that only morality should be considered as making one worthy of happiness; and that happiness ought to be accorded to men in exact proportion to happiness. I shall try to show that this relationship between Morality and Happiness is not (contrary to Kant's view) rationally required¹⁾, not strictly speaking, particularly desirable.

Let us approach the question from the angle of duty: Now if I take upon myself the duty of speaking or writing in a certain cause and if I cherish this cause for itself, I do so not only without thought of payment, but actually cannot be said to deserve payment, seeing that I only please myself by working for that cause. Again if I stand under a certain contractual obligation to somebody, I do not expect to be lauded for fulfilling my obligations, nor do I deserve to be commended, seeing that the performance of such duties is self-understood and not further remarkable in any organised society. Duty in short is an action we ought to perform and for whose performance we cannot strictly speaking be praised, but for whose omission we are held responsible and deserve to be blamed. Therefore when we now examine our moral

1) i.e. ein Beduerfniss der Vernunft.

duty, our obligation not to transgress the moral law for the sake of the respect we cherish for other people's persons we can find no reason why the fulfillment of this duty should entitle us to consider ourselves as specially deserving. Having accepted out of our own free and unconditional choice the basic postulate of Morality, anything we do in accordance with the obligations implied in it, is only done, as it were, to please ourselves; having once accepted the basic moral postulate, we engaged ourselves as by a contract to attend to the obligations which follow from its acceptance: therefore the performance of our moral duty seems self-understood and not further remarkable, certainly not deserving of special recompense. Rather when offered such recompense, in praise or commendation, one should refuse it¹⁾. Now it may be argued that not the performance of moral duties but the moral perfection which is attained through them deserves recompense. Let us make it perfectly clear that moral acts performed in view of the moral perfection of the agent are eo ipso invalidated as moral actions. In other

1) Even in Kant we find one utterance to this effect and in some contrast to the tenor of his argument on the Critique of pract. Reason: "... even the best of men cannot base his expectation of happiness on divine justice but only on divine love and mercy: For he who but performs his duty has no claim on the blessings of God." Kant: Ueber das Misslingen aller phil. Versuch in der Theodizee; (1791) footnote 2.

words a man who puts his own moral perfection before the consideration of other people acts as wrongly as one who puts his monetary advantage before his consideration of others. He certainly does not deserve to be recompensed for it. On the other hand, since it is the performance of moral actions by which moral perfection is brought about, it follows that moral perfection cannot be achieved when directly sought, as the aim of action. Like Truth or like beauty it can only be realised as the by-product of regulated and disciplined conduct. Moral perfection can therefore be realised only as the unsought for by-product of moral actions single-mindedly and unassumingly performed over a long period, for their own sake, i.e. for the sake of our respect for other people's persons. Like Truth or Beauty it is therefore an elusive intangible precarious state, an efflorescence, a bouquet rather than a substance, or a distinct quality. Like Truth or Beauty it is in a manner of speaking the recompense, because it is the crown, of the actions of which it is the unsought-for by-product. Can it also be said to be its own reward? That depends on how we wish to define reward. There is reward in the sense in which certain virtues are their own reward, a sense which contains a strong reference to happiness. Certain virtues, if they are but true natural virtues not merely assumed ones, like

courage, compassion, modesty, loyalty, purity, are their own reward insofar as their very exercise is accompanied by a feeling of joy and happiness. Indeed this joy and happiness which is found in the exercise of virtue is the surest test of the true existence of that virtue. So much so that as von Huegel says, Pope Benedict XIV, in his tractatus on the Beatification and Canonisation of Servants of God, points out four things generally required by the Roman Church for formal Canonisation: a spontaneous popular cultus of one hundred years; three well authenticated miracles; three well authenticated acts of heroic virtue, and the note of expansive joy in the saint's life and influence, however melancholy his natural temperament. This joy, this happiness accompanies also mental exertion or artistic exertion indeed any natural faculty fully and rightly exercised. Happiness is as Aristotle so aptly put it, like the purring of a smoothly working machine. Now moral perfection as we have seen cannot be directly exercised, it is itself a sort of 'purr'. But it has no affinities with Happiness, just as Truth or Beauty have no affinity with Happiness. This is clear when we consider that the Respect for the Human Person, when it becomes a natural Virtue as in the Love and Care for the Welfare of Humanity, when indeed its exercise is accompanied by a feeling of Happiness and Joy, is no longer defined in

the Moral Domain but itself is subject to limitation by the moral law. When however moral action, keeps its limits as moral action then it links up nowhere with Happiness except at times to forego it. There is I am told a certain satisfaction to be found in such self-denial, a certain feeling of superiority and self-righteousness. But surely this feeling must be very short-lived, or if kept alive longer it would become rather priggish. Systematic self-denial is no infallible recipe for morality, and the disappointed seekers of morality plus Happiness on this path are the most desolate of human beings. Would-be moral action or even true moral action is no short cut to Happiness, and the consciousness of having done one's duty cannot warm the heart half as long as the consciousness of not having done it torments it. Moral action in short is no field for self-seekers no matter how sublimated or perverted their purposes, for happiness cannot even be defined in connection with it. Moral action is completely self-less insofar as it seeks neither to benefit nor to improve the self in any way, and indeed is absolutely indifferent to the self and takes no account of it.

Moral perfection is the perfect discipline of the self. The perfect balance of the self in its relations to others.

As such it represents a certain peak of human achievement, a specific excellence of the human personality. Does this excellence deserve happiness as its reward? Does the contemplation of this excellence arouse a need to see happiness added to it? Is the sight of the righteous and the just in the unhappy circumstances, whilst the "wicked flourish like the green bay tree" more offensive than the sight of the artistically gifted, the attractively handsome, or the formerly great in unhappy circumstances? I honestly think not. I think that moral perfection as an excellence of human nature deserves no more Happiness than any other excellence, and that it certainly appears to need it less. Indeed Happiness seems more irrelevant to Moral perfection, than to any other qualification of Human existence, since Morality is as it were the very negation of the importance of Happiness and moral action is defined as the limitation of all human purposes including happiness. In fact moral perfection is an excellence, or if we may borrow the terms, a virtue~~s~~ supremely unaffected by and indifferent to outer circumstances. A virtue for princes and for beggars at once, it shines most clearly when despoiled of riches, fortune, beauty, talents, birth: at the very core and kernel of man:

quo magis in dubiis hominem spectare periculis
convenit adversisque in rebus noscere quisit
nam verae voces tum demum pectore abimo
eliciuntur et eripitur persona, manet res¹⁾.

and the 'res' which remains is the consciousness and the certainty that man's inner dignity is inviolate and inviolable, even in death: 'viz "ma vie est dans vos mains mais non ma dignite"²⁾ or from another point of view

Summam crede nefas, animam preferere pudori
et propter vitam vivendi perdere causas³⁾.

Moral perfection we can now conclude, is the special excellence of man's innermost heart. It has nothing to do with the more peripheral and accidental excellencies of man's other qualities like beauty, wit, charm etc. It certainly has even less to do with outer circumstances, and with happiness. The austere and aloof nature of moral perfection should on the contrary refuse to regard itself as in any way needing or deserving happiness.

Although it is in the power of everyone to perform his actions morally, moral perfection as the unwavering, unflagging, constant attention paid to the moral postulate in all circumstances, at all times, the disciplined excellence of will, is a virtue⁴⁾ rare indeed. Like all other excellences

1) Lucretius. De rerum natura, III. introduction.

2) Corneille, Cinna II Act. Sc. 1.

3) Juvenal, quoted by Kant in Kritik der praktischen Vernunft, part 1.

4) If I may borrow this term, for the moment, to denote an (or any) excellence of human nature, an acme of natural development or of conscientious training.

of which human nature is capable, it moulds a certain type, a certain character, peculiar to its faithful votaries: This character we shall try to describe very briefly in preparation for the problem of different basic and intuitive choices. Now the 'faithful votaries' of morality are first identified, indeed first identify themselves as such, by their intuitive, primary and gratuitous choice to accept the basic moral postulate and its constitutive notion, and all the obligations implied in its acceptance. The basic moral postulate and its ambiance operate with certain well defined concepts like: Dignity, Equality, Liberty, Duty and Autonomy. The contemplation of these concepts evokes a certain emotional response, a certain quickening and firing of the imagination and the heart, in human beings. This quickening, this firing is of a specific and distinct nature, clearly distinguishable from the quickening of the imagination by the contemplation of Beauty, or the firing of the heart in its search for Truth. It is embodied in, and through, certain distinct and specific psychological traits and attitudes which it forges for itself, and which are clearly distinguishable from these in which, and through which, the search for Truth, for example expresses itself. The psychological traits which most nearly correspond to these moral concepts can be described as an inner aloofness

and reserve, a sober self-assurance and pride, an unrelenting self-discipline and a maximal self-sufficiency, all of which combine to determine a certain primary (moral!) attitude. This attitude consists in equal parts of a jealous guarding of the 'not to be abridged' 'distance' between one man and another; a resolved non-interference with the pursuits, lives, idiosyncrasies and characters of other men; a punctilious and ceremonious treatment of others, which is however no mere superficial courtesy, but a courtesy rooted in deep convictions: a politesse de coeur.

The moral attitude is based on the firm conviction that the barriers between oneman and another are sacred, and must not be trespassed. It is an attitude, psychologically possible only to men whose centre of gravity, whose awareness of their intrinsic importance is so securely established in their own hearts that they find no occasion to seek outside confirmation: Neither by trespassing against others so that the debasement of others may heighten and affirm their own importance; nor by subordinating and abasing themselves so as to prop up their tottering importance by the importance of the object, the person, or the god to whom they subordinate themselves and before whom they abase their persons. Morality is the courtesy of a free man towards

his peers: it is a republican virtue, par excellence.

οὐρίνος δούλοι κείωνται φώτος οὐδ' ἀνθρώποι 1); this was the virtue of the Greek city states, on which they prided themselves and to which they attributed their victory over the Persian hordes living in barbaric servitude: ἄρτος ἰσότητος ἔργος ἐστὶν δουλείης 1) This was also the virtus Romanus, to which the Romans attributed their mastery of the world: "Aliae nationes servitutem pati possunt populi Romanum est propria libertas" 2). This was also the virtue of the Polish nobility who would not suffer their King to be more than a primus inter pares.

In its beginnings an aristocratic virtue designed for the exclusive use of patricians amongst themselves, it lost none of its pristine nobility when it became the virtue of all fighters and all battles that were fought against tyranny and oppression: "Der Gott der Eichen wachsen liess der wollte keine Knechte", 3) "Liver daued als slav" 4) "L'humanite doit fremir dans tous les ames quand l'humanite ou que ce fut subisse l'injustice et l'oppression" 5) "L'homme est ne libre ..." 6) etc. etc. etc. Universally applied to hold

1) Aeschylus: Persai. 242; 349.

2) Cicero: Phillipicae orationes in M. Antonium. 6.7.

3) Voltaire.

4) Rousseau: Contrat Social, opening sentence.

5) Martin Luther: Hymn.

6) Battlecry of the Hansa cities.

between every one human being and every other human being moral perfection becomes a democratic virtue, par excellence. It is the virtue of the men who drew the American declaration of independence: of the men who fought for the Rights of Men in the French Revolution, of the men who in England hold fast to the principles of Liberalism at a time when these principles seem most obsolete. It is the virtue of all men who in this our age can sincerely say of themselves "Je suis reste un vieil amant suranne de la liberte dans un temps ou presque tout le monde aime a avoir un maitre"¹⁾.

Before enlarging further on the public and martial, the 'in tyrannos' side of moral virtue I permit myself a short digression to illustrate its gentler aspects. The story of Kant's life and death seems the most appropriate choice. For is it not appropriate that Kant who had first preached the respect on principle for other people's persons should be cited as an example, and is it not gratifying that he can be thus cited?

Kant in his character and conduct was eminently fitted to serve as an illustration of his own theory. He possessed by nature that 'coolness', the reserve and unsentimental aloofness which is an indispensable feature of moral virtue. In the age of sentimentality in which he lived, this coolness

1) Tocqueville: letter to A. Stoffels, of 7th January 1856, p. 470. Oeuvres et correspondance inedites, 1861.

brought him the censure of some of his contemporaries¹⁾ but also earned him the respect, appreciation, and praise of many others²⁾. The 'sentimental attitudes' and 'melting emotions'³⁾ affected by his age were alien to Kant's nature. 'Emotions' produce tears, and nothing in the world dries as quickly as tears: the maxims of moral action must rest on concepts⁴⁾, he used to say. Nevertheless Kant's heart was warm and kind, his emotions, though not exactly of the

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- 1) "Charlotte von Schiller is quoted as having said that Kant would have been one of the greatest examples of humanity if he could have felt the emotions of love; since he could not, this deficiency marred the perfection of his nature". quoted by E. Cassirer: Kant's Leben und Lehre, p. 441 from the quotations of D. Schoendorffer: Kants Briefwechsel.
 - 2) Goethe considered it Kant's greatest merit that he had freed morality from its spineless and servile bondage to the "calculus of happiness" and had "called us all back from the effeminate lassitude into which we had sunk" - quoted by E. Cassirer: Kants Leben und Lehre, p. 287, from Goethe's discourses, Goethe to Kanzler von Mueller on the 23 April 1818. This opinion was shared by Humboldt, Hoelderlin, Fichte, Schiller, to name but a few. Fichte used to say, that he owes "not only his theoretical convictions and tenets to the Kantian philosophy but also his character, nay the very desire to have a character ... " quoted by E. Cassirer; idem, p. 389, J. B. Erhard wrote in his Autobiographie that he owed Kant "the regeneration of his inner life" and Jung-Stilling that Kant's teachings would bring about "a revolution in the souls of man greater and more blessed than Luther's reformation". The most enthusiastic and close adherent however remained Friedrich von Schiller in spite of the sharp distinction we have quoted on p. 95 and Lessing, by nature and temperament held views very similar to Kant.
 - 3) i.e. "die schmelzenden Gefuehle"
 - 4) quoted by E. Cassirer; idem, p. 287 from Schlapp's: Kants Lehre vom Genie.

'melting', vociferous kind, were deep-rooted and astonishingly sensitive. The categorical imperative and the proposition that man is an end in himself, were not mere theoretical ideas to Kant. They were convictions so deeply ingrained that they coloured his slightest thought and action, and formed the very core of his being. When Kant in the feebleness of his old age had lost almost all power over his mind, his character remained unchanged. To the very last he preserved the traits which had so impressed all those who had had the good fortune to know him: an 'incredible modesty', an "Gefuehl fuer Humanitaet", and "Die Hoefflichkeit des Herzens".

His modesty must indeed have seemed incredible and deeply touching to his sentimental contemporaries. It still seems so to us. But let us quote: "Rousseau" Kant writes in 1765 (i.e. in precritical days) "is the one who has put me aright. He has freed me of my besetting sin: the over-estimation of speculative thinking. He has shown my thought the way to practical action. The dazzling superiority of mere knowledge I see now for the illusion it is. I learn to respect all human beings¹⁾ and I should think myself of less value than the most common labourer, if I did not believe that my reflections and writings will help to secure and re-establish the Rights of Men"²⁾. A more intimate glimpse

1) "ich lerne die Menschen ehren", note: "Menschen" not "Menschheit", and compare p.

2) See next page. 371

into the workings of Kant's incredible modesty is provided by the very last footnote, to his paper on "What is enlightenment?" "Today the 30th September I received Busching's Weekly News of the 13th instant, in which the Berlin Journal announces and advertises Mr. Moses Mendelssohn's reply to the same question. I have not been able to get that number of the Journal yet, and I cannot retain this paper until I've read it. I therefore allow it to stand meanwhile as a provisional attempt and insofar as it chances to accord with the other reply"¹). The impression is further strengthened by a letter which Schuetz, one of the editors of the Literary Review of Jena, wrote to Kant (The Review had asked Kant to contribute a paper on Herder's recently published "Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit", and Kant had sent in his paper with a covering note to say that he was ready to forego his fee and that he begged his paper to be treated as a draft-proposal subject to the approval of the editing board.): "I hope you have already seen our number with your papers on Herder ... Everybody here

2) (From previous page):

Fragments aus Kant's Nachlass, quoted by E. Cassirer;
Kant's Leben und Lehre, p. 251.

1) Kant: Was ist Aufklaerung? (1781) footnote.

thinks they are masterpieces of precision ... My god, and you could have offered to forego your fee ... You could think that something you had written might not be up to our standard, or need our approval I could not retain my tears to read such words from you ... I cannot describe what I felt at that moment. I know I felt happy, frightened, and indignant all at once; especially the latter. For I could not but recall the superciliousness of our other scholars none of which is worthy to loosen the shoestring of a Kant " Such was Kant at the height of his fame. As Poerschke wrote to Fichte: "Of all human beings Kant is the least conscious of his own greatness ... "

As he grew older Kant grew very feeble. He lost his intellectual powers and could no longer express himself clearly. He mumbled his words, he even forgot words altogether. He could no longer write, not even his own name. He lost his memory and his sight almost completely. One visitor, who, attracted by the, by then, widespread fame of Kant's name had come to pay his attentions to the "Sage of Koenigsberg" and had found a feeble-minded old man exclaimed in his disappointment: "I have seen Kant's husk, not Kant". But Wasianski, the vicar who cared for Kant in his last years and who knew him most intimately wrote: "Kant's greatness as a Scholar and as a philosopher are known to the world. I am too ignorant to appreciate them. But the lovable and

rare quality of his modesty and his kindness I had occasion to know better than anyone else¹⁾.... On the third of February (nine days before his death) all his vital impulses seemed exhausted. He could and he would eat no more ... His doctor came to visit him that day, by appointment with me Since Kant who could see no longer, did not notice the doctor's presence, I called his attention to it. Kant immediately got up from his chair, and gave the doctor his hand, and said something about "Posten" (tasks) repeating and emphasising the word as though he wanted to be helped in expressing himself. The doctor tried to quieten him by telling him that everything was in order at the "Post" (post-office). But Kant insisted, and went on repeating "many tasks", "hard tasks", "great kindness", "gratitude" without any connection but with increasing warmth I could by then guess pretty accurately at what Kant meant to say. He wanted to say, that seeing the doctor had so many other tasks, and especially since he had been appointed to the hard task of Rector, it was very kind of him (the doctor) that he had found time to visit him. "Quite right" Kant said, still standing up and trembling

1) Schuetz' letter of the 18th February 1784, quoted by Cassirer : Kants Leben und Lehre; p. 389.

in his weakness. The doctor asked him to be seated. Kant hesitated, ashamed and restless. I knew his courteous feelings so well that I had no doubt as to the reason why Kant, though tired to the utmost continued to stand. I advised the doctor, that Kant would with the courtesy and the politeness which were part of his being¹⁾, refuse to sit down as long as he, the stranger in his house, remained standing. The doctor would not believe me at first, but was presently convinced and indeed could not retain his tears, when Kant, following his example sat down, and making a supreme effort to concentrate his remaining forces said quite clearly and firmly: "Das Gefuehl fuer Humanitaet hat mich noch nicht verlassen." It was the first coherent sentence he had spoken in weeks ...²⁾

Nine days later Kant was dead and "His corpse was laid out in his house in Koenigsberg From far and near people came to see him. Rich and poor, high and low, they made the pilgrimage ... They came for many days, and many came two or three times They all would be able to say later: I have seen Kant All the bells of Koenigsberg were ringing when they buried him. His coffin was borne by the students of Koenigsberg and a great multitude followed ... He was buried ... in the Professor's Chapel, in the University

1) i.e. Kant's "feine Denkungsart und artiges Benehmen".

2) E.A.Wasianski: Immanuel Kant in seinen Lebensjahren. pp. 204. 205.

Church"1). Later the Stoa Kantiana was erected on the spot.

Let us return to the harsher aspects of moral perfection, i.e. the perfect discipline of the self. We have seen that as such moral virtue assumes the character of the democratic, or better the civic virtue, par excellence. I wish to add but a few lines to the portrait of the "man of civic virtue". And by describing what qualities this man must have and what qualities he must not have²⁾, I hope to distinguish him quite clearly from the religious man and the Maximalist respectively.

First then, civic virtue is the virtue proper to free men living in the society of their peers. The man of civic virtue is a man deeply conscious of his own inalienable dignity, of the inviolable dignity of his fellow men, and of the obligation under which he is put by either. Civic virtue, though a sober, stern, and rather pedestrian virtue, is a brave and gallant virtue none the less. None but the brave and the fearless can be its votaries. For, the "sole practical guarantee that the liberty and dignity of men will be treated with the respect and the regard which are its due is the readiness of men to fight for it"³⁾. To work for

1) E.A. Wasianski: Immanuel Kant in seinen Lebensjahren. pp. 223- 224, quoted also by Ernst Cassirer.

2) i.e. what qualities are compatible with the qualities inherent in civic virtue, and which are not.

3) B. Croce: La Storia come pensiero e come azione.

the attainment of liberty, to be vigilant in its maintenance, to be prompt in its defense - is the duty of all "men of civic virtue", a duty from which no quarter can be given: al dovere di combattere di esser sempre pronti a combattere non e dato sottrarsi."¹⁾

On the other hand, though gallant enough in times of danger, civic virtue, being by definition a rigorous discipline of the self, and a stern clipper of wings, is not a very exciting virtue. A virtue of self-moderation of *μηδερ ζφαρ* ²⁾, it is not made to inspire men to storm the heavens and depossessthe gods, nor to seek out the height and depths of human existence. It possesses not the fascination of the extreme³⁾ the excessive⁴⁾ the unique. The mysteries

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- 1) B.Croce: La Storia comme pensiero e comme a zione.
 - 2) "No excess is good". S. Burke.
 - 3) Compare P. Valerie's: "Le monde n'a de valeur que par les extremes, il ne dure que par les mediocre."
 - 4) Compare J. Cocteau's "Aucune excess n'est ridicule" (Orpheus). Note also the significant choice of the terms in which value is expressed: "good" by Burke, "Not ridiculous" by Cocteau. It seems reasonable to assume that the aesthetic rather than the moral is the guiding idea of Maximalist evaluation. Extremely illuminating in this connection are the following remarks on "the relationship between the beautiful and the morally right": Whether a conflict between the good and conceivable it will assume the character of a comic or ludicrous conflict are questions of some consequence. Now we know that every ludicrous conflict is judged to be so on aesthetic criteria, i.e. judged to be ludicrous. And since unsuccessful attack of the ugly on the beautiful. Can such a conflict take place between the good

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of the infinite and the indefinite are not its portion. It entices not with dangers, adventures, spoils unimaginable. It transports us not beyond our human state. It is, in short, not a virtue for Maximalists^{3, 4)} of previous page.

But if the 'man of civic virtue' disdains the enticements of his own to which he opposes the respect he has for the dignity of man in others, he is also deaf to the religious call to repentance and expiatory self-abasement before God, to which he opposes the respect he has for the dignity of in man/himself. The life of man, to him, "n'est pas un plaisir, ni une douleur, mais une affaire grave dont nous sommes charges et qu'il faut conduire et terminer a notre honneur"¹⁾. The State of man, in the eyes of the man of civic virtue is an admirable, a honourable, a dignified state. Its value

(Continuation of footnote from previous page):

and the beautiful ... It can, it does, and its outcome is precluded at the moment of inception. Such a conflict is however only possible where the moral is not defined with regard and in subordination to the beautiful, and where the moral arrogates primacy to itself. Wherever the moral demands precedence of the beautiful, and thus provokes a show down it is beaten without fail ... and must be careful not to become ridiculous. Morality can become ludicrous in daring to deny the invincible might of the beautiful ... The nature of this might is best seen in the nature of the ludicrous, because the ludicrous throws light on the transgression which arise whenever something comes into conflict with the beautiful. The Autonomy of Ethics, and of the man of moral virtue esp. insofar as their independence from the beautiful is concerned, is a harmful illusion which makes life gloomy and men stultified and ugly. Ethics is not an independent and autonomous discipline which can be expounded without

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rests securely in the concept of the unconditional, inalienable and autonomous dignity of the human person as such.

Based on the conviction that dignity is the very stuff of which men are made, and indivisible from the human person, the moral attitude locates the centre of gravity, the source of right and wrong, directly in the human person. It is in consequence a self confident, and self-sufficient¹⁾ view of life, and hence a fundamentally irreligious and impious attitude. By making man the ground of his own dignity, the moral attitude needs not appeal to God, indeed has no inkling of his existence. Man is quite sufficient to himself. He does not depend on a God for his dignity, and therefore for his morality. The moral attitude is therefore deeply suspect in religious eyes which always considered *ὑπερηφανία*

(Continuation of footnote from previous page):

consideration for the beautiful. Moralism, by which term I wish to indicate, the jealous attempts of the moral to pose as an absolute and independent obligation, is made ugly by these very attempts and is apt to become ridiculous. For it aspires to a primacy to which it has no right, and in the process meets a foe infinitely stronger than itself and who has the power to make the moral appear as a ludicrous and comic figure ..." F.G. Juenger. "Ueber das Komische;" pp. 47, 48.

- 1) (of previous page): Tocqueville; fragment cited by Gustave de Beaumont in his introduction to Tocqueville's works p. 124 (1861).
- 1) "Nous sommes quelque chose non point par notre dignite mais en tant qu'il nous en estime dignes par sa grace," Calvin, Institutiones, 442.

-self sufficiency a mortal sin. The religious view of man as a being utterly valueless in himself¹⁾, of previous page. whose natural habitus is a cringing and utter self-abasement before God, is deeply suspect to the moral view. Moral virtue, in short, is not a value designed for the use of cringing worms, nor for the use of "creatures" dependent for their very dignity and significance on the whim or the will of God. It is a virtue for fearless, free and self-sufficient men, living amongst other free fearless and self-sufficient men, deeply convinced of the inherent dignity of the human state and determined to defend this dignity against whoever might attempt to violate it: even against heaven, even against their own

It is therefore hardly surprising that the moral attitude is at one and the same time jeered for its timidity by Maximalists and upbraided for its temerity in the name of Heaven. This brings us right to our second problem:

- B) What are the differences between the possible basic (and intuitive) choices?, and: Can the primacy of the moral choice be deduced from the nature of these differences?

Explanation: The basic intuitive choices, other than the moral, most relevant to this enquiry are a) those which

1) viz p. 418 for footnote 1 (calvin)

deny the validity of the moral choice altogether by asserting the illusoriness of all moral experience, or b) those which once accepted, are found to be incompatible with a practical primacy of the moral choice. In other words, those intuitive choices which claim a meta- or supra-moral right to override the injunction of the moral law: i.e. never to violate the dignity of a human being¹⁾.

Each of these intuitive choices corresponds to an immediate and basic experience: an intuitive vision of man's estate which is his nature, an insight into the arcanæ of 'la condition humaine'. The three ways of experiencing man's estate, can be roughly described as follows:

- a) the vision of man's nothingness which is the nihilistic experience.
- b) the vision of man's humanity which is the experience of relatedness.
- c) the vision of man's uniqueness which is the vitalistic experience.

All three partake of the nature of eruptive intuitions, i.e. of the nature of "Valeurs transcritiques" in Renee Bertrand's terms: "Valeurs transcritiques .. c'est a dire un donne non pense, une irruption, une ivasion mentale"²⁾.

1) ~~viz p. for footnote~~

1) I shall not deal, except in passing, with those attitudes which deny the ultimate Autonomy of Ethics but assert the Practical Primacy of its laws.

2) R. Bertrand: Valeurs et verites trans subjectives, p.164.

All three are normally experienced at various times by almost everyone. Their relative frequency, distinctness, clarity and intensity, however, vary considerably with different people. The eventual prevalence of one intuition, the interpretation of the significance of each, and the final arbitration between them is resolved individually by each person for himself. The possibility of the great variety of solution in spite of the sameness of the initial experiences, is an outcome of the particular nature of intuition. For, though "toute intuition est capable de saisir d'une facon immediate et adequate son object il est eronne de penser qu'elle se suffirait donc completement a elle meme ... L'intuition en effet, en meme temps qu'elle percoit une donnee irreductible, comporte une activite mentale qui discrimine cette donnee pour s'en emparer et entre ces deux composantes il est impossible d'etablir une separation complete ... c'est pourquoi une intuition est quelque chose d'unique et de complexe toute a la fois. Elle est une en tant qu'elle revele une maniere d'etre ou d'agir originale et specifique de reel; mais elle est complexe en tant qu'elle est liee a un ensemble d'operations mentales. On s'explique de la que les intuitions du meme objet, puissent varier d'un individu a l'autre. Il en est ainsi parce que la serie des jugements conscients et inconscients et la serie des experiences qui sont indissolublement liees a ces intuitions ont ete differentes chez l'un

et chez l'autre"¹⁾.

Thus, for example, the nihilistic experience of man's nothingness can be interpreted as an utter "creaturely" dependence on God, and lead to Religion, or it can be interpreted as the absolute state of a godless universe and lead to different systems of Existentialism and different forms of Idolatry. The relational experience of man's humanity, again, can be interpreted as referring man as an organical part to a social organism, and lead to different socio-biological and Utilitarian views, or it can be interpreted as contained entirely in the single man who enters subsequently into a relationship of mutual respect, with the equal and integer humanity of others, and lead to Morality. Finally the vitalistic experience of man's uniqueness can be interpreted as providing proof for the existence of the unique and exceptional personalities among men and for the exceptional rights and privileges of these exceptional personalities.

I shall choose one interpretation out of each group to represent the respective basic experience. Thus the religious experience and the duty it generates, the duty man has to god, shall represent the immediate experience of man's nothingness. The moral experience and the duty it generates,

1) A. Raymond: Activite de juger: Intuition et Valeur; Revue de Metaphysique et de la morale, Oct. 1945. pp. 264, 265.

2) ~~viz p. 66~~

the mutual duty men have to each other, shall represent the intuitive experience of man's humanity. Finally the maximalist experience, and the duty it generates, the duty man has to himself, shall represent the vitalistic experience of man's unique and irreplaceable individuality.

Each of the three basic experiences, or rather each of the chosen interpretations of the basic experiences claims absolute primacy for itself and seeks to invalidate the others. It is most important to be clear about this rivalry¹⁾. Curiously enough the invalidation of rival interpretations assumes in most express argumentation and disputes, the character of a moral discreditation of the rival attitudes. Does this furnish indirect proof for a de facto primacy of morality? I think not. For what is claimed by each interpretation is that it is the only valid, the only true interpretation of reality. Since it is the only true interpretation it is also the only morally meritorious interpretation. All other interpretations are errors of truth; malicious misrepresentations or stubborn blindness; and as such morally reprehensible attitudes. This argument, which is commonly used by all interpretations, rest on two fallacious assumptions. First, each interpretation assumes itself to be not only

1) viz p.66

a Truth, but the only Truth and the whole Truth, whereas we have seen that it is but one interpretation of one aspect of Truth. Secondly, each interpretation assumes that Morality and Truth are coincident and inseparable qualifications, so that nothing can be true without being moral at the same time, or moral without being true; whereas, we have seen that the moral is but one interpretation of one aspect of Truth so that it is untruthful insofar as it denies or discounts the other aspects of Truth and on the other hand truth is more comprehensive than morality and includes domains which are merely "indifferent" and domains which are actively opposed to the moral. Morality is therefore only a partial Truth. Truth moral only in parts. And the religious and maximalist attitudes though authentic and valid interpretations of reality (i.e. aspects and parts of Truth) have no part in morality, and no claim to moral merit whatever other merits they might rightfully claim to possess. However, since from these reflections it transpires that intellectual honesty¹⁾ is not a moral quality in the strict sense, it can

1) By intellectual honesty I mean the wish and the attempt to define one's concepts as clearly and distinctly as possible, and to resist the temptation of playing with concepts, and achieving combinations which though pleasing and gratifying are questionable, in whort, what Thomas Mann calls "das unsaubere Spiel mit Begriffen" and what the Americans esp. L.C. Stevenson takes to be the essence of morality. It is however not morality's fault if other disciplines in order to "sell the goods" use its terminology to advertise themselves.

and must be regarded as a quality accessible to, nay a duty incumbent on, all who wish to discuss, combat or advocate any of the possible interpretations. It is therefore at least in theoretical discussions a duty equally incumbent on advocates of the moral, the maximalist¹⁾, and the religious²⁾ interpret-

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- 1) Maximalist attitudes usually claim for themselves the right to make their own truth as well as their own laws and own morality. But the very fact that its philosophers (viz Nietzsche, Pareto etc.) openly claim this right - proves that they acknowledge their duty to be 'intellectually honest' in their thinking, i.e. to make it as clear as possible to themselves what the maxims and grounds of their theories are and what implications and consequences are involved. Muddled thinking and unclear concepts are not a usual defect with maximalist thinkers.
 - 2) Religious attitudes are subject to the rules of intellectual honesty. Indeed since God sees into the innermost heart of man, any other principle would seem foolish as well as despicable. The book of Job here gives the clearest answer: absolute sincerity and the honest attempt to think as clearly as possible, and uphold nothing but that of which we are most deeply convinced in our deepest heart are the virtues dearer to God than the precepts of morality and the keeping of laws. Job was acquitted and raised above his companions, not because he had been righteous before his misfortune, but because in his misfortune he had never stooped to dishonesty, never uttered a word that came not from his heart, never paid lip-service to the accepted pious attitudes. Therefore in his sacrilegious utterance, in his defiance and accusations against the injustices of his fate he had served god more surely than his companions with their puny efforts to 'justify the ways of God to man'. The answer in Job is not that God's ways are just, or that man's demands for justice are unjust. It is that god's ways are inscrutable, and that though Job was justified in his moral demands, accusations, assertions and self-righteousness, all these have no meaning when brought forward in arguments against God. "Now my eye seeth thee ... I abhor myself and repent in

2)
(contd.)

dust and ashes". The idea of a Theodicee itself is a sacrilegious idea, a fundamentally impious and irreligious idea. It is interesting to note that Kant, for whom Reason = Good, and therefore, what we have called intellectual honesty is the supreme moral virtue, remarked when discussing the book of Job: "There is something touching and which moves the soul in displaying a sincere character divested of all falsehood and positive dissimulation; as integrity however a mere simplicity and rectitude of the way of thinking (especially when its ingenuity is excused) is the least that is requisite to a good character, and therefore it is not to be conceived upon what is grounded that admiration with which we are impressed by such an object; it must then be, that sincerity is the property with which human nature is the least endowed. A melancholy observation! As by that only all the other properties so far as they rest upon principles can have an intrinsic true value. None but a contemplative misanthrope (who wishes ill to nobody but is inclined to believe everything bad of men) can be doubtful whether to find men worthy of hatred or of contempt. The properties on whose account he would judge them to be qualified for the former treatment are those by which they designedly do harm. That property, however, which seems rather to expose them to the latter degradation, can be no other than a propensity to what can be used as a mean to no end whatever, which is therefore objectively good for nothing. The former bad is nothing but that of enmity (more mildly expressed unkindness): The latter can be nothing else than a lying disposition (falsehood, even without any design to do hurt). The one inclination has a view, which may in certain other references be allowed and good for instance enmity against incorrigible disturbers of the peace. The other propensity however, is that to the use of a mean (the lies) that, whatever be the view is good for nothing, because it is in itself bad and blameable. In the quality of the man of the former species there is wickedness, yet with which there may be combined a fitness for good ends in certain external relations, and it sins but in the means, which are not rejectable in any view. The bad of the latter sort is worthlessness (Nichtswuerdigkeit) by which all character is refused to man - here I chiefly insist on the impurity lying concealed as man knows to falsify even the internal declarations in the presence of his own conscience. The less ought to surprise the external inclination to fraud; it then be this, that though everyone knows the falseness of the coin with which he trades, it can maintain itself equally well in circulation." "Ueber das Misslingen aller philosophischen Versuche in der Theodicee; (1791) closing passage.

ations. It is only on the grounds of what I have called 'intellectual honesty' that any discussion is possible at all.

Now the root of all moral thinking or acting we have found to be an attitude of respect towards the dignity inherent in human beings as such, and the central concept of morality we have defined as the dignity-of-man-qua-man. This makes Ethics a pre-eminently anthropocentric attitude and as such directly opposed to the theocentricity¹⁾ which is the essential and constituent feature of the religious attitude²⁾. This opposition entails a legitimate rivalry between the two attitudes as to which is the more authentic, the more accurate, the more comprehensive interpretation of reality. This rivalry may be limited to an aspiration for primacy, so that ethics, for instance, will remain valid in itself, but subject to religion as its ultimate justification. Or it may be pushed to the annihilation of the rival attitude so that ethics, for instance, will lose its proper meaning and no longer be recognisable as such. No wonder then that the attitudes regard each other as fundamental errors, and decry

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- 1) Karl Barth, for instance, defines Theocentricity as the sine qua non, and the content of theology.
- 2) Similarly morality as an anthropocentric attitude is opposed to Maximalism as a Titanocentric attitude: I shall discuss this conflict later.

each other as inauthentic, short-sighted, superficial, bigoted, dangerous, et.c etc. All this is legitimate, and to a certain point¹⁾, fully justified. The illegitimate accusations, the intellectual dishonesty creeps in, when the religious attitude accuses the moral of being immoral, because it is impious²⁾, or the moral attitude accuses the religious of being irreligious because it is immoral³⁾. That is when the religious attitude claims moral merit in the precise sense, or when the moral attitude claims to be the only true and legitimate religious attitude.

To take the latter case first: Morality, e.e. some moral philosophers including Kant, claim that such of God's revealed Commandments and actions as conflict or clash with the moral law must give way to the requirements of the moral law, and be declared invalid. This claim morality usually formulates in the innocuous and seemingly inoffensive statement that what is obviously and flagrantly immoral, or what leads to flagrantly immoral actions cannot be God's true will, but an erroneous

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- 1) In so far as each attitude is an authentic distinct, and necessary interpretation of a basic and inescapable experience; but not insofar as each attitude interprets but one basic experience, whereas there are always three such basic experiences.
 - 2) i.e. Religion defines: Only what is conformant with religious principles is moral.
 - 3) i.e. Morality defines: Only what is conformant with moral principles is religious.

interpretation of God's word¹⁾. In other words it claims to know God's will better than anyone else, because in God's own Nature Justice and Goodness take precedence over his will: "Deum ipsum non posse supplere locum causae formalis"²⁾. This in a way amounts to an ultimate vindication of the Primacy of Morality with God himself as our guarantor. This is the attitude of all reasonable, sensible men of good-will who also happen to be religious, in the sense that they believe in "Natural Religion". They can claim St. Thomas himself in support on many points. Yet it seems to me that this attitude, which has mixed antecedents and retains its contradictions unresolved, can only be justified by a postulate demanding God's nature to be such as to be comprehensible and perfect in men's eyes. This would reduce it to the dimensions of Kant's "Religion in den Grenzen der blossen Vernunft"³⁾. Or if recoiling from this extreme it can maintain itself only by most firmly closing its eyes to the specific nature of the Religious, and the specific nature of its basic and primary intuition, i.e. the vision of man's nothingness and his utter and absolute creaturely dependence on God. It must also close its eyes to a great part of the revealed Word. In short it must deny the difference between Morality and Religion, discard all specifically religious content, and retain but the label. Apart

1) Kant: Streit der Fakultäten, I've discussed the example of Isaac's sacrifice on page 252

- 2) Quoted against Descartes in Ralph Cudworth's Religion of Nature delineated.
- 3) and his denial of the existence of a specific and valid religious experience viz p. 207

from everything else this procedure has the demerit of methodical and theoretical inaccuracy. This seems too great a price to pay for the primacy of Morality, seen as compatible with the primacy of religion, (i.e without having to admit that the two cannot be upheld at the same time.)

Can one secure the primacy of morality, whilst avoiding an obvious erroneous denial of the difference between the exigencies of morality and religion, on the basis of this difference? In order to answer this question the claims of the religious experience to be a valid experience, must be reviewed however briefly before the principles of conduct determined by the religious attitude may be examined and compared with the specifically moral principles of conduct.

First then, we contend that there is a religious experience that it is a specific and distinct experience and not merely a theological interpretation of the moral experience, and that it is the constituent experience of a distinct and separate domain, and that this domain is just as authentic, valid and legitimate as the moral domain.

The religious domain, then, is authentic, valid, and legitimate as a discipline of human thought because it is

grounded in a basic primary experience: The vision of man's nothingness is an experience common to all men, but its religious interpretation, i.e. the specific religious manner of experiencing it, is not so frequent, nor so habitual as the moral experience. It is however no less authentic and valid, being of the same structure and form as the moral experience. Like the moral experience it is grounded in an eruptive, immediate, irrational insight¹⁾. Also it forms its basic concepts: God is God, man is nothing, its basic postulates: God exists; and its laws and obligations much in the same way as the basic concept of morality, its postulate, laws and obligations were formed.

Moreover Kant's famous denial of the validity of religious experience " ... etwas Uebernaturliches, Aber eine Erfahrung von der es sich sogar nicht einmal, dass sie eine Erfahrung sei ueberfuehren kann ist eine Ausdeutung gewisser Empfindungen von denen man nicht weiss ob sie als zur Erkenntniss gehoerig einen wirklichen Gegenstand haben oder blosse Traeumerei seien moegen. Den unmittelbaren Einfluss der Gottheit als einen solchen fuehlen wollen ist, weil die Idee von dieser bloss in der Vernunft liegt eine sich selbst widersprechende Anmassung²⁾ is based on his misconception of the basic idea of Morality

1) i.e. "un donne non pense, une eruption, une invasion mentale"
R. Bertrand, ~~viz. p.~~

2) Kant: Streit der Facultaeten: Von Religionssekten.

which he thought grounded in Reason and demonstrable by Reason but which as we have seen is really an intuitively accepted concept, not vindicated or justified by rational argumentation. So that as a matter of fact all that is said in this passage about the religious experience can be said word for word about moral experience: the concept of the 'dignity' of man, for instance, also leaves us doubting whether "es als zur Erkenntniss gehoerig einen wirklichen Gegenstand habe oder blosse Traeumerei sei." Kant admits a few lines further that there is something "was die Menschheit in der Idee zu einer Wuerde erhebt die man an Menschen als Gegenstaende der Erfahrung nicht vermuten sollte¹. This amounts to admitting that the dignity of man is an intuitively accepted, or postulated concept; in short a non-rationally generated idea. But so is the idea of God. Therefore if moral experience have any validity, then religious experience has the same kind of validity, and degree of reality. The religious idea can be subsumed in two propositions: "God exists. God is God"²).

1) Kant: Streit der Facultaeten: Von Religionssekten.

2) *Ego sum - qui sum: Exod. III.14.* Dixit Deus ad Moysen: Ego sum - qui sum: Exodus III.14. It is particularly interesting to note that Sartre in his analysis finds that on taking up the initial position of "Cogito ergo sum" he is brought immediately face to face with the concept of l'antrui' the other, i.e. the moral experience whilst Descartes who first took this initial position of self-awareness was brought face to face with the concept of God: The remarkable similarity in structure between the two different, i.e. dissimilar in content, experiences further speaks for our contention that they ought to be considered of equal validity.

The God whose idea constitutes the authentic religious experience the God who reveals himself to us at the very depths¹⁾ of our horrific vision of man's nothingness is not the 'moral god' (Der moralische Gott)²⁾ of Kant but the Deus absconditus simulacque revelatus of the Bible.

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- 1) Compare: J. Tauber: Sermon on St. Matthew: 'Everything depends ... on a fathomless sinking in a fathomless nothingness ... If a man could answer then really and consciously from the bottom of his heart: 'Then I am nothing and less than nothing', all would be accomplished. ... Thereupon speaks the Heavenly Father: "Thou shalt call me Father and shalt never cease to enter in, entering ever further in, ever nearer so as to sink the deeper in an unknown, an unnamed abyss", quoted by E. Underhill, *Mysticism*, p. 400.
- 2) "As now the conception of God that shall be fit for religion (for we use it not for the behoof of the explanation of nature in a speculative view) must be a conception of him as a moral Being; as this conception as little as it can be grounded upon experience just as little can it be exhibited from merely transcendental conceptions of an absolutely necessary being who is to us totally transcendent: so it is sufficiently evident that the proof of the existence of such a being can be no other than a moral one." Kant, "Ueber das Misslingen aller phil. Versuch einer Theodizee, 1. Note.

Dens revelatus simul acque absconditus - in what way?

He is a revealed god because man's nothingness would have remained empty and desolate and desperate¹⁾ had god not chosen to fill it with his own image. Man's need would have remained unsatisfied, his cry unanswered²⁾, his search futile³⁾ had god not chosen to respond with the revealed word. God's image and god's word, these are the two ways of God's revelation of himself, and he is thus immanent and transcendent at the same time, dwelling in man's heart, and far beyond him at once⁴⁾.

But to some theologians⁵⁾ this seemed too irreverent an interpretation of the Deus revelatus. It left man with a

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- 1) Compare man's nothingness' as experienced by the Existentialist thinkers like Kirkegaard (before the 'leap into faith'), M. Heidegger, J.P. Sartre, etc.
 - 2) viz. de profundis clamavi ad te, Domine, Domine exaudi vocem meam, Psalms 129, 1.
 - 3) viz; In lectulo meo per noctes quaesivi quem diligit anima mea; Cant. III.1.
 - 4) viz. the "Aristotelian" school of Religious thought especially as developed by St. Thomas and Dante, and evidenced by the mystics viz St. Augustine: videlicet nesciunt quod ubique sis ... et solus es praesens etiam his qui longe fient a te. convertantur ergo et quaerant te, quia non, sicut ipsi desertuerunt creatorem suum, ita tu deseruisti creaturam tuam ... et ecce intus eras et ego foris et ibi te quaerebam ... mecum eras, et tecum non eram ... cognoscam te cognitor meus, cognoscam sicut et cognitus sum⁷ Confessiones V.2. X 17.1.
 - 5) viz; the dialectical Theology of E. Brunner. Fr. Gogarten, K. Barth represent the extreme position of the Pauline tradition in Religious thought.

certain measure of initiative vis-a-vis of God, and it left man a possibility to know god directly with the inner vision of his heart. It seemed not enough that God could have created man without implanting in him the need to escape his own nothingness, so that God the Creator is the ground of man's need of Himself. It seemed not enough that once having implanted that need in all men God could refrain from answering it in those he did not choose to answer. God is also thought to awaken this need, make it conscious only to those he pleases to make so conscious. God thus retains the full initiative. By a double act of grace, (a double predestination) he awakens one man's need and satisfies it: "Vea Vd aqui, amigo mio, la historia intima y secreta de mi conversion ... El misterio de ~~mi~~ conversion (porque todo conversion es un misterio) es un misterio de ternura ... No le amaba, y Dios ha querido que le ame, y le amo: y porque le amo, estoy convertido"¹⁾; Whilst the others walk in darkness. He lets himself be sought by those by whom he wishes to be found²⁾.

1) viz Donoso Cortes: Letter written 21st July 1849 to Alberic de Blanche, Marques de Raffin, V. pp. 111-112.

2) "Die Liebe Gottes ist nie eine "verlorene Liebe" (the term is Martin Luther's). Sie is "unverlierbar" weil Gottes Liebe nur den Menschen gilt die zum Gefundenwerden und Finden bestimmt sind." Karl Barth: Die Kirchliche Dogmatic: Die Lehre vom Worte Gottes: vol 2. p. 439.

But this awakening must not be identified with an immanent knowledge of god. If man had an immanent knowledge of god it would give him a value and a dignity beyond his station, it would build a bridge from man to God. Man must not be allowed to build such a bridge. The inaccessibility of God must not be diminished. The immanent knowledge of God is therefore declared invalid¹⁾. The only authentic revelation²⁾ of God is in his authorised word: "The supreme ground of all Truth cannot be itself an object of recognition, only the 'Christian speech', the words which were spoken to the world can be made objects of our knowledge of God"³⁾. The various

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- 1) Thus Barth argues that for instance Schleiermacher's greatest error ('die grosse Verwechslung') was that he mistook the phenomenological-real occurrence of Revelation for its subjective possibility, i.e. he thought that man in his religious capacity could hear the word of God by his own effort: "Die Religion als Menschenmoeglichkeit kann nicht der Offenbarung als der grossen Gottesmoeglichkeit gleichgestellt werden ... vielmehr ist sie nicht nur Ohnmacht der Wirklichkeit der Offenbarung gegenueber sondern Eigenmacht, ... (and as such sacrilegious). K. Barth: Christliche Dogmatik im Entwurf, p. 315.
 - 2) Wir muessen die Gegensaetzlichkeit dessen was Schleiermacher wollte und der Glaubenswelt der Apostel und Reformatoren aufdecken: die innere Unmoeglichkeit eines Buendnisses zwischen jeder mystischen Immanenzphilosophie und dem Christentum der Bibel ... gerade an diesem (i.e. Schleiermachers) klassischen Beispiel zu bewegen und die Theologie vor die Entscheidung zu stellen: entweder Christus oder die moderne (immanenz) Religion." E. Brunner: Die Mystik und das Wort: Der Gegensatz zwischen moderner Religionsauffassung und Christlichem Glauben dargestellt an der Theologie Schleiermachers. p. 10.
 - 3) Emil Brunner: Philosophie der Offenbarung.

interpretations of the manner of divine self-revelation is of the utmost importance for the correlated interpretations of morality¹⁾.

God is however not only revelatus, he is also absconditus. In the holy scriptures, and in the inner recesses of our hearts, he reveals himself as the hidden god whom we may never know. God is above all an omnipotent, an infinite, an incomprehensible being. His incomprehensibility is his very essence, as far as we are concerned. It refers to that fascinans, horrendum, terrendum etc. which Rudolf Otto subsumed under the term 'das Numinoese' the numinous²⁾, and to which is attached the attribute of holiness. Holy is what is strange, unfamiliar, uncanny in a way which forever excludes its becoming familiar and known. The holy god is the intrinsically strange, the essentially and inaccessibly and eternally 'other': "Entre Dios y el hombre habia un abismo insondable³⁾". To measure this God with a human measure is sheer folly. To try to understand his ways is futile.

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- 1) For only an however faint immanence of God, an however feeble initiative on the part of man can assure man's existence as a moral person.
 - 2) viz. R. Otto: Das Heilige.
 - 3) Donoso Cortes: Carta al eminentissimo Cardenal Forniar sobre el principio generador de los mas graves errores de nuestros dias. V. p. 191.

To judge them by the principles of morality and immorality is sacrilegious. Thus, from a religious point of view all attempts 'to justify the ways of God to man' are not merely foolish but sinful. They are inspired by that infernal pride which is the cause of human wickedness: "initium omnis peccati superbia."

This indeed is the meaning of God's answer to Job: Wilt thou disannul my judgement? Wilt thou condemn me that thou mayest be justified? Or has thou an arm like God? And canst thou thunder with a voice like him? Behold now Behemoth which I made with thee Canst thou draw out Leviathan with a hook ... Wilt he make a covenant with thee?"¹⁾ Not the justification of God's moralities, but the humiliation of Job existentially is the religious solution of man's everlasting query²⁾. God is omnipotent, transcendent,

1) Job: XL, 8, 3, 15; XLI, 1.4.

2) The mixed feelings, mixed in equal parts of acknowledgement (of fact) and exasperation (moral!) with which the man of reason regards this query and this answer are admirably because humorously expressed by Heine:

Warum schleppt sich blutend elend
Unter Kreuzlast der Gerechte
Während glücklich als ein Sieger
Trabt zu hohem Ross der Schlechte

Also fragen wir beständig
Bis man uns mit einem Handvoll
Erde endlich stopft die Mäuler.
Aber ist das eine Antwort?

In other words the religious solution though, final in terms of reality is not final in terms of right and wrong: in terms of morality. The religious solution is not a

(Continued next page)

incomprehensible. Man is foolish, ephemeral and powerless. The proper attitude of man when confronted with God's majesty is humility, penance, and adoration. "Then Job answered the Lord and said, I know that thou canst do all things and that no purpose of thine can be restrained. Therefore I have uttered that which I understood not, Things too wonderful for me which I knew not. I have heard of Thee by the hearing of my ear, but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes!"²⁾

From this central tenet on God's infinite, omnipotent and uncomprehensible nature all religious doctrine stem,

(Continuation of footnote from last page):

moral solution. Nevertheless the religious answer is final here, because the moral question is put a priori in the wrong, since it should never be raised in this sense. Morality is a matter of resolve, a matter between man and man. The moment it oversteps this bound and is raised (in existentialist terms as it were) between man and God it becomes invalid, foolish and nonsensical. The moral device as regards God is: "Faites votre devoir et laissez faire aux Dieux", or on a more aggressive note: "Fiat justitia ruat coelum." Which is but another way of repeating E.F. Carritts most apposite exclamation: What is the purpose of man from the point of view of God? I do not know, and as a moral philosopher I do not care!" But if the morality makes itself independent of God it cannot expect to be recompensed by God. God in his mercy may do so but he has no moral obligation (even apart from his omnipotence) to do it.

1) Job: XLIII. 1-6.

and all religious views are determined by it, including the religious views on morality. This is not the proper place for a detailed examination of religious doctrine, and my purpose is much too humble to presume on any such task. The following arguments are necessarily put forward very roughly and very much ad hoc. Roughly then, we can distinguish two authentically religious approaches to moral principles, laws, and problems. One keeps the moral content of 'morality' intact but vindicates it on non moral grounds, i.e. on the religious ground of being the command of God which must be obeyed for the love of God¹⁾. The other changes not only the view point on morality, but the content of morality itself²⁾, so that what may be sanctioned on religious grounds is condemned on moral grounds and vice versa. The latter contingency might befall the first approach but it is the norm and the rule of the second approach.

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- 1) The first approach is the one seen in the book of Job, the Old Testament (generally speaking and confirmed by almost all Hebrew Theologians (~~viz p~~) almost theologians of the 'golden age of catholicism', and commands today a great part of the Catholic Church.
 - 2) The second attitude is the one propounded by the extreme faction of the Protestant Church, a faction whose progressive extremeness is outlined by the names St. Paul, Calvin, Luther, Jansen (Catholic), Kirkegaard, Barth.

To explain this somewhat cryptic remark let us review the two attitudes more closely. As always in questions of morality the crucial point is the meaning attached to the concept of the dignity of man. Now in the first approach man though not endowed with dignity by his own power, is endowed with dignity by God the Creator, who lovingly created man in his own image.¹⁾ All men are created in his image, and therefore all men are possessed of dignity. The moral postulate is thus sanctioned by the will and the grace of god. Moreover god in his infinite love gave men the power to choose, and the capacity to will the good and achieve his own righteousness²⁾.

The concept of morality retains its original meaning in this context, and moral laws their identity: moral rightness remains the criterion of morality. But the ground and the reason of morality are changed. The ground of morality is the will of god, and the reason of morality the love of god. Laws are good laws because they were commanded by God, and because 'Omnis ratio veri et boni ab eus omnipotentia dependeat'³⁾. The very basis of morality: the concept of

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- 1) Et ait: Faciamus hominem ad imaginem et similitudinem nostram ... Et creavit Deus hominem ad imaginem suam ad imaginem Dei creavit illum. Gen. 1. 26, 27. note the threefold repetition and emphasis.
- 2) But not to expect a recompense for it!
- 3) Descartes.

the inalienable dignity of man, has ceased to be the non-plus-ultra ground of right action. It remains valid insofar as it has pleased God to create man in his own image and to endow him with dignity. The inner motivation of morality undergoes a simultaneous transposition into the religious key: Morality is the doing of right actions not for the respect of man, but for the love of God. Evil is not the abuse of human dignity, but a sin against God. And since our first duty to God is to love him with all our heart and all our might, sin is primarily a deficiency in the love of God. The breaking of moral laws is wrong not because of the intrinsic badness of the action, but because it is an act of disobedience towards God, who had commanded those laws: "Catholicae fides est: omne quod dicitur malum aut peccatum esse, aut poenam peccati¹⁾". The keeping of moral laws is good because it is an act of loving obedience towards God. The love of God is the ultimate ground of all human obligation, including our 'obligation to love our neighbours'. What god commanded is therefore less important than that he commanded it. God could have given us other laws to keep had he so chosen, and for the love of him they ought to have been kept just as strictly. Moreover had God chosen to give us other laws than the ones we know, they would have been just as right and

1) St. Augustine.

just as good because his choice would have made them so¹⁾.

God's will is the essence of his being and God's acts are arbitrary acts of sheer will. The arbitrary and mysterious will of God manifests itself in the act of revelation, and is answered in the religious response by an act of sheer will in man which is the act of faith²⁾. Thus indeed had Israel answered God on Mount Sinai and had said: ³⁾ we shall do thy will, and we shall hear it. Israel had promised to do God's bidding because it was God's bidding, and because God had called upon them to do it, and prior to knowing what it was that God would bid them do. Had they been able to do his bidding without knowing what it was they would not have asked to hear it at all. This complete trust and complete self-abandonment in the hand and to the will of God was Israel's supreme act of faith, the religious response par excellence. The acts of sheer arbitrary will are acts of love. By an act of love Israel was chosen, by an act of love it accepted the choice.

To sum up: To the religious response every obligation has its source in God's will and every obligation is an obligation to love God. If God's revealed command clashes in any

1) viz Occam and Descartes.

2) This is the position common to Occam, Descartes, Luther, Pascal, etc.

3) Exodus: XIX, 8.

way with what is due to the dignity of man, it naturally takes precedence, since God is the source both of the command and of that dignity and if in his inscrutable way he has chosen to subject the one to the other his will is always holy and must be obeyed, ad majorem dei gloriam.

He may wish to test us as he did Abraham, or he may have distant aims in view of which we know nothing, but whatever his demands - the only proper and fitting response is faith and obedience and trust; the unflinching love of God.

"This attitude finds its culmination in the middle-ages... in the specifically Christian Ethics ... The formula ... for the specifically Christian Moral Law is here the Augustinian definition of the love of God as the highest and absolute the entirely simple Moral end - an end which contains the demand of the love of God in the stricter sense (self-sanctification, self-denial, contemplation) and the demand for the love of our neighbour (the active relating of all to God, the active interrelating of all in God, and the most penetrating mutual self-sacrifice for God). This Ethic, a mystical interpretation of the Evangelical Preaching forms indeed a strong contrast¹⁾ to the This-Worldly Ethic of Nature

1) Just how strong a contrast will become more apparent when we examine the more flagrant cases of conflict between the moral and religious attitudes in some practical instances; like the witch trial of Europe: The question of social and political reform; and the right to err, i.e. freedom of thought and the exclusive possession of Truth.

Law .. but then this cannot fail to be the case given the entire fundamental character of the Christian Ethic¹⁾.

The second trend²⁾ in religious doctrine changes the very content of morality, or rather it robs morality of all meaning and simultaneously renders the "ethical situation impossible"³⁾. It does so by merely thinking to their logical end the thoughts entailed by the concepts of man's nothingness and god's infinite, omnipotent, incomprehensible being. By drawing the last consequences from the consistent religious point of view, it invalidates the concept of man's dignity which is the crucial concept of morality, and precludes the possibility of freedom which is the sine qua non of all moral responsibility, obligation, and merit.

Man in his abject nothingness stands before God. To stand before God means that man is confronted with the

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- 1) E. Troeltsch: Soziallehren der Christlichen Kirchen und Gruppen; p. 265.
 - 2) To illustrate this trend I draw mostly upon the writings of Karl Barth.
 - 3) "Der Praedestinationsgedanke ... ist als Korrektive zu einer saekularisierten "christlichen" Humanitaetsethik berechtigt ... als ... Prinzip einer Ethik ist er unmoglich weil er als solches die ethische Situation selbst aufhebt". John Cullberg: Das Problem der Ethik in der dialektischen Theologie, p. 45.; Uppsala Universitets Arsskrift, 1938.

question: what ought I to do? The question challenges¹⁾ man in all seriousness and he is obliged to answer it, but he cannot answer it because the answer had been decided for him since the beginning of time in God's inscrutable decree²⁾. This is man's existential position, the state of man.

Though the existential situation is the same for all men, realiter men are not conscious of their tragic position unless God opens their hearts and their eyes, by a special individual dispensation of his grace to this or to that man: "Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will and whom he will he hardeneth"³⁾. Man cannot on his own initiative call on God, because there is no point at which man can contact God⁴⁾

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- 1) i.e. "Die grosse Stoerung" K. Barth's comprehensive title for chapters dealing with ethical problems in Der Roemerbrief viz p. 410. "Die grosse Stoerung" ist nichts anderes als die Beunruhigung durch den den Menschen in absolute Ungewissheit versetzenden Praedestinationsgedanken! H. Eklund, quoted by J. Cullberg; idem. p. 43.
 - 2) "Das ist also die Existentialitaet des Menschen dass er die ethische Frage hoert und ernst nimmt ... dass er antworten soll aber nicht antworten kann, weil die Antwort von Ewigkeit her in Gottes Ratschluss geschrieben steht - und dass er dabei Gott die Ehre gibt", viz J. Cullberg, idem.
 - 3) Romans IX, 18.
 - 4) "Anknuepfungspunkt" viz Barth's answer "Nein!" to Emil Brunner's "Natur und Gnade". Barth argues against Brunner that man has lost his image of God through original sin and therefore his humanity implies no longer a capacity to hear the word of God, the point of contact exists no longer. The only contact now is through Christ and through the Christian faith and only through it. Not man as such, but man as a member of the church - can be addressed by God.

Man cannot go in search of what he knows not that he misses he cannot love God unless God loves him first. Far from being conscious of God's absence, or his need of God unless God addresses his word to man. "The knowledge of God's word is not possible without the experience of God's word. The word of God is known when it makes itself known"¹⁾. Man's response to God is thus dependent on a twofold act of grace from God. God must address man before man can repond, and he must turn man's heart to the right response²⁾. How does God address man? What is the right response to God? Can man acquire any merit, value, dignity by making the right response? Can he solve his problem in this way? First then God address man in one way and in one way only: by his revealed word: the commandments and the evangelion. Since man has no value in himself what is commanded by God is not determined by any consideration except God's arbitrary will. Hence "no Theological Ethics can decide what is commanded by God either by having recourse to the eternal order of creation"¹⁾ or by analogy from this or that Bible verse ... what is commanded

1) K. Barth: Die Kirchliche Dogmatik; Die Lehre vom Worte Gottes. 1, p. 260.

i.e. "die verantwortliche Antwort", viz Christliche Dogmatik, etc.

i.e. "ad imaginem dei crevit illum" viz p. 441

by God only God himself can tell us - in his commandment."¹⁾

- 1) K. Barth: *Zwischen den Zeiten*. p. 216. compare also Gorer's amazingly analogous psychographical description of the Russian character: "... the ordinary person cannot imagine himself thinking or feeling as the leader would do - when he does not have the necessary information (which by the nature of things the ordinary person can never have). This point can perhaps be most clearly seen by means of a contrast with the typical attitude of the Japanese ... to their Emperor. Although the Japanese regard their emperor with the greatest veneration it was always theoretically possible for a Japanese to know (as it were by introspection (immanence) what the Imperial will was and to act accordingly. The typical excuse for political assassination was that the persons assassinated were 'failing to carry out the will of the emperor'. This implies that the assassin, his judges and the public opinion to which he appealed had means of knowing the will of the emperor which were not dependent on the emperor's announcement on the situation or the person in question. On a less marked level an English or American ship's captain for example can make decisions as the King's or the President's representative without feeling (in many cases) the necessity for prior consultation and concrete authorisation. With the mass of Great Russians this is not the case. They cannot, their leader's will in small things or in great until the leader has declared it. Once the leader has made the declaration the Russians will dedicate all their energies and easily their own lives to the fulfilment of the express commands, wishes, plans. No ordinary considerations can stand in the way of carrying out the Leader's will, a course of action so started can only be stopped or reversed by the leader himself making another declaration of his will." G. Gorer: *The Great Russians*, pp. 167 - 168. From this description it would seem that the Russians have a religious attitude to their country and its ruler, where the English and the Americans take the moral approach. This tallies with some of our otherwise reached conclusions namely the affinity between the moral attitude and civil democracy on the one hand, and the religious attitude and hierarchical states on the other.

God's revealed commandments are basically two: "To love God" and to "love one's neighbour". The two are not identical, nor is the second merely relative or less obligatory than the first. The first, again, draws its validity not from the certain qualifications of God's nature (his infinite goodness, for instance) but like the second, directly from God's will. Both commandments are valid, and absolutely valid, because they are his commandments. Morality is the keeping of his commandments. Whatever we decide, when faced by his commandments is primarily a decision for or against him¹⁾. Every decision for God is a decision *ad majorem dei gloriam*, a decision for the glory of God. But how can man in his abject nothingness do anything for the glory of God? All he can do is to testify to this glory "All moral action is but a necessary and required demonstration to the glory of God"²⁾. This demonstration has (in the case of the first commandment) the morality "der gebrochenen Linie, der gebeugten Anbetung des erbarmenden Gottes"³⁾ which is the expression of the primary and appropriate response of man to

1) K. Barth: *Zwischen den Zeiten*. p. 214.

2) "Notwendige und geforderte Demonstration aber auch nur dies ist alles Ethos ... " K. Barth. *Der Roemerbrief*, p. 417.

3) K. Barth, *Der Roemerbrief*, p. 417.

God, namely the expression of humility and penance. In the case of the second commandment we testify to the glory of God by loving our, as such wholly indifferent, or even pitiful and unlovable, neighbour. There is also a third way in which we can testify by our actions to the glory of God, and thus act morally. This is the via negativa of "non revolution". "We demonstrate our faith in God's grace and in the world to come - by not destroying the order we find in this". We demonstrate our disinterestedness in this world by "not acting" against its ruling orders. Non-revolution comes thus a demonstration for the fact "that all true revolution comes from God not from human insurgents."¹⁾ Since from a moral point of view this position has the character of a practical conclusion rather than of a basic tenet, I shall discuss it at a later point, and for the moment shall return to the problem posed by God's command to "love our neighbour". What exactly does this command²⁾ mean in this context?

To understand its meaning aright we must remember, that according to Karl Barth God knows no "lost love". In the

1) K. Barth: Der Roemerbrief, p. 469.

2) In the context of the first religious attitude it remained in content identical with the basic moral law.

question God puts before man the answer is contained, the grace of responding rightly is granted by the very act to those whom God makes truly conscious of his command.

In consequence the revealed word of God is a commandment in appearance only. In reality it is a promise. Not "thou shalt ... " the imperative, but "Thou wilt" the future indicative is its grammatical form¹⁾. What God commanded in the Law he promised to bring about in the evangelion, so that the commandments of the Old Testament are both contained and superrogated by the spontaneously loving service of the New²⁾. In this new light the commandment to love

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- 1) Compare K. Barth: *Evangelium and Gesetz*: "Thou wilt ... means thou wilt love God through thy faith in Christ the Redeemer. The conversion has been achieved for man by Christ's self-sacrifice."
- 2) This mechanical division is far from being correct, compare: "Behold the days come, saith the Lord that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the days that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, which my covenant they brake although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord; But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the House of Israel. After those days saith the Lord I will put my law in their inward parts and write it in their hearts; and I will be their God and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour and every man his brother saying: Know the Lord, for they shall all know the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity and I will remember their sin no more." Jeremiah XXXI, 31-34

one's neighbour - and it makes no difference here whether we treat it as a commandment or as a promise that we will love our neighbour spontaneously - acquires a new meaning which has not the slightest resemblance with its moral meaning or its meaning as interpreted by the first religious attitude. For in this context it is our primary obligation to humble our own person by accepting our neighbour's love, rather than to respect our neighbour's person by giving him ours. This is the much harder task. For helping our neighbour would enhance our self-regard and self-importance. Accepting his help, his charity, pity, and compassion I humble myself. This self-humiliation is the more meritorious the more sinful, abject, poor and humble the neighbour is before whom I humble myself: for only if he is humble and poor and tormented can he come to me in the name of the suffering Christ¹⁾. In return I must testify to the Glory of God in my neighbour's sight. But I must have no further purpose by so testifying. I must not care directly for my neighbour or do anything directly for his sake. "Ich will nichts und ich darf nichts wollen indem ich Zeugniss ablege. Ich lebe nur das Leben meines Glaubens im Konkreten gegenueber mit dem Naechsten".

1) Das ist das verhaengnisvolle des leiblichen, des geistigen, und des geistlichen Reichtums: als Reiche brauchen wir die Menschen nicht." K. Barth: Die Grosse Barmherzigkeit, p. 153.

Indeed my neighbour as a person, is "infinitely unimportant and indifferent to me"¹⁾. Indeed he ought to remain indifferent to me for I must have no ulterior purpose when I testify to the Glory of God, for instance the purpose of converting him. Moreover I do not know whether I am supposed to further his conversion since I am not privy to God's secret counsels, and do not know whether he is one of the chosen. The fact that he has helped me, in that he is the instrument God has used to make me humble myself to the utmost proves that I have been chosen, not that he has been chosen. If in consequence of my self-humiliation I testify to the glory of god I do so spontaneously because I am urged to do so by an inner necessity, e.e. because God has bestowed his grace on me. God can, if he so wishes make my spontaneous demonstration a means whereby my neighbour as its witness is also awakened to the love of God. Thus, indirectly my demonstration for god, brought without any ulterior purpose, can become the instrument of my neighbours salvation. This indeed is the only legitimate and effective expression of my love for my neighbour.

At no point did I love my neighbour for himself. Indeed I was expressly forbidden to do so. Too great a love for

1)K. Barth: Kirchliche Dogmatik. Lehre vom Worte Gottes II, p. 484.

for a man is not compatible with Christian love¹⁾, lest the image of a man intervene between us and the love of God. At no point was there a question of respecting him. This indeed would be a sacrilegious act, an act which comes under the heading of sin, of evil and of wrong, since only God must be respected and loved: Soli Deo Gloria.

This attitude leads to a position which is directly opposed to the moral position. In it the moral law and all it imports is flatly contradicted, derided and invalidated. The two positions are hopelessly incompatible, reconciliation impossible, attempt at such reconciliation either foolish or dishonest.

Now that the 'love of one's neighbour' has been reduced to a manifestation of the love of God, we can formulate our last question in more precise terms: Does the love with which a man clings to God confer merit, dignity, value on that man's person? Barth's answer is a flat no. Man cannot acquire

1) viz: Donoso Cortes: Letter to Alberic de Blanche quoted on page 337,: "Tuve un hermono a quien vi vivir y morir, y que vivo una vida de angel, y, murio como los angeles moririan, si muririan y sin embargo, mis lagrimas non tienen fiu, ni le tendran si Dios no viene en mi ayuda. Se que non es licito querer tanto a una creatura: Se que los christianos no deben llorar a los que acaban christianamente ... y se por ultimo que San Augustin tuvo escrupulos por haber llorado a su madre ... " Compare also St. Augustine on the death of his mother: Confessiones, XIII, 4-6.

merit by performing the right action, the action pleasing to God; and it is immaterial whether he performed them in fulfilment of duty or with the spontaneous joy of the elect. The reasons are: a) Man performs this act by the Grace of God; b) Man chooses this act because God has granted him by a special dispensation of his grace, the power to choose the good. c) Man recognised the good act because god has opened his eyes by addressing him personally with his word. "The moral question 'what ought I to do?' or the question of the chosen ones 'what will I do?' is fundamentally a question to which only God himself and his actions (i.e. predestination) can provide an answer"¹⁾. It is God who both addresses and answers himself in us, who chooses to love himself through our love for him. All comes from him and all tends towards him, and there is none responsible or free, or of value but He: Soli Deo Gloria.

Since no merit, no value, no dignity, and above all no real efficacious responsibility can be predicated of man, all human deeds as human deeds are intrinsically insignificant and irrelevant. Since all human existence on the human plan is intrinsically worthless there is no great matter between good and evil in the temporal world. This permits

1) K. Barth: Der Roemerbrief, p. 459.

practically an infinite tolerance towards miscreants and offenders: "Wir koennen es uns leisten romantischer zu sein als die Romantiker und humanistischer als die Humanisten"¹⁾. This tolerance sets at nought all evaluation of human existence qua human (i.e. in this world) and dulls the moral perception by blurring the distinction between right and wrong. But this, we can now echo Barth, is of no great matter, since in the present context all moral distinctions and differentiation are devoid of meaning seeing that man cannot be considered as a moral agent at all²⁾, and that in consequence 'the ethical situation' has ceased to exist.

Moral laws can exist only in a context, which allows dignity however acquired to human beings as such. That is, all human beings as such are endowed (for whatever reason it may be) with dignity and none may be arbitrarily excluded. Morality proper, i.e. the keeping of moral laws for morality's sake can exist only in a context where the respect for the human persons is acknowledged as the reason, the only reason, (i.e. the sufficient reason) for keeping the laws. Hence the exigencies of morality will necessarily clash both in principle and in practice with the second religious attitude and will necessarily clash in principle with the first religious attitude. In practice morality does not necessarily clash with the first religious attitude, but then it does not necessarily not

1) Karl Barth: Das Wort Gottes und die Theologie, p.55.

2) Since predestination deprives man of his freedom, the sine qua non of moral actions.

clash with it. Such clashes are possible, have occurred, and are directly derived from the change of accent in the inner motivation for keeping the moral laws: from the respect of man to the love of God. This change of accent can be of incisive practical importance.

The rights and wrongs of the witch trials provide a fascinating illustration to this point. From a religious point of view they were perfectly justified, one may even say praiseworthy: "Men and women who of their own free will have chosen to succumb to the devil must be held responsible for their choice and hence punished. This punishment has moreover, the virtues of a purification. It benefits the community which is being rid of the evil influence, no less than the miscreant whom it redeems forever ... To burn them at the stake was regarded as a pious duty The soul of the miscreant held in such sinful captivity by the corrupted will within the body must be set free again. It must be delivered by confession. It must be delivered by the destruction of its prison. Torture ~~will~~ confession ... and the auto-da-fe assume the character of acts of mercy, they are the solemn salvage of something immortal from the clutches of darkness and evil ... an act of lofty devotion and pious genuflection before the great wisdom and the glory of the Lord The imposing of a supreme purification by fire was an

ecstasy and a devout communion with the will of God"¹⁾. This describes the official and indeed intrinsically religious attitude of that time to that problem: All is done for the love of God, and man salvages another man's soul for the love he bears his fellow men as a child of God whose soul belongs to god, and must be returned to god.

The specifically moral answer to this problem is given in a booklet written at a time and published at a place where witch trials were very much en vogue. "Und wer kann allen unrath solcher Gefaengnus erziehlen? Es entsetzet sich ein Christlich Gemueht wann es davon hoeret, ich geschweige siehet, die Haar stehen einem gen Berg wann mans erzehlet. Ja das Hertz im Leibe moechte einem zerspringen wann man es bedencket dass ein Mensch dem andern (die wir doch alle ungerecht) so grewlich plaget und in solchen Jammer dringet O ihr Richter ... so seydt ihr je vor Gott und Menschen daran schuldig: Wer den Menschen erhalten kann und thuts nit der ist ein Todtschleger"²⁾. No mention here of souls, of salvation, of purification, of the Glory of God and his

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- 1) Thus G. Zilboorg sums up the approach of the Malleus Maleficarum in The History of Medical Psychology, p. 156.
 - 2) Malleus Judicum: Das ist: Gesetzhammer der unbarmherzigen Hexenrichter auss dem besten Ertzgoettlicher, Natuerlicher und Weltlicher Rechten von Etlichen Christlichen Meistern geschmiedet und jetzo durch einen barmhertzigem Catholischer Christen auffs newe bestielet. (Nuernberg? XVIthe Century, app. 1580?) pp. 71, 72.

mysterious will. Mention only again and again, of Man, Man's conduct to Man, Man's cruelty to Man, Man's misuse of Man, Man's guilt before Man, Man's obligation to Man. And the significant phrase: the heart breaks in one's heart to look upon such misery. For here as always in the moral approach suffering has no supernatural virtue of purification and salvation, and when deliberately and unnecessarily (from a moral point of view) inflicted by one man upon another it is wholly and entirely evil. On this practical issue the religious and the moral attitude are directly opposed to each other, the primacy of the one neatly excluded the primacy of the other, and a choice has to be made between the two.

That time has resolved this particular contest in favour of morality is relatively of little significance: the contest is continued on other points some of which have just lately acquired particular importance, like the problem of social reforms, and the problem of the freedom of thought or the right to err.

The moral attitude to social reform is sufficiently obvious. Naturally anyone who believes that all men are possessed of dignity and entitled to be respected in their person, will be a militant champion of liberty, democracy, and Perpetual Peace in the Kantian sense.¹⁾ But what is

1) *Viz* Kant: Zum ewigen Frieden.

the religious position? There are two to accord with the two attitudes we have described above. The first as exemplified by the famous prophesy of Isaiah¹⁾, accords practically in everything with the moral vision of the perfect state to which it adds the piety of an overall orientation towards god. The second religious attitude defines a very different approach to Social reforms. Not only is it unimportant to have them since nothing in this world is of any great matter; not only is it desirable not to have them the better to show that we are aware of their essential insignificance and glad to demonstrate this awareness to the greater glory of God²⁾: It is also, according to Donoso Cortes, positively wicked to bring them about since revolutions and reforms are only the last effect of the evolution of pride; "el ultimo termino adonde ha llegado el orgulo estad el revolucion³⁾, and pride is the root of all evil: *initium omnis peccati superbia*.

Cortes argues this point as follows: Every social and political question rests on a Theological question. The course of political history is judged and decided on Theological principles. All political and social mistakes are

1) Isaiah: Chap. 11, 2-4.

2) The *via negativa* of ethical action as expounded by K. Barth viz p. 450

3) Donoso Cortes: *Pensamientos varios*, 11.

rooted in religious sins, and all religious sins are rooted in Theological errors.

Now, *initium omnis peccati superbia* - pride is the root of all sin - and man's first sin was his apostasy from god. Pride was caused by man's initial error: the belief in his innate goodness¹⁾. This error takes three forms each of which gives rise to a political or social aberration. The first error is the belief in man's immaculate conception; (*immaculate concepcion del hombre*) that is man's natural impulses are not regarded as in themselves wicked. This gives rise to a social Theory which holds that the primary task of states and governments is to satisfy the natural needs of man. The second error is the belief that man's will is intrinsically good and that he needs not god's grace to turn towards the good. This gives rise to the political theory that men of good will can form societies without having strict rules and regulations imposed on them by a mighty ruler. The third error is the belief in the independence and autonomy of reason and this gives rise to the political theory that all social and political problems can be solved on rational principles²⁾. All these errors are made by the "philosophical

1) Cortes' arguments are directed primarily against Rousseau, and the ideas which inspired the French revolution.

2) D. Cortes: sobre el principio generador de los mas graves errores de nuestros dias.

civilisation" as opposed to true Catholic faith. Since this philosophical civilisation assumes that man is capable of true knowledge by the light of his natural reason, of good counsel and good practice through the innate goodness of his will and the possession of freedom, it encourages men to order, reform, or revolutionise their societies in accordance with their chosen principles. Man constitutes himself as the authorised reformer of the world order, without himself first undergoing a reform. Thus man transforms himself into a god, he ceases to be human and becomes divine in his own eyes. He regards himself as inherently good and worthy, and he therefore assumes that all the reforms and revolutions he instigates are changes to the better¹⁾. But all these assumptions pleasant and flattering as they might be are erroneous. The truth is that man is conceived in sin (concebido en pecado) that he is incapable of good (impotencia pora el bien) and that with his apostasy from God even his reason becomes corrupted so that he no longer is capable of distinguishing Truth and error. He is sorely in need of God's grace: and god has granted him this grace by entrusting this absolute Truth to the Catholic Church. Only in Truth is life, only in the Catholic Church Salvation. 'el error mata' and 'y solo el catolicismo es la vida'. But revolution-

1) D. Cortes: Ensayo sobre el Catolicismo, el Liberalismo et el Socialismo.

of rebellion and the dictatorship of government. I prefer the dictatorship of government - it is the less oppressive. The choice is between dictatorship from below or dictatorship from above - I prefer dictatorship from above - it is born in purer and gayer spheres. The choice is between the dictatorship of the sword and the dictatorship of the dagger. I prefer the dictatorship of the sword - it is the nobler weapon"¹⁾.

The authentic religious attitude - the belief in the intrinsic worthlessness of the human being - in the practical questions of social reform necessarily leads to a position directly opposed to the moral attitude. The question whether primacy is accorded to the one or to the other is of incisive importance for social and political practice.

Our third example is the problem of absolute Truth and the freedom of thought, or the right to err. The religious position on this point is summed up in this fairly recent declaration of a Catholic dignitary: "What is disliked is the Church's affirmation that she alone has the charism of indefectibly true doctrine: It is accused of being unchristian in its intransigence. But this intransigence far from being "clean contrary to the spirit of the Gospels" is typical of the New Testament and of our Lord himself. St. Peter in the Acts asserts that elsewhere than in "Jesus

1) D. Cortes: Discours sur la dictature, French Edition 1. p. 337.

Christ the Nazarene". Salvation is not to be found and that his alone "of all the names under heaven has been appointed to men as the one by which they must needs be saved". (IV 12) in other words extra Christum nulla salus ... a most intransigent assertion ... For St. Paul the distinction between those who are within and those that are without ... the visible Church is fundamental: "the Church is the object of Christ's love. It is the Church which will be redeemed": extra ecclesiam nulla salus ... Our Lord himself in St. Matthew's Gospel (XV 24) says: "My errand is only to the lost sheep of the House of Israel". As to his own position as the one mediator - an intransigent position - He said: "No man knoweth the Father save the Son, and those to whom it is the son's good pleasure to reveal him." (XI. 27).

I would go further and say that the opposition aroused by this intransigence, insofar as it is an opposition to intransigence as such does not rest upon a Christian foundation at all and is not an expression of charity. Christianity has always maintained that Truth is one and that it is inconsistent with the manifold forms of error. It has always too when faithful to its Gospel source maintained that it possesses this Truth, that it can formulate it that it can in consequence condemn error. The hostility to this contention springs not from Christian charity but deep down, and unbeknown

to those who share it form the human spirits horror of encountering the Absolute within the temporal process ..."¹⁾

The moral attitude will be exactly opposite. It holds as always that the 'how' is more important than the 'what', the manner in which a thing is accomplished more important than the accomplished end. The sincere effort of human reason to per^{the} to/Truth is of greater value, morally speaking, than the acceptance of Truth under the dication of authority. The pursuit of Truth more admirable than the unearned possession of truth²⁾. Even the errors and failures of the pursuit have more merit than the easily achieved Truth by dication: "La raison qui vit dans l'individu, la raison qui peut errer, et qui a le droit d'errer en chacun sans que jamais on puisse la containdre a penser ce qu'elle n'a pas trouve elle-meme en toute faiblesse et en toute layaute, la raison qui n'est que la sincerite d'une ame pensant le vrai et le bien, est le trefonds de l'ame humaine et la seule chose sacree qui soit en monde" - these words of Bayle's have the authentic moral ring. How typical indeed is Bayle's insistence on the right to choose one's own way, of the right to err, of the right not to be helped, or urged or forced in any way,

1) The Abbot of Downside: Caello Tonantem, Dublin Review, Spring 1950.

2) Compare Lessing's dictum on Truth, quoted p. 95

of the right to be respected in one's independence. How significant the indifference toward the intransigence of the religious attitude as long as this intransigence is directed towards itself: i.e. the religious determination to keep its Truth uncontaminated and untouched, and how even more significant the insistence that such intransigence must not be directed against others: Neither by stopping those others to look for their own truth, not by forcing the religious Truth on them, nor by precluding their findings by the declaration that the possession of truth is arbitrarily limited to a few elects of faith. How characteristic the insistence on the universality of the right to search for Truth, and on the equal merit of all pursuit of Truth whether it achieve its end or not. The moral respect is given to human reason as such, and its efforts both of which religion regards with the greatest contempt. Another significant point is that a consensus omnium, a general agreement on Theoretical Truth is not of fundamental interest to morality as long as the moral postulate is accepted in practice and the moral law applied. A belief in one Truth, is a fundamental tenet of religion.

The Consensus omnium illuminatorum is the most important achievement of the Church, and its highest purpose¹⁾. But

1) Here too Gorer's description of the Great Russian attitude to Truth presents an amazing analogy to the religious attitude.

as far as morality is concerned it takes second place to 'le droit d'errer'. Hence, the moral attitude can treat disagreements as natural and justified privileges of human persons, whilst the religious attitude must regard them as signs of stubbornness or foolishness, or sheer wickedness and treat them as haeresies, and the willfull aberrations of haeretics.

On the question of Truth and the significance of arguments and disagreements, and their practical consequences the religious and the moral attitude occupy directly opposite positions. There is indeed a world of difference between 'la raison ... qui a le droit d'errer' and still remains 'la seule chose sacree au monde', and Pascal's remark "Toute la dignite de l'homme est en la pensee mais qu'est ce que cette pensee? Qu'ella est sottte"¹⁾. There is no way of bridging these differences and there can be no doubt that the Primacy of the one is not compatible with the Primacy of either be supplied by anything but its own domain. Therefore if the Primacy of the Moral Domain is to be upheld, it must be upheld by a gratuitous decision, a free ungrounded, unconditional choice. And this decision, this choice will have to be made with the full knowledge of its implications, and full responsibility for its consequences. What indeed does the decision to accord Primacy to the Moral Domain over

1) Pascal: Pensees; XXIV, 53.

the Religious imply?

Before attempting to answer this question we must review however briefly the tenets of maximalism. Maximalism, has been defined, as a certain interpretation of the intuitive and immediate perception individual men have of their own being. In this, the vitalistic experience, the individual perceives himself as a unique being endowed with infinite value. This infinite value is rooted not in the individual's humanity, his shared capacities, but in his individuality, his exclusive concrete qualities. The basic concept of this experience is: "Myself-as-infinitely-valuable"¹⁾. Its postulate runs: "I alone am of value." And its law commands "Be at the maximum of value i.e. Actualise your potentialities to the highest degree," Insofar as this experience is accessible and presumably common to all men Nietzsche's dictum that "Morality with its universal decrees wrongs every individual", is valid. However this is not the most important nor the most authentic application of maximalism. Since every human being is unique, this uniqueness as a common property looses its precise maximalist meaning. Maximalism attains its full meaning only when the objective value of a person approximates the subjective self-evaluation of that

1) This concept is a complex concept. It is combined from the term: I exist. I am I. I am of infinite value because I am I.

person i.e. when the maximalist happens to be a truly exceptional and outstanding human being. It must however be noted that the maximalist must be outstanding and exceptional by virtue of his own concrete qualities, not as a member of a clique or elite. The maximalism of the aristocratic elite in Pareto's sense¹⁾, is only a pseudo-maximalism. True enough such elites arrogate the prerogatives of the exceptional individual. To be his own Truth, his own norm, his own law: the origin, ground and reason at once of what is good, right and true²⁾. But as the laws, norms, and rules defined by such elites, are generated determined and vindicated by the mutual and reciprocal respect which the individual members show each other, (not by the arbitrary autonomy of one individual) the basic attitude of an elite group coincides with the attitude of double morality³⁾ when the members of the elite regard each other as equal, and with an idolatrous

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- 1) "La storia e un cimitero di aristocrazie" - Pareto, Trattato di sociologia & 2053. "Toute elite qui n'est pas prete a livrer bataille, pour defendre ses positions est en plaine decadence." Pareto: Les Systemes socialistes I. p.40. As long as the elite is powerful enough to keep its rights or assured enough to fight for them, these rights are the truly 'moral' rights (i.e. maximalist rights).
- 2) Compare Pareto, who follows Nietzsche in defining man as a deceiving and deceived being. Man is deceived insofar as he believes that science and philosophy are rational, and that in them reason seeks and can seek objective knowledge. Man is the deceiver, insofar as he always masks his lust for power with moral, legal and religious images, and because he is compelled to do so if he does not wish to appear - in his bare factuality - like a beast of prey.
- 3) Compare page 261

(feudal, bureaucratic or racial) interpretation of the initial ~~exp~~erience of man's nothingness if members of the elite regard each other as occupying relative rungs on a rigid scale of values, i.e. form a hierarchy.

The elite or clique attitude is further disqualified from ranging as an authentic instance of maximalism by lacking the genuine and compelling basic experience¹⁾, which is the sine-qua-non of the ~~max~~imalist conviction.

The basic postulate of maximalism²⁾ is directly opposed to the basic postulate of morality³⁾, and the maximalist law⁴⁾ conflicts and clashes in principle and in practice with the moral law⁵⁾. The maximalist argument in support of its transgression of the moral law runs as follows: Men are unequal in their very being. The exceptional man alone is **of** value. The outstanding personality alone is endowed with dignity. The exceptional individual is the only valuable being, the only being which is an end-to-itself. This being must not be used as a means for the benefit of worthless

1) As well as the objective wherewithal.

2) I alone among man of value, i.e. all men (except me) are of no importance.

3) All men have value.

4) Be at the maximum of value: i.e. use everything as a means to the only end which is thyself.

5) Use no other man as a means.

and insignificant beings. On the contrary, these worthless and insignificant beings ought to serve as a means for the purposes of the valuable being, i.e. treated as means to the end which is the valuable being. A respect for others and a self-limitation for the sake of others i.e. obedience to the moral law, would in the cases of the exceptional individual be a sin against maximalism which is a sin against 'Nature'. The exceptional individual has a right may a duty to disregard the moral law. It is a duty to himself a duty to his exceptional destiny, his daimon. But it is also more. It is a cosmic duty. For the Exceptional Man, the Superman is the purpose and the aim of all creation: in him the excellence of a generation or many generations is gathered, in him qualities it has taken ages to breed are distilled to a perfect blend; in him the final destiny of mankind is consummated. By cultivating and perfecting his own excellence he endows the world with what it most desires: Value¹⁾. He is thus the manifestation, the redeemer, the fulfiller and the purpose of creation. It is characteristic of the exceptional man that his destiny, his daimon pulsates in exact harmony with the cosmic ebb and tide. Indeed the truly exceptional as he is born triumphantly on the crests, acquires himself the quality of a cosmic power, a natural force. He is his own

1) Objective entitlement is therefore essential.

daimon, his own destiny, and the daimon and the destiny of many others. To the exceptional man himself, this latter result is of no importance. Driven by his daaimon, lured by his destiny, the exceptional man obeys the cosmic will which is his own. He cared not whom he tramples underfoot. And whether the practical outcome, be ruin or salvation, glory or perdition he cares not one wit. For in all his deeds he pursues only himself, and serves only himself: His law is: Be at the maximum of value, be at the maximum of actuality¹⁾, be at the maximum of yourself.

Maximalism of person - can be achieved in different ways, realised in different manners. It can be pursued in the comprehensiveness and the universality of knowledge and virtues and excellences. The maximalist law is made to determine the "Renaissance ideal". Thus it was conceived and defined by Goethe, by Humboldt, by the Humanist educational system. In this form a certain harmony and inner balance softens the harsher implications of the Maximalist view point. But the maximalist ideal can also be conceived as the maximal, extreme single-minded concentration on one particular and dominant trait in the Exceptional Man's Nature: It is then that fanaticism is born, and the full implication of the maximalist attitude becomes apparent. At the same time the feeling

1) i.e. *évergéia*

of freedom, of riding the crest, of living to the full, of fulfilling a destiny are intensified to the highest pitch. The Men of Power, the Men of Destiny (Napoleon for instance) as well as the Artists, the Explorers, the Visionary Philosopher, even some religious mystics are of this description. As long as they ride the crest, as long as the beat of their lives is corythmical with that of nature, their unimpeded progress, their miraculous successes and achievements seem to bespeak the blessing and the grace of God on all their doing. But the god whose blessed they are is not the Transcendental and Personal God of the Bible, not even the impersonal unmoved mover of Aristotle.

He is a spirit of Nature, a pulsating force blindly forging ahead into the new: "This cosmic spirit must not be mistaken for the supernatural God of Christianity. Nor must those whom he endows with so perfect an empathy into his own nature that they seem themselves manifestations of l'elan vital, think of themselves as thereby partaking of the blessed society of those to whom God has given the power of Christian love¹⁾. True, the Vitalistic experience leads to Vitalism (i.e. Maximalism) and Christianity. But its dualism is morally/differentⁱⁿ. It replaces the Christian opposite of God and the Devil, good and evil with the vitalistic opposites

1) Bergson's conception in Les deu x Sources de la morale et de la Religion.

life - death, elan vital - apathy."¹⁾

The maximalist attitude stands in opposition to the religious attitude as well as to the moral attitude. It has however more affinity with the religious than with the moral attitude as its basic experience, in a sense, is the inverse of the religious experience: Man has become his own God, and his dignity and value rest no longer in his shared humanity, but in his individual and unique personality, whose sacred purposes all other men must lovingly serve as means and humbly adore, even as in the religious domain men are required to serve²⁾ God lovingly and adore him humbly.

To mark the boundary stones between the religious, the moral, and the maximalist positions let us pass the following instances in quick review:

<u>Man:</u>	Moral man wants and demands justice. religious man is in dire need of mercy and hopes for it. maximalist man wishes for neither justice nor mercy for he has luck.
<u>Truth:</u>	Morally: neutral concept, religious: essence, maximalist: convention. a moral virtue, a religious sin, a weakening of the maximalist position.

1) Van Bruggen: Im Schatten des Nihilismus: Die Expressionistische Lyrik Deutschlands: p. 175.

2) i.e. regard themselves as means to God's greater glory.

- Tolerance: a moral virtue, a religious sin, a weakening of the maximalist position.
- Charity: a moral faux pas, a religious virtue, a maximalist crime.
- Pride: a morally ambivalent term, a religious error, a maximalist virtue.
- Democracy: a morally valuable state; a religiously questionable state, a maximalist abomination.
- Predestination: a doctrine abhorrent to morality; essential to religion; self-understood fact for the maximalist.
- Dignity of Man: a morally essential doctrine; sinful doctrine for religion, a bivalent term for the maximalist.
- Autonomy: moral value, religious sin, maximalist value: and so on.

The hurried examples are enough to show that the various attitudes are bound to clash in the majority of instances whenever practical decisions are required, and that in the minority of instances when they do not actually clash, the difference of accent makes what seemed at first blush, identical merely similar decisions¹⁾. Since there exists no point of contact between different domains, none of them can be demonstrated to be worthy of unquestionable primacy over the others.

1) i.e. similar in appearance, dissimilar in substance.

If such primacy is accorded to any one domain, it is accorded by an arbitrary resolve, by einem Machtspruch des Willens. The domain to whom we accord undisputed primacy over our conative lives acquires and keeps that primacy on the strength of the initial and subsequent affirmatory resolutions. Obviously in the present context we are first and foremost interested in the actual consequences of a resolution in favour of the moral domain. Assuming then that we resolved to accord primacy to the moral domain, how would this affect our position vis-a-vis the religious domain? And vis-a-vis the maximalist domain?

A resolution in favour of the moral domain leads first of all to the denial of the absolute validity of the Religious domain. This denial is the denial of a body of persuasions which may well prove the more significant vision of reality; the more penetrating comprehension of man's estate and nature; the richer, more entrancing, more satisfactory way of thinking. For though one may continue to follow theological disputations, and even exercise one's own mind with religious problems, one does so through an insulating wall, as it were. The living current of religious thought is cut off when one approaches with mental provisions and reservations the prejudicial 'but's and 'although's instilled by a primarily moral orientation.

Secondly one accepts an obligation to give moral duties precedence, at all times and in all instances over any religious obligations one may have even if doing this runs counter to the very tenets of one's faith.

If morality is to take precedence over Religion then the Duty to Man must come before the duty to God. It needs the courage of all one's convictions to put this consequence so bluntly to oneself; The duty to man is to come before the duty to God, and consideration and respect for the human person are to come before consideration and respect for God: his revealed word, his manifest will, his institutions. There is little consolation in the thought that God may well wish us to choose like this since we did not choose the primacy of the moral domain for the love of God but out of respect for man. Similarly we choose to treat all men as equally possessed of human dignity, although it is manifest that men are by no means equal, in dignity or in anything else. And again it may be argued that such might be God's secret intention, God's test for the goodness of our will: seeing that if men were really equal in all things there would be no special merit in treating them with equal respect. But then we would have to answer honestly that "we do not know if this is really God's wish and as moral agents we do not care", our actions are not informed by a desire to divine

God's will but by a determination to conform to a moral law we have set before ourselves for the sake of the respect we have for human persons. Therefore were we even convinced that Goethe gauged God's purpose more correctly when he wrote (this from a purely Maximalist attitude):

Was? ihr missbilligt den kraeftigen Sturm
 Des Uebermuths, verlogne Pfaffen?
 Haett' Allah mich bestimmt zum Wurm 1)
 So haett' er mich als Wurm geschaffen¹⁾.

We would still insist on the equal dignity of all men, and the prohibition against violating this dignity in anyone, since "as moral agents we care not one bit for God's intentions, or the rights of the Exceptional Man." For this is another consequence of the decision to accord primacy to the Moral Domain: it means putting the duty to another before the duty to oneself. Though this does not imply that I have a duty to use myself as a means for another man's end, I also have no right to use men as a means to my ends: The duty to respect another person, comes before the duty I have towards myself in the sense that if my destiny and my nature, require the sacrifice of other people's lives, happiness, freedom, or dignity I must abstain from following that particular star no matter how compelling the temptation.

This is a consequence of extreme seriousness. Its

1) Goethe: West-Oestlicher Diwan.

closer consideration will find a more appropriate and convenient place, in the discussion of our third problem.

To recapitulate: According Primacy to the Moral Domain over the maximalist, precedence to our duty to others over our duty to ourselves, may nearly, and probably will mean that one has to forego one's chance of self-perfection, of achievement, to forego the happiness and the joy that comes from natural inclinations given their full head, natural gifts exercised to the full. If we are very unlucky it may amount to a life missed, a destiny denied, which is always a piteous or even a ludicrous sight. We might well ask ourselves whether Morality is worth having at that price? Especially ~~when~~ we consider that it is by a gratuitous and arbitrary decision that we first gave it this Primacy, first formulated the moral postulate, first interpreted our primary intuition of man's humanity, in the moral sense first chose indeed to stress this intuition as against the other two.

In short, out of ~~an~~ ungrounded, unjustified, unvindicable respect for the persons, the dignity, the very humanity in other men, we ~~gratu~~ ously and deliberately take upon ourselves an obligation to commit every conceivable offence against ourselves, the world, the values and ends, even against God, rather than break faith with our fellowmen. This decision seems the more gratuitous since the primary intuition ~~which~~

is its ground origin could a) have been interpreted differently; and b) as only one of three equally primary, immediate and decisive experiences. I shall leave point a) for the moment since it forms part of the third problem which remains yet to be discussed. As for b) it is interesting to note that all men are capable of all the three primary experiences and that indeed no man can fully escape any of them. Hence no man by choosing one can completely wipe out the memory of the other two. Their persistence of the basic moral intuition (of man's humanity, or man's inviolable dignity) can be clearly observed in the fact that maximalist and religious transgressions against the law (i.e. when they transgress the moral law by applying it with arbitrary limitations and exceptions) are unconsciously driven to declare that those against whom they transgressed were not really human. Thus Aristotle felt impelled to define slaves as instruments which by an oversight or indolence of nature are shaped like humans. Cicero felt moved to declare that 'alieae nationes servitutem pati possunt'. The torturing judges in the witch trials were wont to allude to the poor brutes whom they tormented as "our little song-birds"¹⁾. Heretics and dissenters were described as possessed by Devils. To stress this for a long

1) Malleus Judicum; p.77; Nun hoeret wieter zu ihr Herren lasse Euch unter Augen stellen ... wann ihr etliche Menschen habt die ihr wohl spoettlich ewer schoenes Gemuechts gegen den Armen zu erkennen gebende Voegel zu nennen pflegt so nach eurem gefallen singen sollen ...

time not 'Mensch' but 'Christenmensch' was the terminus technicus for human being.

The upper classes in the nineteenth century were convinced that the poor did not "feel" things as "intensely" as themselves were not human beings of the same order. Viscount Curzon on seeing some English soldiers bathing in a stream is supposed to have said: "I didn't realise the working classes had such white skin." The Germans declared every nation they wanted to rob, exploit, or murder, to be merely subhuman etc. etc. The offenders most immune against the persistence of the moral intuition are the religious (since they are secure in God to whom they pass on their inner uneasiness) or those benefactors of humanity who claim to seek the good of all mankind even whilst most horribly offending against that part which they have in their power (they are secure in a fanatic belief in the goodness of their own doctrine, and more important: in a genuine desire to extend their supposedly righteous rule to the whole world). But no single human being choosing the maximalist attitude can altogether rid itself of the memory of the moral intuition or altogether quieten its misgivings on this point without lapsing into insanity (viz Caligula, Nero, indeed what is termed the Caesarean complex). As for the primary religious intuition a Maximalist can always painlessly absorb it into the system of his life and conduct, under the heading of "extremes-of-experience", new instances

of which are always welcome to him. Similarly the basic maximalist and religious intuitions persist inspite of the moral choice and thus exige the moral choice to be reaffirmed and renewed from time to time.

There exists no aspect or sense in which the primary moral intuition can be said to be completely and absolutely superior to the other two. There can be no ultimate ground for deciding in favour of the Primacy of the Moral Domain over the Religious and the Maximalist, other than this deliberate, and gratuituous choice itself. Therefore if anyone chooses to reject the Primacy of the Moral Domain he is entitled to do so as and when he pleased without belittling thereby or prejudicing in any way the value of his choice. He must however stand by his choice and claim such merit as he may for it, but one thing he must never do: he must never try to claim moral merit.

This we are perfectly entitled to demand of anyone, no matter what his fundamental decision, since this demand is simply a demand for intellectual honesty. Intellectual honesty whereby I mean an effort to discriminate and distinguish as sharply and as firmly as one can between the concepts with which one operates, is not (as we have shown on a previous occasion) a moral virtue. It is a quality required of all such as wish to take part in a theoretical discussion, and

therefore a quality required also of those who rejected the basic moral postulate, insofar as they wish to discuss their decision, its implications, grounds consequences etc. That is, it is incumbent on all those who have made the maximalist or the religious decision not to claim moral merit for their respective maximalist and religious choices.

This brings us right to our last question:

c) Can an exclusive definition of Ethics, i.e. a definition of Ethics based exclusively on the concept of the morally right, be cleared of the charges of artificiality, narrowness and insufficiency? In other words: Is the concept of the morally right a sufficient basis for a comprehensive system of Ethics?

Obviously any serious objection to an excessively narrow definition of morality, cannot intend to force maximalist or religious obligations into the precincts of the moral domain, or under the cover of morality's name. We are entitled to take it that all such obligations¹⁾ are eliminated from the first. We also take it that their claims for primacy over moral obligations are rejected as immoral, i.e. incompatible with the exigencies of morality. What then are we asked to include in the moral domain? Certainly not some

1) i.e. maximalist obligations and religious obligations. I am not thinking here of Religious systems which are moral Theories in religious trappings.

obligation whose origins cannot be traced back to the primary moral experience, for such an obligation would come under the jurisdiction of the maximalist or under the jurisdiction of the religious domain. It must be some obligation grounded in the primary moral experience, the intuitive vision of man's humanity.

Now, the initial experience of man's humanity can be conceived in three different ways:¹⁾ Man is humanity²⁾. Man is part of humanity³⁾ Man is partaking in humanity.

In the first case the individual incarnates, completely and absolutely, the whole significance and value of humanity. The individual is the unconditional, inalienable non-derivative value: humanity. Human dignity is the essential attribute of the individual. This is the specifically moral conception which I have used throughout.

In the second case the individual exists as part of a whole, as part of human society, as a zoon politicon. The individual incarnates humanity, is the bearer of its unconditional inalienable, non-derivative value and is possessed of dignity insofar as he is a zoon politicon. His dignity remains his inalienable attribute, but it acquires significance, and reality only in the social setting, as a diamond acquires fire only in the rays of light. Hence the more advanced and perfect the society in which the individual exists, the greater the

sparkle he can produce. The individual advances in and through society, and morality though keeping him in mind as an individual, will find it best to approach him by way of his community. This is the Utilitarian approach. Naturally the Utilitarian takes the advancement, improvement, enlightenment and enrichment of society to be his primary obligation. The respect for the human person and its inviolable dignity may, and probably is, a part and even a purpose of utilitarian conduct. It is however always subordinate and subject to the primary utilitarian obligation: the duty to society comes before the duty to the individual.

In the third case the individual per se is devoid of all value, all value and all dignity being centred in the idea of humanity. The individual exists not as a part of humanity, but as a means, a step, a rung on the ladder to humanity¹⁾. The individual is valuable insofar as he serves, furthers, helps the ends of humanity. The ends of humanity are its self-realisation and they are variously defined as the survival of the Race, the survival of the State, the perfection of the Race, the perfection of the State. This conception of man's humanity shades imperceptibly into certain interpretation of the Nihilistic intuition of man's nothingness and, in the

1) Compare Kant's "Ich lerne die Menschen ehren, i.e. die Menschen = people, not Menschheit = humanity: viz. p-

end, can be hardly distinguished from them. Humanity, the human race, the state become Idols before whom man cringes in utter dependence. By this attitude hierarchial societies of all descriptions are created: vast serfdoms, and small oppressive tyrannies. When corrupt these societies become the playground of a few opportune 'maximalists'. If they possess integrity these societies define the morality of an ant-heap when orientated towards the State, or the morality of a breeding farm when orientated towards the future of the Race. Obviously we are not meant to allow these principles into the moral domain and expected to give them the cover of morality's name.

The only serious claimant for the right of entry into the moral domain and the right to bear morality's name is the Utilitarian view of duty. The Utilitarian view (being based as we experience of man's humanity) alone of all divergent conceptions of the nature of man, can be defined in the moral domain. For it alone accords a modicum of autonomous Dignity to man. Now, the utilitarian attitude defines an obligation of its own: the duty to society, and it claims that this duty overrides the moral law in the case of clash. On the other hand the moral law itself may be defined as a duty to society, and if it be found to be of sufficient importance

i.e. usefulness, it may even be made to override other more specifically Utilitarian duties. The specific Utilitarian duty is the duty to benefit in general the society in which we live. We can so benefit in general the society in which we live either by enriching it materially, or by enriching it spiritually, either by improving it materially or by improving it spiritually. Material enrichment (for instance buildings, factories, commerce, etc.) and material improvement (health, sports, etc.) are usually subsumed under the name of welfare, spiritual enrichment (theatres, paintings, sculptures, books) and spiritual improvement (education, lectures, sermons, etc.) are subsumed under the name of enlightenment.

Our duty, on this view, is to work for the welfare and the enlightenment of the society of which we are part. Put like this it sounds plausible enough, it even sounds promising. But when we wish to take a closer view of these "duties" they simply dissolve. Imagine for instance a man, let us call him John, getting up in the morning and saying to himself: "What am I going to do for my country's welfare today?" It so happens that his country is in need of engineers. Can John go forth **of** a morning and build a bridge or construct a machine? Can he issue forth of an evening and give a

lecture on modern music or croone a song into a microphone, when and where his country may want such enlightenment and amusements? Years of training are needed for proficiency in any profession. Besides anything turned out on demand like that will probably not be of lasting value, and surely the Utilitarian wishes to be of use rather than to seem of use. It appears therefore that the best and most advisable thing for John to do is to stay quietly at home and train for a profession till he be really proficient. But what profession? Evidently one that will prove most useful to the country like engineering for instance, or the army. But suppose John is no good at mathematics and hates army life. Eventually he will prove a burden rather than an asset to his country and in addition will have wasted years of training. Under the circumstances it seems preferable that John should choose the profession for which he is gifted and hope that it will prove of use to his country. But again John will be of much greater use at a job he loves doing for its own sake and regardless of its ultimate usefulness. It therefore seems imperative that John should choose a profession he genuinely likes. It is indeed a poor excuse if a man can say no better of his life's employment than "it is useful" - (I do not refer to those who loving their work beyond anything are shy of having their passion known and therefore say

depreciatingly: "It is useful" ... but to those who hating and detesting what they do must console themselves with the knowledge that it is useful). Certainly nothing great, nothing lasting can be achieved in this manner. All the great achievements, the important and decisive changes of which humanity was the beneficiary, were wrought by and must be credited to men whose soul and heart were in the work they were doing, who found happiness and satisfaction in their labour, and who had found their task by following their natural inclinations and gifts. The duty to benefit humanity defeats itself qua duty.

Besides, to assume that men approach given situations saying to themselves "Now how can I improve this situation and by what?" in the manner of a teacher facing his class and saying to himself, "Now what shall I ask whom?" seems to me a strange and artificial description of the way in which men act. It seems to me that men are rather in the position of the pupil. They are part of the class which is asked questions and they naturally want to answer rightly, to get good marks, or alternatively to be noisy and naughty, to get turned out of the classroom, etc. Men are part of the situation, and they have their own desires in the matter, and their own inclinations, and they envisage certain courses of action which they would like to follow, and I can see no reason

why they should not follow them. It seems indeed absurd to make the choice of all one's likes and dislikes, the choice of all one's activities a matter of duty; and the whole approach, the very posing of the question seems at fault. It can in most cases be traced back to an initial misinterpretation of the nature and the function of morality¹⁾.

Utilitarians, however, sometimes put forward another argument which on the face of it, seems valid enough²⁾. They claim that just as I have to ask myself whether by my proposed action I do not infringe the moral law, I also ought to ask myself whether by the proposed action I do not infringe the Utilitarian law. That is whether my action may not have pernicious or unpleasant consequences for the society in which I live. Similarly, when the utilitarian considerations clash with the moral law I must ask myself which I prefer to infringe.³⁾

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- 1) The only case in which this description of conduct might apply is when the family solicitor is called in to clear up the mess into which the family has got itself: he indeed seems to say: "Now let us see what the best course is to get you out of this?" But then he is an outside consultant his inclinations and desires are not involved, etc. Except perhaps his desire to help. But so is the desire of people who desire to benefit humanity. Utilitarianism however deals not with a desire to benefit humanity which is its own justification, but with a duty to benefit humanity which needs to be justified. Aspects of the problems have been discussed under the heading of imperfect duties (positive duties).
 - 2) Thus far the Rossian approach to Ethics.
 - 3) i.e. The utilitarian obligation, like the moral, is applied as a criterion and a regulative principle: i.e. in the intrinsically moral manner. It is defined as a perfect (i.e. negative) duty.

Supposing then that though my action does not infringe the moral law, its outcome may be pernicious or unpleasant: By telling a poet the truth¹⁾ about his poems I may cause him to go home and hang himself or alternatively to break up all the pottery in the house of the mutual friend where we meet. I should, therefore, knowing the sensitive nature of poets, refrain from voicing my criticism too plainly. On the other hand for all I know he might go home in a rage and write something beautiful, and then my action would have the most salutary effect. Knowing the unaccountable reactions of poets I should therefore risk the truth¹⁾.

This simple example brings out the problem: There is my initial right (!) action; there is the unforeseeable reaction it may arouse in another agent; there are the consequences. The Utilitarian consideration overlooks the salient, the important point; the existence of the other agent. It treats this free and presumably rational agent as though he were but another thing to be improved or enlightened or benefited as I please. But the moment the action has passed from me to that other agent, it is no longer I, but he, who is the subject of the action. He will react, not like a punching-ball (coming back at the same angle), but like a human being.

1) i.e. a truthful and sincere statement of my opinion.

He will be angry or amused. He will feel insulted or stimulated. He will say or do one thing or another, but whatever he does is no longer my responsibility but his. To think otherwise is to deprive him of his status as a person.

I have, however, dealt with this question from the aspect forced upon me by the Utilitarian interjection. Actually, I do not think that in a case like this the question of the consequences of one's frankness (i.e. the effects it might have on the life of the poet) would trouble one excessively. One would naturally assume that the poet in question (poets being notoriously tough creatures) would know how to look after himself. What would trouble one in the matter is that one is much too polite to be truthful, much too conscious of the ensuing conversational strain, much too indolent to bother at all. Should one nevertheless force oneself to be frank and speak the truth, one can never be sure that one hadn't done so as a matter of self-discipline. None of these doubts and difficulties are in any way actuated by Utilitarian considerations.

There exists another, and more serious, eventuality when Utilitarian considerations openly clash with the exigencies of the moral law. This eventuality can be best characterised in the following way: There are cases when I am supposed to witness, by privy, or myself instigate an act of injustice and

when I must not take up the case, divulge it, or decline to commit it, because such a conduct would harm and injure society. How can a rejection of injustice harm society? Obviously only under very singular circumstances. In a state of war or emergency, in a situation when there is a "side which is ours" and "a side which is theirs". When any weakness I cause "our side" may give an unproportional advantage to the "other side" etc. Since this is an age of assorted wars and continual emergencies, we can safely assume that throughout our life-times there will always be a side that is ours and a side that is theirs. The 'singular circumstances' have, alas, come to stay. They are with us almost without interruption, and we have grown so used to them that they no longer seem extraordinary to us. But this is no reason to assume that they are not singular nor to assume that the exigencies of these situations are the criteria of moral judgement. As Benedetto Croce says: "It is stupid to make the state or the nation, which are necessary conditions for the higher activities of the Spirit, the highest purpose of those activities. It is just as stupid as to contend that the end purpose of thought, Art and Morality, is to provide the human organism with a good digestion. The necessity which makes the safety of a country the *suprema lex* in times of war and emergency corresponds to the situation of a man whose spiritual

activities are suspended whilst his stomach is out of order and he awaits its restoration¹⁾. Therefore the moral judgement cannot be grounded in reasons of expediency, national or otherwise. The moral judgement even in case of war and revolution will remain exemplified by Montesquieu's dictum: "If I knew of an action useful to France but harmful to Europe, or useful to Europe but harmful to the rest of humanity I should consider it a crime." This being the case I am caught in the majority of conflicts between a clear moral duty to reject injustice in all cases on the one hand, and an imperative national interest not to reject it on the other. This interest may weigh so heavily in my considerations that I might decide to do as it bids me. Though I might subsequently justify my decision by explaining all the circumstances which have brought me to it, and the overwhelming nature of the interests involved, though moreover I would be ready to take full responsibility for my decision, even to the extent of claiming that if a similar situation arose I would again choose to act in this way. I should in no way try to sanctify my decision by calling it a moral decision. I should also not be prepared to demand that everybody else should act like myself, though I certainly shall expect people to act like me, and indeed

1) Viz: Benedetto Croce: The character of modern philosophy.

have acted as I have on the strength of this expectation. What **h**appened is this: I had compromised the moral law, and had done so on the assumption that my reasons for doing so were strong enough to induce all other persons concerned (i.e. all fellow patriots) to compromise at the same time and to the same extent. I cannot however demand (on moral grounds i.e. as a moral demand), that everybody compromise. If there be a man who when all others are brought to compromise, refuses to do so, no power on earth has the moral right to make him do it.¹⁾ Moreover there are certain compromises (i.e. transgressions of the moral law demanded by national interests) which no national interests are entitled to demand²⁾, and which in case they are demanded the individual must refuse to make³⁾. Where precisely this line is to be drawn⁴⁾ is a matter of some conjecture. Actually it oscillates quite a lot, (from one age to another, and from one country to another) but in any case it is a demarcation line of what I shall call

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- 1) i.e. on moral grounds, as a moral demand I might be able to demand as the basis of a contract made, i.e. a legal demand, viz p. ~~3~~
 - 2) Even a soldier is entitled to refuse to obey an "inhuman" order.
 - 3) Even a soldier is held personally (i.e. legally - from a moral point of view he is always "personally responsible") for carrying out such an order.
 - 4) By this line we differentiate Real=politiks from more honest political conduct, Barbarian from civilised people.

legalistic nature. By legalistic I wish to indicate, what is and what is not permitted by the written laws, as well as what is and what is not done according to the unwritten, tacit law of custom¹⁾, in any given society. Wherever the legalistic responsibility (punishment and public censure) may be placed in some cases, the moral responsibility in our sense rests in all cases squarely with the individual.

The moral character of Utilitarianism is due to its intrasubjectivity and to its principle "everyone to count as one and no one to count for more than one". The Utilitarian contentions that the interest of society overrides the interest of the individual and that the interest of society is eo ipso morally good, on the other hand are highly questionable. At this point indeed the implications of the second conception become apparent. If man has dignity only as part of a whole, then indeed the many are more important than the one. But if, as is the authentic moral position, man has dignity as an individual per se, then the interest of the many is not (morally speaking) more important than the interest of the individual, for dignity is not a cumulative commodity. Infringements of the moral law committed by many against one are just as wrong

1) This "legalistic morality" is what Westemmark takes to be "relative Ethics". The reason for the relativity is the temporal and local fluctuations of the demarcation line.

as those committed by one against one. From a moral point of view, the interests of society (especially as long as societies are arbitrarily limited and do not comprise the whole of Humanity) are no more sacred than those of the individual. Moral laws are indeed primarily meant to protect the individual against transgressions, even the transgressions of society. Moral laws are therefore meant to curb and limit the interest of society not to sanction them. Hence the demand that the individual sacrifice his interests to those of society is not a moral demand so long as the interests of the individual do not infringe the moral law, or so long as this is not the reason why the individual is required to forego his interests. From a moral point of view, such a demand represents an unwarranted and unjustifiable interference with the liberties of the individual. From a moral point of view the abdication of the individual: "Die Abdikation des Individuums"¹⁾ in favour of the state which we witness everywhere in the world today is a regrettable affair. In consequence, and in all sincerity I suggest that we reject the Utilitarian claim to Morality, and decline to accord moral status to the Utilitarian obligations

Is the Domain of Ethics, when even Utilitarian principles are eliminated, not too narrowly drawn, its content insufficient?

1) Compare also V. Monod: Devalorisation de l'homme; p.60. Etudes d'histoire et de Philosophie religieuses, 1935-36.

Let us consider for a moment: What do we mean by Ethics? Do we mean the whole of our conative lives? The pursuit of all the 'good's and the 'values' we can think of? Certainly not. The pursuit of some values then and others not. And here the ways divide. Some seek the 'good life' and some seek to 'benefit society' and some pursue Truth and some are dedicated to God. If one wishes one may call all this Ethics. This is not a quarrel about words. I only proposed that Ethics and Morality be reserved as appellation for that particular value, its manner of operation, and its field of action (or its domain) which, not establishing an end itself, or a purpose, acts as a limit to all pursuits of Ends and regulates them in the name of the respect we owe to the Dignity of Man in human beings, a respect which ought to stop us transgressing or trespassing against human persons in any way. Naturally since this value, its function, and its Domain by virtue of its specific nature and definition is limiting, non creative, non cumulative, non progressive, and does not generate ends, it cannot by itself constitute the 'good life'. It never by itself constitutes an action or a practical decision. But this seems to me no reason to go in frantic search for some complementary values which added with discretion, might produce a respectably large and self-sufficient domain. For purely methodical reasons it seems on the contrary, preferable to

separate, differentiate and discriminate our concepts as sharply as possible, and to pursue our divisions as far as we can.

Synthesis and synoptic views are all very well when one knows what one is putting together, what one is seeing together: i.e. after analysis. Moreover it seems that certain things are observed better apart from their organic natural setting. Their intrinsic 'differentness' and 'separateness' from the complex whole in which they are embedded, and which obscures that 'differentness', will be clearly recognised and the manner of their functions will grow more comprehensible. This does not mean that once we have observed them apart we mean to let them languish apart and function in vacuo - But it means that we will not hasten to obscure or submerge their 'separateness' again and continue to require of one thing what only another can supply. That we will never again require the 'good' to serve as a moral criterion or to determine a moral duty, nor the Right to yield material contents of action. A clear and distinct idea of Morality and a clear and distinct idea of its manner of operation seem recompense enough for the narrowness of the Ethical Domain.

One final remark on the status of morality in a comprehensive view of human conduct and human lives. Human lives and human

conduct, to recapitulate previous conclusions follow certain lines and are governed by certain rules. The lines have starting points and end points (motives and ends); the rules have principles. Human lives, human pursuits, human conduct are therefore determined by ends, motives and principles. And the principles are of three kinds: those which prescribe how to attain a pursued end, those which regulate the manner in which ends are to be pursued, those which decree what ends to pursue.

Principles which prescribe how to attain an end pursued are the hypothetical imperatives of purposive action. They are hypothetical because whether we accept them or not depends on whether or not we are pursuing, i.e. interested, in the end which they help us to attain. Ends are things which we desire, and if I do not desire a certain thing the line of conduct by which I am most likely to acquire it is of no interest to me. The hypothetical imperative which prescribes the actions to be taken is therefore a subjective maxim of limited interest. The maxims regulating scientific research, or those regulating martial careers can be safely disregarded, indeed must be disregarded by the painter, the peasant and the priest.

Rules of conduct which are derived from the object pursued are therefore not objective (i.e. generally valid) rules of

conduct. They are neither objective obligations nor universal duties. They would be universal duties or categorical imperatives only if there were an object, or objects which all men ought to pursue. If there is such an object then it ought to be pursued by all men qua men, i.e. there would have to be a point of contact between the nature of man and the object pursued. It would follow that objective maxims of conduct can be formulated with precision only from the point of view of the pursuing subject. They are derived from and grounded in a definite and circumscribed conception of the nature of man. Now the nature of man can be conceived in different ways each of which will provide humanity with an "universally" valid purpose, and objective obligation or categorical imperative of its own. The purposes so construed are defined as the higher values. The usual higher values are Beauty, Truth and Goodness. The higher values themselves can be conceived in different ways, and so can the manner of their material realisation. According to whether the realisation of higher values is located primarily without or within the human person we get three concomittant pairs of concepts to the three higher values: Artistic dreation and Self-realisation to correspond to Beauty; Scientific achievements (the body of knowledge) and religious faith to correspond to Truth; Ideal societies and moral perfection to correspond to Goodness. Concomittantly

three pairs of concepts are defined to indicate the capacities of human nature which correspond to the realised ideals, and since the twofold localisation has resulted in twofold ideals, this duplication is reflected back onto the higher values themselves. In consequence we arrive at the following correspondences: Creative capacity and Vitality, to correspond to "The Body of human aesthetic achievements" and to Maximalism (for Beauty); intellectual capacity and spiritual humility (sensitivity) to correspond to "The Body of human knowledge" and to Religion (for Truth); and Practical capacity and good will to correspond to the "Whole of human Statesmanship and Political legal structures" and to Morality (for Goodness). It must be noted that the various ideals and disciplines tend to pretend to each others qualities so that Maximalism arrogates the values of Truth and Goodness, Religion the values of Goodness and Beauty, and Morality the values of Beauty and Truth without great success.

The higher values, however conceived and interpreted, are primarily significant for the order which they impose on the lives of men. The more unavoidable, more day-to-day and commonplace pursuits of men, (for example the pursuit of the necessities, or the pursuit of material possessions) are subordinated in each case to the pursuit of one of the higher values, and thus a certain shape, a certain stamp is set on

on human life. The most important feature of this superimposed stamp is that from a combination of the end chosen (Beauty for instance) and a certain conception of the nature of man (the conception of man's unique individuality for instance) a certain law is formulated whose object it is to regulate the way in which man's usual actions are performed, a maxim of conduct in the "second degree". When the realisation of the higher values is conceived to be located without man, then the maxims of conduct of the second degree merely command that all other pursuits be regarded as insignificant and subordinate to the main pursuit which is the pursuit of the higher value. Thus the pursuit of knowledge decrees that not much time, energy or notice be given to the pursuit of material goods, and the artist is not supposed to pay too much attention to recent mathematical theories for instance. But there is no attempt to change the first degree purposes in themselves. However when the realisation of the higher Values is thought to take place within the human person, then the maxims of conduct which we have termed of "second degree" not only subordinate all other pursuits, but seek to influence or change those pursuits in themselves. Thus maximalism considers all pursuits qua pursuits good, since they intensify the vitality, enrich the personality, and heighten the value of the pursuing subject. The Maximalist categorical imperative: Be

at the maximum of yourself; tends therefore to glorify and push all human purpose to their ultima thule. Religion on the other hand views all human pursuits as supremely insignificant and even actively evil insofar as they divert part of men's attention from the contemplation of God to their own affairs. The Religious imperative "Love God, and God alone" ... "Soli Deo Gloria" tends to devalue, invalidate and deny all human purpose except the consciousness of God. Morality regards all purpose as being neither good nor evil in itself so long as it does not encroach on the prerogatives of the human person. The moral categorical imperative: "Never violate the dignity of man in thy fellow men" tends therefore to limit all purposes without glorifying, devaluating or otherwise changing them in themselves. It fulfils therefore a function very similar to that described above (viz the artist and mathematical theories) with the exception that no purpose at all, not even that of morality itself, is exempt from this limitation. All three: the maximalist, the religious and the moral views of human life can therefore be said to formulate regulative rules for human conduct.

In consequence Morality is seen to be merely one among several possible sets of regulative rules for human conduct. How then did it acquire the inordinately important place it occupies in our judgement of men? It seems to me this is so,

not because an adherence to moral laws means much¹⁾ but because a non-adherence to moral laws means more, and because given our actual "human condition" a non-adherence to the moral law is as a rule unavoidable: Given the rigidity and the extreme sensitivity of moral obligation, any purpose or ideal whole heartedly pursued must lead in one way or another to a transgression of the moral law.

I shall limit myself to two examples of the artist, and that of the statesman. The way of the artist leads through the domain of maximalism to the idolisation of his work: the lump of earth, the coloured tubes, the minor or the major key. The maximalist postulate defines its own obligation: its is: expand, increase, deepen and enrich. The expansion, increase, depth and enrichment of the self is paid for with the disregard and abuse of others. The idolisation of one's 'work' reduces one's fellow men to the level of mere means. There can be, there must be no consideration for others, no respect for their persons, their pursuits of their needs in the life of the artist. Guilt and transgression are the price of creation, and nothing in the artist's life can escape the masticating jaw of the Moloch, who will eventually spew out a poem, a canvass, five bars of music. With luck it will be a beautiful poem, a fine canvass, a most enchanting musical phrase, and everything will seem justified in retrospect.

1) I think that it is quite wrong to assume that if a man

1) be but of high moral status his other deficiencies contd. seem unimportant. It is when his moral status is low that his other excellences and virtues seem tinged with baseness.

If not the sacrifices, guilt, pain and effort have all been in vain and the wheel must be started rolling again: "il faut recommencer, toujours recommencer."

In the case of the statesman, the army commander, the politician of whatever description, the social reformer - transgression of the moral law is part of his job. People, their lives, property, dignity, are his raw material, they are by definition, his means, cyphers in his calculations. This cannot be avoided even by the most morally sensitive, the most cautious of men, if they occupy responsible positions. Indeed the greater the man the more imposing his achievement, the deeper his guilt, the graver his transgression. Even from our own limited experience we have learnt to know that try as we may we cannot avoid guilt and injustice, and lack of consideration and the trampling of other people's lives and happiness and dignity if anything, anything at all is to be achieved. No wonder then that the moral law is broken time and again. Nevertheless the moral law stands unchanged. Its demand as unconditional, its postulate as absolute, its challenge as gallant as before. We can come back to it whenever we choose and its directions will be just as clear and definite

as the first time we consciously and gladly broke it. It stand there an unchanged an unchangeable signpost to Humanity - It is we who change: Has guilt left its mark on our brow? - has it coarsened our sensibilities? - above all has it vitiated the purpose, the shining ideal for which we incurred it so bravely?

It seems to me that in all matters dealing directly with people, that is in all politics, statesmanship, in all public functions, and public offices, every transgression against the moral law hoplessly vitiates the purpose for which it was committed. Every single person violated in his liberty and dignity in the name of a political creed, vitiates that creed and no matter how fair its name at the beginning turns it into oppression and tyranny. The tragedy of public life is that one cannot choose one's enemies and that it is always the one who is lowest on the scale of morality who has the choice of weapon. It is the tragedy of war that no one is victorious till each has become like the other at their lowest common level and that all victory is pyrrhic, for the victor is the vanquished disguised as himself¹⁾.

1) Thus if the (morally!) inferior cause wins it has won an all over victory, insofar as it has not boldly killed off its adversaries it has won their souls. If the better cause wins in most cases it finds that *propter vitam vivendi perderit causas*: It defeats its adversaries bodily, but its heart has been contaminated as it must be if it is to win at all (viz the employment of spies, torture, etc.) by the moral

- 1) contd. status of the adversary so that in a way the adversary can be said to have carried off the victory over its soul. It usually takes the better cause a longer time to recuperate from its victories than to recuperate from its defeat.

The moral law reigns then supreme over all that appertains to the life of nations and societies. Those who transgress it vitiate or forfeit everything: integrity, victory, the very purposes in whose name and for whose benefit they first transgressed the moral law. Do transgressions of the moral law also affect the work of the artiste, the findings of the scientist? Does the moral law also reign supreme over the relationship of the creator to his work, the inventor to his inventions, the discoverer to his discovery, the thinker to his thought? That imperceptible coarsening of the heart, that imperceptible less in sensitivity, that comes with the transgression of the law, the disrespect and disregard for human dignity. It is felt in a coarser rime, a more vulgar tinge to the sequence of our thoughts, a poorer juxtaposition of colours and of musical notes, an inferior charting of scientific variables, a shakier formulation of mathematical equations? At times it seems clearly so¹⁾, at others one hopes that moral

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- 1) I must exempt the numerical charts of the scientist, the formulas of the mathematicians, the logical analyses of the philosophers. The pursuit of Truth it seems is untinged by the moral transgressions of those who pursue it. Not

- 1) so the reports on those pursuits and their findings, contd. which forms an indispensable part of the scientists etc. work. The books, papers, lectures of the scientist and the philosopher are just as vulnerable as the work of the sculptor or the painter. The form, the style, the expressions in which the scientist and the philosopher report their findings to the world, are indiscreet gossips who readily give away the moral status of their authors. The moral immunity of the pursuit of truth does not cover the expression of Truth, the moral immunity of the figure, the formula and the chart, does not cover the explanation, and the deduction, the hypotheses and the conclusions which are expressed in words. And humanity, even scientific humanity cannot as yet, altogether forego the use of words!

transgression marring the man but spare his work, till one comes upon that jarring note, that faulty rime, the vulgar undertone of thought, the ostentatious composition, and one is reluctantly forced to admit that the price of moral transgression is always exacted to the full. There is no escape from the exigencies of the moral law.

It is our fate and our tragedy that we can neither achieve (as statesmen, social reformers, patriots, citizens even) nor fashion (as artists, craftsman, scientist) anything without in the process incurring the guilt however slight of moral transgression, and that every transgression mars the nature of our persons and our achievements both. Between a law we must break in order to grow and a growth vitiated

by the guilt of the broken law we oscillate in trepidation,
never quite reaching the stars, never quite ready to resign:

Denn mit den Goettern
Soll sich nicht messen
Irgend ein Mensch
Hebt er sich aufwaerts
Und beruehret
Mit dem Scheitel die Sterne
Nirgends haften dann
Die unsicheren Sohlen
Und mit ihm spielen
Wolken und Winde.
Steht er mit festen
Markigen Knochen
Auf der wohlgeruendeten
Dauernden Erde
Reicht er nicht auf
Nur mit der Eiche
Oder der Rebe
Sich zu vergleichen.

THE DESIRED AND THE DESIRABLE

By PEPITA HAEZRAHI

J. S. MILL'S dictum: "The sole evidence it is possible to produce that anything is desirable is that people actually desire it"¹ has been so often refuted on so many plausible grounds that an attempt to vindicate it might not be wholly devoid of interest.

One can recognise at least three distinctions of meaning between "desired" and "desirable" which either singly or in various combinations cover all ordinary senses of the two notions. These, I shall, for want of a more precise appellation, term (*a*) "the dispositional", (*b*) "the emotive or propagandist" and (*c*) "the imperative or absolute." I shall assume that "X is desired" means in all cases "Y is now desiring X", i.e. X has overcome all rival claimants and all obstacles to Y's fullest attention. "X is desirable" however seems cap-

¹ Utilitarianism, Ch. IV.

able of three different interpretations to match the three distinctions. Thus "X is desirable" may be equivalent to: (a) "X is capable of being desired" or "X would be desired if . . ."; (b) "I approve of my (or your) desiring X"; and (c) "X is good, therefore one ought to desire X".

I wish to maintain that a consideration of the ways in which "desired" and "desirable" are actually used will show that far from being irreconcilable the difference between the two terms is one of degree rather than of kind and is adjustable to the point of interchangeability.²

(a) *The dispositional sense of "desirable"*

This is easily proved, indeed hardly a matter of dispute, in the context of the first interpretation. Here "X is desirable" i.e. "X is capable of arousing desire" strongly suggests the qualifying clause "but does not at this moment". How, then can I know that X is capable of arousing desire? Either by recalling that X has done so on some past occasion or occasions; or by its resemblance to an object which is actually desired now or which has been actually desired in the past. Thus, though I usually prefer brandy I might refuse it on an evening dedicated to whisky; i.e., though I usually find brandy desirable I now desire whisky. "The desirable" is equated with the "once, or usually desired". It might even be actually present in the form of a very faint desire, accompanying or called forth by the recollection of a past desire and immediately overridden by the much stronger desire for my present drink or by the desire to be reasonable and not mix them.

This use of "desirable" is sharply brought out by examples like "It would be desirable for me to do some work but I'd rather go to the party", or in a more famous formulation "Video meliora proboque deteriora sequor". Here "X is desirable" means "X fits into my general system of values, I approve of X, indeed I do actually desire it; but alas, I entertain

² It should be pointed out that such gradual adjustments take place where the "desired" and the "desirable" are considered against the concrete background of their actual relationships. The abstract logical relations between these two concepts remain however unaffected by such adjustments and, indeed, follow laws of their own. Thus in the context of the first interpretation—the most easily adjustable in its temporal concrete aspect, the logical relation is one of incompatibility and mutual exclusion: If X is desired (i.e. actualised) it is no longer desirable (potentially desired). In the context of the second interpretation a relation of one-sided dependence holds. The desirable is always something that is already desired. But the desired can be either desirable or undesirable. In the context of the third interpretation the desirable is completely independent and indifferent to the desired. For the desirable is defined as the good, and remains so regardless of whether it be actually desired or not. It is the object of this paper to show that this abstract relation, arrived at by a definition in vacuo, as it were, is not valid in the domain of actual relationships.

some fiercer desires which, being incompatible with X, induce me to give it up (good as it may be, fitting as it may be, desired as it may be) in favour of their own realisation”.

It should be pointed out that the reference of “desirable” in the above examples to fittingness or approval is *fortuitous* and *by no means necessary*. “Cigarettes are desirable but I desire health more and therefore will not smoke them” and “Health is desirable but I desire a smoke more and will have my cigarette” are two equally justifiable assertions. Assuming health to be indeed the greater good, this example neatly brings out my point: “desirable”, in this context, does not necessarily refer to a greater good; it connotes solely an over-ridden and sup-
planted desire. To misquote a saying of Gregory of Nazanz’ which the Master of Balliol is very fond of citing:³ “The actually desired is not necessarily the undesirable”.

The difference, then, between “desirable” and “desired” lies in the time of realisation, or in intensity and degree. The ultimate reference of the desirable (indeed its sole evidence for being desirable) is *either* to a past or future actual desire which X has or expects to be aroused *or* to a present actual, but very faint and overridden desire.

(b) *The emotive or propagandist sense of “desirable”.*

“Desirable” is often employed in a hortatory manner.⁴ At such times use is made of the double-entendre of this term with its simultaneous reference to desire and to approval, to stress the latter and thereby increase its emotive and propagandist power. An additional sleight of hand is performed by presenting this approval as applying directly to X, when in fact it applies only to the “desiring of X”. For “X is desirable” in this context means either “I approve of my desiring X” or “I approve of your desiring X”. It is of great interest to note that only the first case implies a *necessary* approval of X; the second tacitly assuming it on insufficient grounds.

Thus, when, being an addict, I say “Music is desirable”, what I mean is: “Music is a good thing; I enjoy and desire it very much; I think well of myself for desiring it, I hope I will go on desiring it”. On the other hand when disliking a certain task and wishing someone else to undertake it one says, *e.g.*: “Domestic service is desirable”, one appears to convey a

³ “The kingdom of heaven is not necessarily confined to fools.”

⁴ I deal here with the hortatory use of “desirable” only, i.e. cases where existing desires are checked or encouraged. I shall deal with the imperative sense of desirable which claims to order non-existent desires into being later. Obviously a strong hortatory flavour adheres to the imperative use; but not vice versa.

favourable attitude to domestic service but what one has is a favourable attitude to the desiring of domestic service by someone else. One says, in effect, "Domestic chores are a *bore*, how wonderful if someone else would do them".

This is a rather extreme example of the demagogic misuse to which "X is desirable" lends itself. Milder examples are met with daily as one says: "Early bed-times are desirable", or "Regular attendance at Church is desirable", when one has no intention of complying oneself but, on the other hand, has no actual distaste for these activities.

Altogether four uses of "desirable" in the hortatory sense can be distinguished: (a) "I desire X and desire to go on desiring X"; (b) "I desire X and desire somebody or everybody else to desire X"; (c) "Though I do not desire X I desire to desire it";⁵ (d) "Though I do not desire X myself I desire somebody else to desire it".

In all four cases the actual object of desire and approval is the "desiring of X" not X. This is usually misunderstood and desire and approval are assumed to apply directly to X. Sometimes, X *happens* to be *also* approved and desired and then this hasty assumption is rendered innocuous. But sometimes X is not desired and approved, and if the spurious effects of its being desired and approved be consciously misused, the results might prove pernicious.

But the sole point which need concern us here is that "X is desirable" in the hortatory sense refers to, and is directly dependent on an existing actual desire for the "desiring of X", which it tries to intensify and perpetuate (or check and lessen when "undesirable" is used).

(c) *The imperative or absolute sense of desirable.*

It is the third sense which is commonly supposed to exemplify the irreconcilability of the "desired" and the "desirable". "X is desirable" is equated to "X is good, X ought to be desired regardless of whether it is actually desired or not". In the second sense, when X is not actually desired, the imperative or absolute interpretation retains its full stringency. Thus, "X is desirable" *i.e.* "X ought to be desired" seems to imply an obligation to desire a certain object though it had never been desired before, is not desired now, and is quite incapable of

⁵ This is the hortatory equivalent of "video meliora", if a very faint desire for X is existent which I desire to render sovereign; or the hortatory equivalent of the imperative or absolute interpretation if I try to call forth a non-existent desire, by my desire for this desire. But of this later.

arousing desire even under the most auspicious of circumstances. On asking why on earth we should be obliged to desire that object at all, we are told because it is "good" (or conducive to "good")⁶ and that one should always desire what is good (or conducive to good). In short, "desirable" is the predicate of an X which, though a fit object of a judgment of approval, *i.e.* "good", *does not* affect our conative tendencies at all. By introducing an alien principle of valuation, the norm of the "good", an absolute difference in kind is assumed between the desired and the desirable.

To illustrate this point let us imagine something "good" which possesses no reference to desire; *e.g.* a certain piece of modern music. We approve of the composition in so far as it satisfies the criteria, rules and principles of what good music ought to be. Now let us assume that listening to it affords none of the pleasures associated with classical music and leaves us no desire to repeat the experience, and also fails to satisfy any desire for self-improvement or for novel experience. In short, the composition is "good" because it comes up to standard, but we do not actually desire to listen to it for any reason whatsoever. This desirable—because good—piece of music would then not be desired at all and at first blush the case would seem proved for a use of "desirable" and "desired" in the third sense.

Now this argument has a very serious flaw: it fails to account for the difference of meaning between "good" and "desirable". The hortatory power which judgments of approval (*i.e.* "good") possess in themselves is, for instance, considerably intensified⁷ and to a certain degree actualised and activated by the epithet "desirable". When instead of calling X "good" I call X "desirable" I wish to imply in addition to: (*a*) that X is good; (*b*) that the good ought to be desired (which are contained in "good"); (*c*) that the good *can* be desired: other good things in my experience have been desired; at this very moment, I desire a good thing and desire it to be desired by others;⁸ (*d*) that in a very small way it is in my power to bring a state about in which this thing will be actually desired by others, *i.e.*

⁶ Both alternatives equally satisfy the argument.

⁷ It is interesting to note that in this case the hortatory intensification draws its power from a reference to the actually "desired" and not as in the case discussed above from a reference to approval. This sheds new light on the inherent ambivalence of "desirable" (*i.e.* its simultaneous reference to "good" and to "the desired") and on the possibility of a demagogic use of this double-entendre, as at the dictate of interest and not always in accordance with one's real intentions, now the one, now the other aspect is thrown into relief.

⁸ But of this later.

by calling it "desirable" I recommend it as if it were already and generally desired; (e) that I actually, at this moment intensely desire to bring such a state about. The "desirable" in the imperative sense of "what ought to be desired" includes therefore a strong and essential reference to what is actually desired. That one ought to desire X, means that somebody exhorts one to desire X, in other words that somebody who actually desires X himself also desires others to desire X. Even the rejected piece of music must presumably have been desired, and desired passionately, by at least one person—its composer.

I cannot at this moment recall a single example of an object, which, having been considered desirable (and good), has not actually been desired by at least one person: the person who discovered it to be so. Thus, a social reformer who propagates the idea of absolute equality, desires people to desire absolute equality. He thinks that they ought to desire it. He himself approves of it and actually desires it. And though all men or the majority of men do not as yet desire it in actual fact, he does his best to bring about such a state.

The ultimate reference of the "desirable" in the sense of "what ought to be desired" is therefore to the actually desired, namely, the actually desired by the person who dictates the "ought" and brings into prominence the good hitherto neglected, overlooked or rejected. The difference between "desired" and "desirable" appears once again not so much a difference in kind, as in the generality of distribution; in short, a quantitative difference adjustable by degrees.⁹

This seems to me to prove conclusively that "the sole evidence for something being desirable is that *people* actually desire it."¹⁰ We must be careful though to point out that *evidence* does not mean *reason*. We know that X is desirable because we find ourselves: (a) desiring X and encouraged in this desire; or, (b) being admonished to desire X by somebody who having found it good, actually desires X; or, (c) being admonished to desire it by somebody who does not think X good, does not desire X but misuses the hortatory power of the word to mislead us as to the nature of X and of his feelings about X. But this is not the reason *why* X is good, nor why it is desirable. It is but the proof *that* X is desirable, *i.e.* of an existing relation between X and desire. The reasons are the actual qualities of X,

⁹ Here, as in the dispositional use of the term, what is desirable is what has not been fully realised. But whereas there the full realisation inside *one single person* had been impeded by circumstantial factors or lack of intensity, here its chief lack is scope; *i.e.* though fully realised (intensely desired by one person) it is not generally accepted and desired by others.

¹⁰ The italics are mine.

which do not concern us here. This may possibly explain why the predicates "desirable" and "desired" are not fool-proof signs for the axiological standing of an X: "the good is not necessarily the undesired"(!)

The weakness of the argument is in the indeterminate denotative scope of the term "*people*". If this be reducible to its lower limit of one, then Mill's dictum holds. But if it be taken to mean "a reasonable majority"¹¹ then it must be admitted a moot point.

In other words as long as we take Mill's dictum to be a statement about the desirable being good by virtue of the third interpretation; and the evidence for the good being desirable its being actually desired—it must be granted that this is the only way in which the desirable (and the good) can be recognised at all. But the claim that what the majority (by the way which?)¹² desires is therefore desirable *and* good, is to say the least highly questionable. Therefore we ought to be very careful to keep these two assertions apart and be fully aware whether we argue against the first or the second. This seems to me a point of some importance, when considering such arguments as are brought forward by C. L. Stevenson in *Ethics and Language*. He writes:—

"... J. S. Mill... treats the statement "*If something is desired it is desirable*", as though it were axiomatic, the antecedent being the "sole evidence" it is possible to produce for the consequent. If "desirable" meant capable of being desired, the statement would indeed be innocent enough. But Mill intends the word to carry all the import of "good". Thus understood the statement so far from being axiomatic becomes highly controversial... "*That which is desired is desirable*" is a statement characteristic of an easy-going man who wishes to encourage people to leave their present desires unchanged and conversely the statement "*That which is desired is not desirable*" is characteristic of the stern reformer who seeks to alter or inhibit existing desires. *Statements about what is desirable unlike those about what is desired, serve not to describe attitudes MERELY but to intensify or alter them.*¹³ The alleged axiom then is controversial because it leads to disagreement in attitude. Although it seems innocuous to those content with a ready status quo it is intolerable to those who are striving to make fundamental changes in men's aims; and it is particularly invidious because its concealed

¹¹ As no doubt Mill intended it to.

¹² The majority of which country, which continent, which world?

¹³ All italics are mine.

pun makes it seem to give the former people alone an axiomatic support. In defence of Mill it must be mentioned that he was assuredly not seeking this effect"¹⁴

My conclusion that statements about the desirable no less than those about the desired describe actual attitudes (namely, those of reformers and innovators of all kinds) seems born out by Stevenson's choice of the qualifying adverb *merely* in the italicised proposition (*vide supra*). That is, Stevenson holds without reservation that "if something is desirable it is also desired". Now this is really all that Mill claims on the first point, though he also seems to imply by using the term "people" that "what is desirable is *generally* desired." Nowhere does Mill assert what Stevenson by a very elementary error in logic¹⁵ takes him to assert; namely, that "if something is desired it is desirable". This Stevenson characterises as the attitude of the easy-going man and proceeds to attack. But surely no man is that easy-going. Surely some of the things actually desired must appear undesirable even to the easiest-going (for instance the desire of reformers for reforms!) What singles out the easy-going man is that he is apt to consider the usual and general desires of normal people to equate pretty nearly with what he holds desirable. He is also inclined to take the actual and general presence of a desire as a point in its favour. In this he concurs with the distributive implication of Mill's dictum so that when Stevenson attacks his stand he argues against the second (distributive) not the (essential) first aspect of Mill's dictum. The first essential aspect Stevenson does not touch upon except, unconsciously, and in a somewhat off-hand manner to agree with it.

To conclude: Mill's dictum is immune to attacks directed against his definition of the "desirable" (as implying the notion of "good" and "superior value") for in this context it seems impossible to find evidence that any desirable thing has been known to exist which has not also been actually desired by at least one person.

But the explicit inclusion of a reference to the distributive generality of being desired shifts the point of the argument. Mill goes on to argue that happiness is desirable not because it is good and because somebody desires it, but because *each* person and therefore *all* persons desire it. The proof for the desirable (what Mill desires us to desire) being desirable (good)

¹⁴ Ch. I, p. 17.

¹⁵ (a) (If something is desirable it is desired) entails (b) (All that is desirable is desired). But (b) does not *necessarily* entail (c) (All that is desired is desirable) but only (d) (Some things which are desired are desirable). (a) therefore does not entail (e) (If something is desired it is desirable).

is not that it is good and that Mill desires it, but that *all* people desire it. Mill may not have sought this effect any more than the one of which Stevenson acquits him, but these are the ultimate elements to which his argument reduces itself, and the one form in which it is open to legitimate attack.

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SOME ARGUMENTS AGAINST
G. E. MOORE'S VIEW OF THE FUNCTION OF
"GOOD" IN ETHICS

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SOME ARGUMENTS AGAINST G. E. MOORE'S VIEW OF THE FUNCTION OF "GOOD" IN ETHICS

BY PEPITA HAEZRAHI, M.A.

IN the preface to *Principia Ethica* (edition of 1903, p. viii, lines 4, 5) Moore divides the possible aims of Ethics into two main trends. The one seeks an answer to the question: "What kind of things ought to exist for their own sake?"; the other to the query: "What kinds of actions ought we to perform?" For various reasons, which shall be examined in detail as they are of paramount importance for the general intent of Moore's ethical thought, absolute primacy is given to the first query over the second. So much so that the answer to the former is regarded by Moore as *the* solution to our ethical problems, the answer to the latter following almost automatically and as a corollary from the material constitution of the answer to the first.

As all answers to the first question are commonly (and very roughly) qualified by the attribute "good", whilst those to the second are as commonly (and as roughly) qualified by the attribute "right", Moore makes his stand on this matter even more explicit, by defining "right" as "good-as-a-means". Whether this attitude is warranted by the facts of moral experience, or by stringent reasoning from these facts, will be our first preoccupation.

In compliance with the demands of all methodical enquiry into Ethics, Moore starts his analysis with the initial datum of all such enquiries: the existence *de facto* of the act of moral judgment. In our experience, he says, we cannot but come across such sentences as "This is good", "This is bad", etc. Most of these assertions are obviously concerned with human conduct even where human conduct is not explicitly stated to be their subject. Therefore Ethics is undoubtedly concerned with the question of what good conduct is. But, Moore continues, good conduct (which we must remember is more closely and immediately associated with query number two: "What kind of actions ought we to perform?" than with query number one) is a complex notion. It contains the notion of "good" as well as the notion of "conduct". For (a) Conduct may be good, bad or indifferent, and (b) Other things besides conduct may be good. Hence all ethical enquiry, whose preoccupation is after all with

"good" and "bad" (which are its own specific and constitutive notions) rather than with conduct, cannot limit itself into an analysis of the judgment of conduct. For, since "*good denotes a property that is common to conduct and other things*" (p. 2, l. 7, a. f.) we might mistake the nature of this property by limiting our enquiry to one instance only (namely good conduct) of all possible good things. Thus we might take for the general nature of "good" something specific to conduct, and not shared by all those other things which might be called good. Moreover, by thus failing to grasp the nature of good in general, we are certain to mistake the nature of its particular: good conduct.

Therefore the first task of Ethics is to investigate the nature of "good" in general. This once grasped, the nature of "good conduct" will automatically follow from it, as a corollary, important only in as much as it might furnish the means of attainment of "THE Good". By this argument Moore takes the primacy of query number one over query number two to be established irrevocably. Almost as a matter of logical consequence, the task of Ethics is pronounced to consist in the determination and enunciation of the nature of "the Good" to which we all must aspire, rather than in the discovery and enunciation of a supreme law, to be followed and realised in our conduct.

"The peculiarity of Ethics is not that it investigates assertions about human conduct but that it investigates that property of things which is denoted by the term good and the converse property denoted by the term bad. It must in order to establish its conclusions investigate the truth of *all* such assertions *except* those which assert the relation of this property only to a single existent" (p. 36 & 23, l. 2).

Another assertion of Moore's that ought to be mentioned at this point occurs in the preface, p. viii, l. 6, and runs ". . . exactly what it is that we ask about a thing when we ask whether it ought to exist for its own sake, is good, or has intrinsic value".

At this point, several questions may be raised:—

(A) Whether the contention that, other things besides conduct may be good, is true? If so:—

(α) Does this imply that all instances of the application of good have but one meaning: not in the sense of derivative or primary meaning, but in the sense that they all possess moral significance?

(β) If all instances of the application of "good" are not *ipso facto* possessed of moral significance, what exactly can their meaning be, and in what relation do they stand to the specifically moral meaning of "good"?

- (B) Whether the contention that, the property, commonly denoted by "good" comes under the jurisdiction of Ethics, in all its applications, is true, and whether its truth necessarily follows from the affirmation of (A) ?

Explanation : The property "good" as it appears in the complex notion "good conduct", possesses a specifically "moral" meaning, which is drawn either from its intrinsic nature, or from its conjunction with a certain subject, namely human conduct, *i.e.* conduct which is motivated, willed, intended, and, at least for our purposes, under the control of a free and intelligent agent. I suggest that the moral significance of "good" in the complex notion "good conduct" is based on the later part (conduct) rather than on the former (good). For "conduct" even when lacking all further qualification but that of being the motivated conduct of a free and rational agent, preserves still some moral connotation, whereas for "good" this is an open question. To illustrate this point : the moral significance of statements like : "Art is good", "Modern sanitary installations are good", is by no means self-evident, unless we are carried away by the mere similarity of expression. In some cases, as for example in "a good hiding", "a good road", etc., this lack of obvious and self-evident moral implication is even more evident. On the other hand, these statements are not devoid of sense, nor do they give the impression of being merely examples of the misuse of the property "good". Good, we might therefore conclude tentatively for the moment may be employed to qualify other things besides conduct. But in what sense, whether moral or otherwise, it is so employed must for the moment remain an open question.

In any case, even granted that (A) is true, it is premature to conclude from this one premiss, as Moore does, that (B) is true (*i.e.* to conclude from the fact that other things besides conduct may be good, that all such applications of good fall necessarily under the jurisdiction of Ethics). Indeed, it seems to me that (B) does not follow from (A) at all, as Moore would have it, but rather from (α). That is, only if it be proven that all applications of the property "good" *ipso nomine* convey an ethical significance, in other words, that all applications of good have but one meaning and that meaning ethical, the contention that all applications of the property "good" fall under the jurisdiction of Ethics, will be true by implication. That is, Moore's contention that the preoccupation of Ethics is with "good" and "bad" rather than with conduct will be justified. But as (α) seems at present to be a tacit and even unconscious assumption, rather than a sufficiently

proven assertion, and as it is not self-evident enough to be accepted without proof, (α) seems hardly a strong enough basis for an edifice as vast as the *Principia Ethica*.

Moreover, the question seems precluded already in the sentence quoted above from the preface, where for all purposes what ought to exist for its own sake, is identified with intrinsic value and also with what is good in itself.

Now this is by no means necessarily or even generally true, unless we take nothing to have intrinsic value except moral goodness. But this is obviously not what Moore means, whose general striving is to widen the boundaries of Ethics rather than to annihilate the domain of Aesthetics. As an explanation let us take "the Beautiful" as an example of a thing possessed of intrinsic value. Is "the Beautiful" always and *a priori* identical with the good? Or again, if we agree to say that "The beautiful having intrinsic value is always good"—is "good" in this sense always and *a priori* identical with the good in the moral sense which is the predicate of human conduct? Suppose we had two instances of indiscriminate and unmotivated bombing. In one instance the old stained glass windows of a fourteenth-century church were destroyed. In the second case a house full of the most worthless possible of human beings, say incurable criminal lunatics. Which would be the morally worse action? And which action would diminish the sum total of intrinsic value existent in the world to a greater degree? Does not the fact that these two questions are *not* identical, that indeed the answers to them are of necessity opposite, prove that intrinsic value and moral goodness are not necessarily one and the same thing? That they might even clash with each other in their respective appeal and attraction for us?

Now, the special and specific preoccupation of Ethics it seems to me should be with moral goodness rather than with the beautiful, which after all comes mainly under the jurisdiction of Aesthetics. Granted even that moral goodness and the beautiful have this in common, that they both possess intrinsic value (the problem of intrinsic value is far too complicated and controversial to be pursued here) does this entitle the science of ethics to extend its boundaries in order to include all the domains of intrinsic value and incorporate them into its own system? Would this not bring about a blurring of the specific mission and character of Ethics, an insensitivity to its particular principles? Should we not, on the contrary, try to define the unique quality of Ethics as clearly as possible, and draw its boundaries as sharply as possible? In short, is it not rather the task of Ethics to uphold

the moral claims and safeguard itself against encroaching influences of kindred domains, rather than to seek to absorb these domains and lose its own soul ?

* * * * *

However, before we can satisfactorily answer the question whether "good" holds moral significance in all its applications, we must discuss the notion of good as presented by Moore. We have seen that the question which Moore regards as the main aim of Ethics : "What kind of things ought to exist for their own sake ?" may according to his assumptions be simplified to the question : "What is good ?" There are, says Moore, three possible answers to this question : (a) particular answers of the form "This painting is good" ; (b) general answers of the form "Books are good", "Pleasure is good" ; and (c) definitions as when we say "Pleasure is good", not like in (b) meaning that pleasure is one of many possible good things, or even that pleasure alone is a good thing, *i.e.*, $p \subset g$ or p is comprised in g , but meaning that $p \equiv g$, pleasure is identical with good and good with pleasure. The particular answers, Moore argues, are of no interest to this enquiry. The definition is useless since "good" taken as a predicate is a simple unique and undefinable notion in the sense in which yellow is undefinable. The general answers are our clue to a possible definition of what "the good" (taken as a substantive, an embracing whole of many and variegated parts) might be. Hence our main task should be to examine all such general answers, and sound them as to the truth of their contention. In Moore's case this meant a survey of such schools of thought as Hedonism, Utilitarianism, Evolutionism and the Ethics of H. Sidgwick. During this examination their solutions should be stripped of the pretension of being definitions of "good". They should be subjected to a rigorous examination as to the truth of their contention, and when once found true, these various answers should be incorporated into the final idea of *the good* as its constitutive parts.

Here, too, several points may be raised in argument :—

- (A) Is it really impossible to define "good" ?
- (B) What justification is there for the assumption of the existence of such a comprehensive whole as "the good", whether it be defined as an organic unity or not ?
- (A) In so far as "good" denotes a certain simple and unique property of things it cannot be defined in the sense that it is irreplaceable by another term, or by a string of terms, or by an enumeration of its constituent parts, *i.e.* a descriptive definition

of the term is not possible. But, on the other hand, a definition *in usu*, in the sense in which x is defined in the equation

$$2x + 3y + 6z + 13 = 0 \qquad \begin{array}{l} y = a \\ z = b \end{array}$$

might be possible. For example "yellow" though indefinable in itself, might be defined as "that colour which corresponds to the wavelength ξ "; or alternatively as "that colour which occupies the intermediate place between red and green". This admittedly does not give us an accurate description of what the term contains, but furnishes us with a workable means of determining the position of this term in our general system of knowledge. Indeed, in many cases where the property is simple and unique and its content grasped immediately and directly either by the senses or by intuition, it is found useful in scientific investigations to ignore this and deal but with its definition *in usu*. Thus though the significance of, say, the ordinal number 2 is grasped intuitively, analytical arithmetics finds it useful to define 2 as the immediate successor of 1, or the immediate predecessor of 3. Now a certain definition of good may be attempted on the same lines. "Good", we might say, "is the opposite of bad." This is not so trivial as it might seem. For although our intuitive concept of good may vary considerably from one age to another, from one country to another, from one social class to another, from one individual to another, and even in the same individual from one time to another, one thing remains stable throughout these changes: its relation to "bad". In other words, of good whatever we might mean by it, *i.e.* whatever its material content, we always approve; of bad we disapprove. There seems to be a certain reflexive relation between "good" and "approval", which exists of necessity—and in all cases. They correspond to each other as "yellow" corresponds to the "wavelength ξ ". Hence for our purpose we might define "good" as that property of a thing which calls forth our approval of that thing. To avoid misunderstanding it should be stated that by the use of the term "calls forth" we do not mean to imply any causal relation between good (as the cause) and approval (as the effect). We could have defined good with the same justification as that predicate of a thing which expresses our approval of that thing, in which case "approval" would have appeared to be the cause and 'good' the effect. But even as "yellow" can be said to be neither the cause of " ξ " nor " ξ " the cause of "yellow", so neither is good the cause of approval, nor approval the cause of good, but each corresponds to the other in a certain reflexive

relation. Again, as for many scientific analyses it is more useful and more fruitful to examine the relations and implications of the wavelength ξ , than those of "yellow", so it might be more useful and fruitful in our enquiry to examine the implications and relations of "approval" than those of "good". Before we go any further there are two points which need clarification: (a) What exactly do we mean by "approval"? (b) What are the reasons which might be adduced in justification for our reducing the enquiry into the nature of good to an enquiry into the implications of approval?

(a) To approve of something is to *think* it desirable (in the sense that it should be desired, not in the sense that it is desired) in view of a certain object or end, or to think it suitable and fitting certain preconceived principles or criteria.

This definition seems at first sight to call forth a series *ad infinitum*, since obviously before we approve of anything we must first approve of the object or end for which it is deemed desirable, and before we approve of those objects or ends we must approve of other objects and ends in view of which the former seem desirable, etc. If we want to avoid this, we must assume that there are things we approve of in themselves, without reference to any ulterior object. But in this case our approval will be based on certain principles which we hold to be true, or on certain criteria which we bring to bear on the respective object or end. These criteria and principles, which we have termed "preconceived" open up the vista of yet another infinite series. For obviously before we examine whether a thing fits certain criteria and principles, we must first examine these criteria and principles in their own right, in view of higher criteria and principles, and those again, and so on, *ad infinitum*. But this is not necessarily so. For in our investigation we might come upon a concept that is primary and self-evident, or which cannot be reduced to other concepts, and must either be accepted or rejected intuitively. That there is such a primary concept in Ethics, which is not identical with good, and therefore not dependent on approval I shall try to prove in another connexion. For the moment I should like to point out tentatively that not all the criteria and principles upon which approval is based are necessarily of a moral character, and that by examining the nature of these criteria it might be possible to prove that not all instances of the attribute good necessarily represent instances of moral judgment.

(b) The reasons, then, for reducing the enquiry into the nature of "good" to an enquiry into the nature of "approval" will be:—

- (α) That by this reduction the appearance of the attribute "good" in an assertion will be seen to be insufficient to establish this assertion as a moral judgment.
- (β) That by this reduction the existence of absolute values independent of our reaction to them will be seen to be by no means so stringently and conclusively and rigorously proven as it would appear to Moore by taking such statements as "This picture is good but I do not like it" at their face value.
- (γ) That even the existence of values, whether absolute or not, will not have an automatic bearing on Ethics, since it will be seen that all values, even absolute values, are not necessarily moral values.
- (B) That therefore as a corollary to α , β and γ , no reasonable purpose of Ethics will be served by an enumeration of all things (whether in particular, general, or definition-like statements is of no importance here) that have been or are pronounced good. Nor would an examination of them in the light of what we ourselves hold to be good serve such a purpose. Nor would it make any difference if we should find a common denominator and term it the highest good; or if we should combine several of those things on an equal footing and call it an organic whole, a process which, by the way, might yield many different and variegated patterns of the "good life". . . .

(α) Let us examine such diverse statements as: "a good painting", "good roads", "a good hiding", "a good slaughter", "a good time", "good conduct", "pleasure is good", "art is good", "virtue is good", "justice is good". On the assumption that wherever terms like "good" and "bad" appear moral judgment is given, these statements by including the term "good" have a spurious appearance of being moral judgments. That this appearance is spurious and entirely based on the external uniformity of the attribute good will be seen upon closer inspection.

What do we mean by calling a painting good? Obviously that this particular painting calls forth a feeling of approval in us. This approval is easily seen to be based on the fact that we consider the painting, or that the painting strikes us as having artistic merit for one reason or another. (I have used both the term "we consider" as well as the term "strikes us" to emphasise the rational-reflective as well as the spontaneous-reaction elements that enter into the composition of "approval".) Our approval of the painting is an instance of æsthetic judgment based upon certain æsthetic principles which we hold to be valid, as

well as on a certain direct appeal that the painting in question exercises over our æsthetic susceptibility. This direct appeal is in most cases expressed by the term "beautiful". Even a moral action can be called beautiful, when considered only in so far as it appeals directly to our emotional susceptibilities. Alexander in his book, *Beauty and other forms of Value*, analyses the concept of beauty even further, and states that "nothing is beautiful, whether in itself attractive or unattractive, save in so far as it is æsthetically good, or æsthetically right" (p. 165). So that even that direct appeal to our susceptibility in order to be effective must accord with certain principles and criteria which render it (æsthetically) right. By calling a painting not only beautiful but good, we generally wish to emphasise that it so conforms to certain æsthetic criteria which we regard as having undoubted validity, as to make that painting worthy of our well-considered approval over and above any direct appeal it may have.

However we might regard such complex problems as those of the objective and general validity of æsthetic criteria and the admixture of subjective and objective elements in æsthetic judgments, one thing is quite clear: In no way did any moral considerations enter into the process. We neither consider whether the picture will make us morally better men (which is not the same as an æsthetically enriched one), nor if it will have any beneficent effect on the standard of public health, or foster a social revolution. All these considerations *might* enter the mind of a spectator but they have nothing to do with his calling the painting a good one in the first place, *i.e.* with his approbation or disapprobation of the picture as such. This sort of approval might be termed æsthetic approval, and the attribute "good" that corresponds to it is in no way identical with moral goodness.

But let us regard the more general forms of this statement: "good painting", and "painting is good". In an assertion like "good painting" the criteria which determine our approval of what constitutes painting that is good, are obviously again of a purely æsthetic order. Not so in an assertion like "Painting is good". Here we almost automatically add in our mind "good for what?" In this case, we do not approve of painting because of its inherent qualities as an art, but for some ulterior motive. Thus the difference between such statements as "a good painting" and "painting is good", is not so much a difference of generality or particularity of statement, but lies in the fact that in one case the approval denoted by the attribute "good" was based on the inherent criteria of the concept so qualified, in the other on

external criteria. It does not follow that such ulterior motives or external criteria are *necessarily moral ones*, as might be concluded from the impression that Moore's discussion of such instances gives. "Painting" for instance may "be good" for hiding the cracks in our wall, which is by no means a moral motive. Or, "Painting" may "be good" for distracting the attention of a sovereign from the social injustice rampant in his domains, which might be a moral motive though not exactly a good one. Now the better the painting, the better it will distract the sovereign: "Good painting" will be "bad" which proves that the "good" in "a good painting" is by no means identical with the "good" in "Painting is good". And even if our former example might be taken as a sophistry, in any case the differences of the set of motives (whether inherent or ulterior) in these different assertions may be clearly grasped from the fact that such a statement as "Good painting is good" is by no means a mere tautology.

These inherent or ulterior motives must not be confused with good-as-a-means, and good-as-an-end. For, although when we approve of something for reasons outside its inherent nature, we generally approve of it as a means, *i.e.* we consider it good-as-a-means: when we approve of something for inherent reasons this does not mean that we approve of it as an end, as something good-in-itself. Sometimes we do not even consider it good at all. Our approval in this case corresponds to what we might roughly deserve as "a 'good' specimen of its kind", or the "technically good".

To illustrate this point let us take the example of "a good road". By a "good road" we mean a road that is well-kept, asphalt-covered, smooth, straight. Here again the term good does not signify moral approval, though it certainly signifies approval of some sort. For when we reflect on the criteria and principles on which we based our approval of the road, we see that no moral criteria have entered our consideration, but only such principles as were inherent in the concept of "a road", and our criteria of what a road at its best, at the maximum realisation of its function as a road would be like. Hence the "good" in 'good road' did not correspond to any moral approval, but to a certain other kind of approval that might be termed "technical approval". In other words, though the attribute "good" in "good roads" is not devoid of meaning, it has no moral significance whatsoever.

That the kind of approval signified by "good" in such complexes as "a good . . ." is always determined by the principles

and criteria of the domain of which the concept so qualified is an element can be seen even more clearly in such examples as : " a good pleasure ", " a good hiding ", " a good slaughter ". In the first example we must take " good " to mean intense, undisturbed and of long duration, *i.e.* we approve of this pleasure because of certain modifications which enhance its innermost nature, the nature of being pleasant. Much in the same manner " a good slaughter " means a slaughter which is big, extensive in scope and efficient in its implementation, and therefore when judging of slaughters in general we find this one to be a good example of its kind. But no moral judgment is implied. The criteria we employed are the criteria of the efficiency of the slaughter, the maximum realisation of the potentialities implicit in the concept of the noun qualified by the attribute good.

Therefore when the noun is an element of, say, the æsthetic domain, the term " good " will signify an æsthetic judgment, for it will correspond to the kind of approval that is based on æsthetic criteria. When the noun is an element of the domain of science the attribute " good " when applied to it will signify an epistemological judgment, for it will correspond to the kind of approval that is based on the principles and criteria of epistemology. Similarly when the noun qualified by the attribute " good " is an element of the domain of Ethics, the term " good " when applied to it, and only in that case will signify a moral judgment, for it will correspond to that kind of approval which is based on moral criteria and principles.

In other words, the term " good " will have a moral significance (in such complex notions as " a good . . . ") *only when* applied to concepts that are elements of the ethical domain (necessary condition). But it will not have this significance *whenever* it is so applied. (The condition is not sufficient.) For instance, " cruelty ", " justice ", " virtue ", " vice ", are certainly moral concepts. But it is plainly impossible to speak of " a good cruelty ", " a good vice ", " a good virtue ", or even " good justice ". For what reason ? Because though all of these may be carried to the highest peak of efficiency, it is not under the criteria of efficiency that we judge them but under those of ethics. And under the criteria of morality the issue has been decided already and is already embodied in the concept. Thus it is absurd to say " a good virtue ", for virtue itself means " a morally good quality ". Or to say with moral significance " good cruelty " for cruelty is a vice and vice is a morally bad quality, and it is impossible to call a morally bad quality morally good. In the same way it is absurd to speak of " good justice ", for

justice that is bad is *ipso facto* justice no longer. But in the moral domain there are many concepts which do not by definition contain the results of moral judgment, and which we might term "the plastic material" of ethics. These are concepts like "conduct", "will", "motive", "deed", etc. Let us consider "good conduct". Here the issue is not precluded since conduct may be bad, good and indifferent. On the other hand, by "good conduct" we do not mean conduct carried to its highest efficiency, for such conduct may be bad as well as highly evolved or realised or organised or polished, or whatever it may be that we regard as the highest technical possibility of conduct. The "good" of "good conduct" is then specifically different from all other forms of good, it is moral goodness. Therefore good conduct does not share its property with other things and an examination of this property, denoted by good, in other things cannot help us at all to understand what good conduct is.

The problem becomes more complicated in assertions of the form "... is good". For example, "Pleasure is good"; "Painting is good"; "Roads are good"; "Justice is good". In these cases the predicate "good" corresponds to that kind of approval, which is not based upon the criteria that govern the inner nature of the concept said to be good, but is based on some ulterior end, or ulterior reason not inherent in the concept itself.

In that case we have instances of what is called good-as-a-means, and we plainly must first examine the things for which they are means, (a) as to their goodness, *i.e.* we must ask ourselves whether we approve of them, and (b) as to their moral goodness, *i.e.* we must ask ourselves if we approve of them on moral grounds. In this case, our preoccupation will be with those things, and will follow the same lines. But in some cases this end may be seen to be not ulterior to the concept but inherent in it. Then our approval assumes the character of an intuitive acceptance of the concept. Concepts so accepted are usually termed ultimate values or intrinsic values. But as their acceptance, *because of its instantaneous character, was not based on moral criteria*, it is by no means a necessary attribute of intrinsic values as such, to be moral values. In other words, if an intrinsic value is a moral value, this is not an outcome of its formal nature as an intrinsic value, but the result of its particular, material determinations.

Let us take "Painting is good" as our first example. In this case we naturally ask "good for what?" or "good because of what?" The first extension is of no further interest to us here, the second might evoke the answer, "Painting is good because it is an art". This means that we assert "Art" to be "good".

On what grounds? Because it incarnates the beautiful. That means that we assert "the Beautiful" to be "good". On what grounds? Because it is beautiful. That is, the beautiful becomes the reason and the end for our approval of it. Saying that "the beautiful" is "good", is really saying that it is "beautiful", *i.e.* that our approval of it has the character of an intuitive acceptance and affirmation of its nature as the beautiful. This means that saying that the "beautiful is good" is a mere tautology unless we specify "good" to mean "morally good", in which case this assertion is plainly false, since not moral but æsthetic criteria have entered into the constitution of the beautiful. The two may coincide by chance, but are not necessarily identical. As a matter of fact they often clash in actual experience.

Let us examine the more difficult and problematic assertion: "Pleasure is good". Let us assume that "Pleasure is good" really means something besides "Pleasure is good because it is pleasant", which would be only another illustration of the case of intuitive approval. Let us assume that "Pleasure is good" is a moral judgment, *i.e.* that we judge "pleasure" to be "morally good". Then its opposite "pain" would be "morally evil". I suggest that it is not so, but that pain and pleasure are morally neutral concepts, and that whenever they enter moral judgments, they do so, and are proclaimed to be morally bad or good, in accordance with some other element, moral by its intrinsic nature, in combination with which they form the object of our moral judgment. I suggest this because I see no valid reason for attributing to pleasure (as against other values) a special standing as regards morality, and insisting in the face of all evidence to the contrary on its being good; even in the restricted sense of its being *prima facie* good, *i.e.* holding that a complex situation in so far as it includes pleasure is in so far morally good. On the contrary, cruelty in so far as it holds pleasure is in so far morally worse, for example; whilst if an operation has to be undergone in which some pain is unavoidable, the greater or lesser degree of pain does not change the moral standing of the whole situation at all. Illustrations can be multiplied *ad lib.* They all seem to me to point to one thing; that since (*a*) no such thing as pure (uncaused and unconditioned) pleasure ever enters our moral judgment, and (*b*) the moral standing of such complex objects of our moral judgment in which pleasure is a part seem to be determined not so much by the fact of pleasure being present as by the nature of its cause, circumstances, and perhaps effects, it would be more plausible to hold that pleasure and pain are morally neutral and dependent in their moral worth upon

the moral standing of the thing or the activity they accompany. This seems to me not only a plausible, logical and fairly-well-founded view to take, but also a very workable and useful hypothesis to hold when dealing with moral problems. Into what unnecessary mental acrobatics the contrary view leads us can be best illustrated by these extracts. They are taken from Susan Stebbing's *Hobhouse Lecture* (Dec. 1943) and propound a thoroughly Moorian view of Ethics:—

'Moral evaluation is not confined to the evaluation and criticism of conduct, it is concerned with good and evil wherever they may be found . . .' (p. 12). 'Consider, for example, the pair of ethical judgments: "Pain is evil", "Cruelty is evil". These are diverse types. "Pain is evil" I shall call a simple, or basic ethical judgment in the quite precise sense that the truth of the judgment is not based upon any other ethical judgment that is more logically simple, but is itself a basis for other ethical judgments. "Cruelty is evil" is not thus simple and basic, its truth is based upon the judgment "Pain is evil" and follows from this judgment, together with the intrinsic nature of cruelty as being enjoyment in witnessing or inflicting pain upon other sentient beings. I should myself say that it follows from the judgment "cruelty is evil" that under all circumstances and in all conditions to act cruelly is evil. This follows, however, from the total judgment, not merely from the fact that what is predicated of something is that it is evil. It does not follow from the judgment "Pain is evil" that deliberately to inflict pain is to act evilly, nor that a situation in which pain is present is naturally evil on the whole. The pairs of judgments I have cited as examples are clearly diverse in logical type.

'A judgment of a third type has been mentioned in what I have just said: To act cruelly is evil. This judgment could not be true unless the judgment "Cruelty is evil" were true. And cruelty could not be evil unless it were true that "Pain is evil"' (p. 13).

Now several fallacies may be pointed out in this argument: First, though "Pain is evil" is a logically basic judgment, in the sense that it is not based on other judgments, but as I have put it, is intuitively accepted, it is overhasty, and against the evidence adduced by herself ("It does, however, not follow from the judgment "Pain is evil", that deliberately to inflict pain is to act evilly, etc. . . ." Susan Stebbing, quoted above) to infer that it is also an *ethical* judgment, basic or otherwise. For, as we have seen, "pain" might enter into moral situations without prejudging their ethical standing in one way or another. This

could not be so if "pain" in its intrinsic nature would hold an ethical meaning, an ethical value. Witness the case of "cruelty". "Cruelty" is a moral concept, though not a simple or a basic one. But in so far as it is a moral concept, holding its moral value and worth in itself, the judgment "Cruelty is morally evil" is true in all cases, or whenever "cruelty" enters a moral situation, that situation is necessarily, irrevocably and unredeemably evil. But it would be hard to explain how, if "Cruelty is evil" is based and derived from "Pain is evil", the derived judgment had more moral validity and force than the judgment from which it is derived. Therefore we must conclude that "Cruelty is evil" as a *moral* judgment is *not based* upon "Pain is evil" but draws its moral validity from some other element, or principle that enters its formation.

What are the elements that make up the concept of cruelty? There is: Pain. The infliction of pain. The deliberate infliction of pain. The deliberate infliction of pain upon a sentient being to his detriment. The enjoyment, or pleasure taken at the deliberate infliction of pain upon a sentient being to his detriment. Explanation: The presence of pain though in itself unpleasant (bad) is not enough to constitute a moral evil, as we have seen. The infliction of it may be involuntary and therefore not morally bad. The deliberate infliction of it upon a sentient being may be for his own good (like an operation) and therefore morally good. Only when the infliction of pain is deliberate and to the detriment of a sentient being we have a situation of unadulterated moral evil. When enjoyment, *i.e.* pleasure in this, is added, the evil of the situation increases or in any case does not decrease.

Hence we are forced to conclude that the basis of what is morally evil in the complex situation "cruelty" is not the pain involved but the "harming of a sentient being" and the enjoyment of this harm. "Cruelty is evil" as a moral judgment is, therefore, not based upon the judgment "Pain is evil", but on the contrary, in so far as pain may be said to be morally evil it is so as a possible ingredient of "cruelty".

"Pain" and "pleasure" then, harbouring no moral elements in their intrinsic nature, are not moral values, and therefore the judgments "Pain is evil", "Pleasure is good" being intuitive judgments cannot be ethical ones.

On the other hand, "Justice is good" is a moral judgment. "Justice is good" because it is intuitively approved, it is morally good because its material particular content is in accordance with certain basic moral criteria, *i.e.* our approval of it is morally determined and refers to a moral content.

We may now conclude and say that the answer to the query "What is good?" is so far from furnishing us with a solution of our ethical problem that the attributes "good" and "bad" in general do not even furnish us with the subject-matter of ethical enquiry. At most they might seem to serve as indicators, pointing the way to where in *some* cases ethical subject-matter *may* be found, depending on whether the approval to which "good" corresponds in each case, is based on moral criteria, or involves an intuitive acceptance of a moral concept. Hence, in our opinion, the peculiarity of ethics most certainly is its pre-occupation with assertions about human conduct, and with the property of "good" or "bad" not wherever they may be found but only in so far as these terms are applied to human conduct.

(β) In order to prove that "good" is not dependent on our approval (an association which we do not uphold in its causal but only in its correlative meaning, *i.e.* that where "good" appears there is also approval, and *vice versa*) but is the expression of an objective value, independent of our subjective reaction to it, Moore cites assertion of the form: "This . . . is good but I do not like it." He takes this to mean, that though subjectively we do not appreciate a painting—for example—yet we must bow to the objective manifestation of the intrinsic value of (in this case) beauty and call it "good". But we have seen that to call a painting "good", means to assert that it complies with certain æsthetic principles and rules, which we suppose to govern the art of painting, and to possess certain qualities that constitute the artistic merit of a painting. On the other hand, the assertion of such a relation between the particular painting and certain æsthetic principles, we have called "the expression of approval". For it would manifestly be absurd to call a painting good, when it neither appeals directly to our æsthetic susceptibility ("we do not like it") nor conforms to our conception of what a picture should be, even though this conception came to us second-hand. On the other hand, what is the meaning of "like" in this assertion? There are two possibilities: Either it means that I approve of the picture for certain reasons and on certain principles which I yet do not regard as accepted and venerable enough in the hierarchy of æsthetic rules to warrant the decree of "good"; or it means that I have no better reason to approve of the picture than a sentimental attachment involving an emotional reaction that I choose to express by "like".

For example, if we say: "This is a very bad painting but I like it because I inherited it from my great-grandmother or because I have seen it hanging over the mantelpiece ever since I

was a child", we do not make an æsthetic assertion, let alone a moral judgment, but recount a piece of biography for what it may be worth. Therefore this second meaning of "like" is of no interest to us, and it was certainly not in this second meaning that Moore wanted it to be understood.

On the other hand, if we accept "like" in its first meaning, there is no essential difference between the grounds of its assertion, and the grounds and structure of the judgment expressed by "good".

The reason for this difference lies rather in the different amount of objective force and validity which we attribute to the two respective sets of criteria. This amount is not necessarily fixed, or unchangeable, and the proportional strength of the sets are variable in time so that what we might pronounce to-day "Good but not to our liking" we might to-morrow pronounce to be "to our liking but bad". In other words what may be to-day the primary principles and criteria of æsthetic judgment may to-morrow become secondary. For example, we view a certain surrealist painting. It does not conform to our main preconceived ideas and criteria of what a good painting should be; on the other hand, something about it may strike us as being "a good sense of colour", which also is regarded as one of the criteria of a good painting. We should then pronounce judgment and say: "It is not a good picture but there is something about it which I like". Now suppose the same picture viewed by a second surrealist painter. He will in the main agree with the æsthetic principles of his rival's work, but since his idea of implementation of these principles will necessarily be different, he will pronounce the picture to be "good" (because of its accordance with his main artistic principles), but not to his liking (because of its deficiency in view of some other æsthetic criterion of secondary importance). In both cases judgment will be given in accordance with the same two sets of principles. The difference being that in the first case greater importance is ascribed to one set (what we might call the classical principle in painting); in the second case greater importance is given to the second set of principles (what we might term the surrealist principle of painting). Hence, as far as the nature of the grounds and the logical structure of the judgment is concerned, there is no essential difference between the assertion "this is good" and "I like this". In the same way in which the "good" *corresponds* to "approval", "like", too, corresponds to approval. It seems also probable that there are just as many kinds of "liking" as there are kinds of "good", and kinds of "approval". If so, "like" and

"good" signify the difference of degree in the assurance of approval (the degree of assurance being dependent on the primary or secondary importance attributed to the grounds on which it is based). Though the relation between "good" and "like" is thereby irrevocably stated, the material contents of what we call "good" or "liked" are variable in direct proportion to the variable standards of different periods.

In the main, the same argument will apply to statements like "The Useful is good but I do not like it", where the "Useful" will be seen to be "good" because of our approval of, say, the principles of general prosperity, but will be seen to be not "to our liking" because of our approval of the æsthetic principles of art, with which the useful does not always comply. Sometimes moral principles may or may not form one of the sets; and though it is never on moral grounds that one set is regarded as more important than the other, it is an open question whether in the case mentioned above (when moral principles form one of the sets) preponderance is *always* given to this set. For example: "Cruelty is bad but I like it" seems to imply this, and so does "Justice and Equity are good but I do not like them". In other words, it is an open question whether the appearance of a "good" which is "morally good" automatically degrades other kinds of good to "like", *i.e.* whether absolute primacy should be given to moral approval over any other kinds of approval.

Personally I am inclined to think so, and proof for this contention might be found in an examination of our everyday moral experience.

(γ) As to the existence of eternal intrinsic values, independent of our approval, all that can be proven is that there are things of which we approve for no ulterior reason but their inherent nature, but which not only are not independent of our approval, but whose only possible definition contains the concept of approval. We define value, or intrinsic value then, as that concept which generally corresponds to what we have termed "intuitive approval". This relation between "intrinsic value" and "intuitive approval" is not causal in any respect but correlative, as we have seen the relation between "yellow" and "wavelength ξ " to be. But then "intrinsic value" will have no meaning outside this definition, and for our purposes, in an ethical enquiry, we might find it useful to investigate the nature and peculiarities of "intuitive approval" rather than those of "intrinsic value". It will also be understood that "intrinsic values" are not necessarily moral values, as the concept of "intuitive approval" does not contain any reference to moral criteria. There

might be a moral concept, which is also an intrinsic value, but this will be grasped directly in its material contents. It might also be that in any clash of values, the moral will prove the stronger, and aspire to primacy over all other values. But this also cannot be proven by an enumeration and survey of values, their examination and arrangement into patterns, but by an analysis of our moral experience, our actual moral judgments, their grounds, laws and validity.

AUTONOMOUS ETHICS

A Symposium : Part Two

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MAN WITHOUT CONSCIENCE ?

SINCE the beginning of the seventeenth century men's thought about themselves and society has come successively under the influence of whichever special science has occupied the main attention of the educated world. In the seventeenth century itself the principles of morality were often conceived on the analogy of mathematical axioms. In the eighteenth the attempt was made to construct a "moral science" that could stand comparison with the physics of "the incomparable Mr Newton." In the nineteenth century the main influence was biology (though that had been influenced by the economics of Malthus), and "Darwinism" invaded social and moral theory. In the twentieth century the whole range of science has been so enormously extended that it is not possible to point to a single dominating one. But it is probable that psychology is the science that has attracted most attention and discussion outside the circle of scientific specialists themselves. Indeed, it seems possible that if judgements of such a nature are being made a hundred years hence, Freud may then be regarded as having an importance for twentieth-century thought comparable with Galileo's for the seventeenth, Newton's for the eighteenth, and Darwin's for the nineteenth.

It can be seen, however, that in the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries men's thinking about themselves and society was being influenced by their thinking about other things, such as numbers, planets and plants. Freud's influence, however, is much more direct, since his accounts of the human mind claim to be scientifically based on observations of human minds themselves. It is true that a good deal of the evidence he made use of was derived from observation of unbalanced minds. But this, in itself, does not invalidate his general conclusions, for his claim is that

unbalanced minds show, as it were in caricature, the operation of factors which are also present, in less exaggerated form, in normal people. This view is shared by psychologists who would differ from Freud in much else, so that the importance of such inquiries cannot justly be depreciated on the ground that their main conceptions were first suggested by the study of minds in disease.

It would have been strange indeed if nothing of relevance to our moral beliefs had emerged from such inquiries. For some of the main types of mental illness manifest themselves in what appear to be groundless feelings of unworthiness and guilt, while others involve the sufferers in conduct which, if they were fully sane, would be regarded as criminal. A general result of the spread of modern ideas about psychology has been to make people rather more cautious in their moral judgements about other people, less hasty to condemn and, perhaps, less ready to praise. If this were all, however, it could hardly be said that the effects of contemporary psychology on our moral thinking had been more than to render our moral judgement more sensitive by enabling us more readily to distinguish between moral appearances and moral realities, between the appearance of theft, for example, and the facts of kleptomania, or between the appearance of parental solicitude and the fact of jealousy or domination.

The belief is current, however, that Freudian psychology has in some way undermined the authority that has commonly been attributed to the conscience. This belief is encouraged, in some degree, by the use of the technical term "super-ego" which makes it appear that a new word is needed because there is nothing for the old word "conscience" to stand for. It is known, furthermore, that Freud and his followers have attempted to explain how feelings of guilt first come to be experienced by very young children, and how the authority of parental wishes and requirements comes to be transferred to forces within the self, or to forces falsely regarded as existing outside the self in the guise of saints or gods. It is thus thought that Freud, in analysing the genesis of conscience, has shown that it is a relic of childishness and, in its most important aspects, a product of fantasy rather than of reason or revelation.

Some such vague impression is, I believe, pretty widespread. In what follows I shall endeavour to clarify one or two elements of the problem. (The problem of conscience, however, is a very large part, if not the whole, of moral philosophy, so that I cannot hope, in the space at my disposal, to do more than indicate some lines of inquiry that appear to me to be worth following. A philosophical inquiry into the Freudian theory of conscience is long overdue, but I cannot claim that what follows is any such thing.) It is necessary, in the first place, to say something about what we ordinarily take conscience to be. What is being said about people when it is said that they have consciences? I have no doubt that a number of things are being said, and that we can best distinguish them if we ask what would be meant if it were said about someone that he had no conscience. One thing that might be meant would be that he was incapable of distinguishing right and wrong. Another thing would be that although he could distinguish right and wrong, he had no settled inclination to do what he believed to be right or to refrain from doing what he believed to be wrong. Thus a man without conscience could be either a man incapable of making moral distinctions

from the relation of, say, physical or biological hypotheses to their evidence.

(d) Some people believe that Freudian psychology is not only a "scientific" account of what morality is, but also provides the means for making our existing morality itself more "scientific." The idea appears to be that once the mechanisms of introjection, aggression, narcissism and the like have been brought to light, it will be possible for the enlightened individual to free himself from moral compulsions, *i.e.* from conscience. Henceforth, it is sometimes believed, he will be able to adopt a scientific attitude towards himself and other people, neither condemning them nor himself but seeking for the best means of achieving his goals and theirs. According to Freud, however, a morality without conscience in this sense is impossible, since the infantile situation and native characteristics of all human beings inevitably engender a super-ego. It has sometimes been hoped that, even if a wholly "scientific" morality is impossible, at least something more scientific could be substituted for what are regarded as the unscientific and barbarous practices of blame and punishment. As I understand them, however, psychologists who adopt the Freudian point of view are extremely doubtful of the possibility even of this, both because they recognise a deep desire to be punished on the part of many individuals and also because they do not think there could be a real *desire* on the part of other people to remit altogether the punishment of those who are regarded as offenders.¹ Thus the view of the traditionalist or intuitionist that wrong-doing merits punishment and should receive it is reinforced by the psychological theory that punishment is so deeply rooted in human nature that its abolition (as distinct from its reform) is inconceivable.

(e) No one who theorises about morals is ever content merely to describe and explain. All, sooner or later, come to make moral recommendations. Freudian psychologists are no exception. One of the recommendations most frequently made is that the ego-ideal (one of the more controllable elements of the super-ego) should be neither so high as to be impossible of achievement or discouragingly difficult nor so low as to make the task of living up to it too easy. This is not an exercise in Aristotelian mediocrity, but a practical rule allegedly derived from psychiatric experience and supported by the shrewd observation that people who demand markedly more, morally, from themselves than they do from others must somehow regard themselves very much more highly than they do other people. In its second aspect this Freudian observation calls attention to one of the "ruses of Satan" that may be most difficult to uncover, but which had already been discussed by Hegel in his account of "the beautiful soul"² and by Bradley, in his references to "star-gazing virgins with souls above their spheres, whose wish to be something in the world takes the form of wanting to do something with it, and in the end do badly what they might have done in the beginning well."³ In its first aspect,

¹ J. C. Flügel, *Man, Morals and Society, A Psycho-analytical Study* (London, 1945), Ch. XII.

² Hegel, *Phenomenology of Mind*. C. Ch. VI. C (c).

³ Bradley, *Ethical Studies*. (2nd Ed. Oxford. 1927). pp. 201-202.

ETHICS WITHOUT LAW ?

THERE are some moral philosophers, particularly prominent in our own day, who take their stand on the unique nature of every actual moral dilemma and the ensuing singularity of the ethical decision it demands. They emphasise the changing, non-recurrent nature of actuality, and the consequent need for an extremely flexible and adaptable moral attitude. An attitude distinguished by an ever present readiness to do justice to changing circumstances, to consider every situation on its own merits, to solve it according to its inherent needs and not according "to a set of rules to be applied like drugstore prescriptions."¹ In short, this intuitionist, or, as it might be more precisely called, occasionalist school of ethical thought demands a *human* approach to ethical problems, human in the Bergsonian and perhaps in the Montaignian sense of the word : "*Je peins pas l'être je peins le passage.*"

At a time when all values give way to vitality and rigid laws to the

¹ John Dewey, *Reconstruction in Philosophy* (1921), Ch. VII, p. 170.

atomising impact of chance, when constant environments crumble, exposing the once sheltered consciousness to the demands of a society which daily encroaches more on private preserves, the appeal of the occasionalist theory is twofold: to instinct and to common sense. It seems to bear out what we experience when we actually try to reach a moral decision in unprecedented circumstances; and how many these have become! It concurs with the feeling of loneliness and forlornness, the emotional residue of such decisions, and accounts for the burden of a responsibility that lies daily heavier upon us. It increases our alertness, our efficiency in coping with new situations which is our greatest asset in a world where to keep up with the pace of events is the *sine qua non* of survival. No wonder then that on the first impact and to a certain degree, the occasionalist theory seems acceptable enough. Yet, because its emotional appeal is so strong, and its arguments so seemingly plausible, a careful scrutiny of the grounds on which it is based and the conclusions it entails seems called for. For the former are more far-fetched and the latter far more dangerous than might be suspected. Indeed we would do well to be on our guard against the charm and promise of the occasionalist theory especially when put forward by so brilliant an exponent as E. F. Carritt, or with the prophetic ardour of a John Dewey.

It may seem surprising to find the names of Dewey, the empiricist, the believer in "Scientific method in Philosophy" and of Carritt, the rationalist, thus unceremoniously yoked. My excuse is that, poles apart though these philosophers are, they yet meet in what I have called the Occasionalist Theory of Ethics, *i.e.* in the stress they put on the unique nature of every ethical dilemma, in their assertion of the need for equally unique ethical solutions and their refusal to accept any general and *a priori* ground of moral obligation. And though they have reached this position by different roads, and substantiated it with different reasons, it may yet not be entirely impermissible or useless to consider them jointly in an attempt to assess the theoretical implications and practical consequences of this position.

The main argument of the occasionalist school runs somewhat as follows: On every occasion on which our moral decision is required we are faced with a particular set of circumstances which presents a unique instance of the ethical problem. Each such occasion in the full complexity of its concrete reality and "givenness," involves besides its material elements a number of sometimes conflicting, sometimes competing, and sometimes downright incompatible obligations, satisfactions, desires, and pertinent general rules. It is therefore ultimately and basically by an intuitive choice that one decides what rules apply; which obligation is overriding, in a given situation. That is, "the right act," "the real duty" is picked by intuition.

No number of moral rules will save us from exercising intuition, for a rule can only be general but an act must be particular, so it will always be necessary to satisfy ourselves that an act comes under the rule and for that no rule can be given.¹

Moreover, it is very doubtful whether such general moral rules as are known represent the primary grounds of particular moral decision, or only subsequent generalisations from the way in which particular instances have been solved.

¹ E. F. Carritt, *The Theory of Morals* (1928), Ch. XIII, p. 114.

But if we can judge an instance without general rules it might seem as Butler says, *that the inquiry of them is merely an occupation not without some usefulness, for "men of leisure."*¹

Nor can such general rules be deduced from one supreme ground of obligation :

I have not satisfied myself that there is any quality common to all right acts which makes them right. I think that probably most right acts consist in bringing about the distribution of satisfaction which is due in the circumstances.²

This could be a possible explanation of a common ground of obligation in the sense in which John Dewey uses the concept of "Melioration," but Carritt attaches singularly little importance to it, and on returning to the discussion on a later occasion he writes :

Before trying to classify our obligations by asking whether they are all founded on one ground or on two or more, it is necessary to consider the greater nature of a ground of obligation. Unfortunately *this is a puzzling and not very interesting question*. . . . The general question is whether our obligations and consequently our duties depend upon our actual situation including our capacities for affecting it and the consequences of what we may immediately bring about, or upon our belief about that situation or upon our moral estimate of what the supposed situation demands.³

Now this is as neat a way of side-tracking and precluding the issue of the second question (Is the ground of obligation transcendent and *a priori* to the given situation or not?) as one may wish. It should be added that the first question (Are all obligations founded on one ground?) is completely engulfed by the ensuing quibble about real and subjective and putative duties.

I have dwelt at such length on Carritt's view because he finally puts the point and pleads the case for such philosophies as John Dewey's with its stress on the singularity of instances and the duty of melioration; concurs with Sir David Ross' ethical theory on the need for an intuitive decision between the clamouring merits of different obligations and satisfactions inherent in one situation; and even agrees on some very essential points with the ethical theories of existentialists like Sartre. The latter, however, argues in addition that what is the right action for one man is by no means right for another, though all objective circumstances remain the same. Thus, for one Frenchman, who under the German occupation had the choice of joining the Maquis or staying on to help an old widowed mother, to stay would have been the right decision (if he were a gallant young fellow whose every instinct drove him to fight); for another—to go (if he were a timid fellow whose dependence on his mother's presence would have induced him to stay). A genuine and sincere moral decision according to Sartre must, under given circumstances, *necessarily* yield different results for different persons. By finally abandoning any objective view of duty, Sartre thus breaks the last hold of the intuitive theory of morals on an objective concept of right, and invalidates any claim it may put forward for the universal validity of the intuited content. Unredeemable relativity

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 113.

² *Op. cit.*, Ch. XVI, p. 140.

³ E. F. Carritt, *Ethical and Political Thinking* (1947), Ch. II, p. 14.

and undifferentiated chaos are the final outcome. Our question can now be put as follows: Does a strict adherence to Carritt's Theory of Morals logically and inevitably lead to chaos; or do such safeguards as he provides by holding on to an objective view of duty and the entailed identity of intuited contents effectively circumvent this outcome; and if so, are they justifiable inside the limits of his own theory?

We must, however, first mention the curious inability or unwillingness noticeable amongst adherents of the occasionalist theory to differentiate between the entirely dissimilar processes of ethical analysis and moral deliberation. The aim we pursue and the method we employ in enquiring after the nature and validity of a ground of obligation is very different from the aim pursued and method used when we seek to make up our minds on how this obligation affects, applies, and in its turn is modified to meet the practical contingencies of an actual situation.¹ The latter method is rather like that of a surgeon's scalpel which isolates and lays bare a certain tendon. To lay bare the moral component of action, to reveal the moral law in its purity is the aim of analysis. The process may be roughly described as follows. After all practical considerations have been accounted for and deducted, be they particular obligations, material factors or personal inclinations (and this we have all experienced when submitting any of our moral decisions to a careful scrutiny) there remains an unaccounted for residue, an inclination, be it ever so small, away from the result warranted by the known vectors of actual circumstances. Unless we seek to account for this residue, and discover the nature and the source of its influence we cannot claim to have understood the actual process of taking a moral decision nor explain the fact of moral experience in a satisfactory manner. Now this cannot be done by going once again over the particular traits of a given situation since those have been accounted for already. The residue, we must therefore assume, could have been effected only by something outside and prior to the particular modifications of which situations are capable. A satisfactory explanation would have to depend on an analysis of general principles. An inquiry concerning the nature of general principles would therefore, far from being "an occupation not without some usefulness for 'men of leisure,'" appear to be *the* main task of the ethical analyst. However weary and seemingly unprofitable, this inquiry must not be neglected on pain of invalidating the results of a moral theory.

To sum up: if Carritt wishes to point out that moral decisions are, ultimately, the sole responsibility of the agent, *i.e.* that each man must decide for himself whether and how far to admit a reverence for the moral law as a decisive factor in his practical deliberations—we have no quarrel with him. For indeed situations are unique, identical instances of moral problems do not recur; their solution requires alertness and moral sensitivity. An appeal to "cut and dried recipes" will be of no avail, as in any case one would have to decide which recipe to apply. One cannot even shift one's responsibility by asking the advice of some person one respects. This procedure, which de Burgh thinks possible though it deprives the decision of the moral value which it would otherwise have, is shown up as an unavail-

¹ Compare Professor A. E. Murphy's "Who are we?" A discussion of Carritt's Ethical and Political Theory, in the *Philosophical Review*, May, 1949; which deals with Carritt's intuitionism (We think . . .) when establishing and vindicating moral axioms.

ing strategem by Sartre. For Sartre very cleverly points out that one is responsible for the choice of one's advisers: *i.e.* one chooses to ask Brown's advice because one knows beforehand what sort of person Brown is and what sort of advice he is likely to give. But to say that a moral decision is unique and particular in each particular instance and ultimately the sole and unshirkable responsibility of the agent, is one thing; to claim that it is reached by an ever renewed and ever changing intuition (*i.e.* an intuition whose content differs with every given problem) is another. Nor does it seem justifiable to infer on this evidence that such decisions are *not* taken in respect of a transcendent ground of obligation. Nor can it be taken to eliminate the possibility that such a ground not derived from the practical circumstances of a particular occasion, *does* determine (in a way and to a certain degree) all decisions taken on all occasions.¹

How indeed does Carritt vindicate his denial of the existence of such a single universally valid ground of obligation? On what reasons does he base his assumption that all obligations are obligations *ad hoc*; that there are many kinds of obligation; and that they are all abstracted from particular instances? Surely a failure to inquire into their nature and one or two asides about the "puzzling and uninteresting" qualities of this problem are not enough to settle it off-hand in favour of the occasionalists?

The stand taken by Carritt on this question can only be explained by his refusal to discriminate between the nature of such numerous though general maxims as "thou shalt not kill"; "one ought not to lie"; "one ought to keep promises" and the common ground of their validity which alone can be called *the moral law*. In other words, the moral law is not as Carritt takes it to be the sum, or outcome of the obligations inherent in a situation but something beyond them, something which is both the ground for the initial validity of those obligations and the arbiter regulating and assigning their respective and rival claims. This moral law it seems to me, we apprehend by intuition, and at the same time we apprehend it as applying to all and any of our actions. We have no need of additional intuitions to tell us which instances fall or do not fall under its sway, since we know that all instances, inasmuch as they are instances of the decisions and actions of a human agent, come under its jurisdiction. What is open to question is the degree to which we are able to realise the moral law in our actual decisions and the forms it takes when modified to meet practical contingencies. These are indeed determined by the mind, the temperament and the attitude of a particular agent at a particular time. As for the moral law, it is best described in terms of the respect we owe unconditionally and under all circumstances to the person in every man *qua* man. All general maxims can be reduced to this final law, and all draw their validity from the initial interdict against misusing (or lacking reverence for) another man's person.²

Now it seems to me that we refer back to this law in every single decision

¹ The strongest arguments against this aspect of intuitionism are to be found in Paton's *Can Reason be Practical?*, the H. Hertz Lecture of 1943, pp. 30-3, where intuition in the absence of an ultimate principle is characterised as a "groundless opinion" and the existence of such a principle reaffirmed: "The grounds of rightness may be different and yet the principle of rightness be the same."

² See Kant's second formula of the categorical imperative cited in Heinemann's "Autonomy or Orthonomy?", *HIBBERT JOURNAL*, July, 1949. I am indebted to Dr Heinemann for a number of useful suggestions in the course of the discussion on my paper.

we take, and that we measure the value of our decisions by its norm. This is by no means so far fetched as it sounds : we have only to observe what anyone does when deliberating on a moral decision or pronouncing a moral judgement in order to furnish the required proof. Let us recall for a moment how we actually reach a moral decision, in a given instance. We weigh the claims our nearest and dearest have on us, the obligations under which we labour, our own desires in the matter, our estimate of the facts and the possible consequences. But after we have done all this we still have to pose the moral question : Am I acting equitably (towards all men) in doing this, or am I abasing the dignity of any man ? Whatever our actual decision may finally turn out to be, the moral verdict remains unchanged. We might for instance decide that under the circumstances we are prepared to take the guilt of infringement of the moral law upon ourselves for the sake of other things. We permit killing in war, lying under certain circumstances, and the breaking of a promise to one man in order to benefit many others. But we must be fully aware what we are doing, and we must be clear about our responsibilities. We might claim alleviating circumstance. We might even argue that because of the *ad hoc* nature of all human activities it is conceivable that never in the course of human history has a deed been performed which was absolutely and perfectly moral. Nevertheless we seem to be held responsible for every failure to implement the moral law in its fullness : for is not this the ground on which we judge even the bravest of Nazi soldier morally both responsible and guilty ? He obeyed orders. He satisfied the claims of country, family, position and honour. His only fault was his refusal to accept what the late Master of Balliol terms "the challenge to perfection." He failed to satisfy the claims of the universally binding, universally valid moral law, which *prior to all situations* is the unconditional duty of all men. For this he is personally responsible, and of this responsibility no one can free him. I can therefore not agree with Carritt's definition of putative duty : what a man *thinks* his duty to be under certain circumstances, since what we really hold him responsible for is whether or not, and to what degree, he is prepared to make the upholding of the moral law his paramount duty under all circumstances. This seems to me a reasonably accurate description of what actually happens when we pronounce *moral* judgements on people. Of course, being human, we allow for human failings. Of course we temper the wind to the shorn lamb. But in order to do this effectively we need to consider not only the bare condition of the lamb's skin but also the fury of the wind. To compromise is one thing ; to mistake this compromise for the principle, the circumstantial modification for the essential, the occasional for the law is another. Besides, there is our practical need to rid ourselves of the bewildering multitude of inessential minutiae. In order to do this effectively we must have a stable point of reference beyond them. Morally we stand therefore in great need of having our belief in the absolute validity of this point of reference strengthened. Therefore a moral theory which does its best to blur the outlines of the moral law, and render indistinct the extent, mode, and nature of its influence on practical decisions ; a theory which in contradiction and disregard of the pertinent facts of moral experience (both as decision and as judgement) neglects to examine the distinctive function of the moral component of action errs on two different levels. It errs as a *theory* of morals by unaccount-

ably neglecting some of the weightier points of its problem. And it errs as a theory of *morals* in that by denying the existence of the moral law, it tends to weaken the influence of that law on future practical decisions.

Admittedly Carritt does not expose his theory to the relativity inherent in the occasionalist attitude without an attempt to assure it of a certain modicum of objectivity. He provides this by assuming that every morally problematical situation determines only one or at any rate only a few objectively right solutions, and that any sincere unbiased man when confronted with the same situation will intuit the same solution or the same limited set of solutions. Since obligations are inherent in the situation and may be discoverable by our examination of that situation in all its implications, one's first duty is to acquaint oneself with all the pertinent facts. This as has been repeatedly pointed out is a condition impossible to fulfil since no finite being can know all the facts or survey all the consequences of even the simplest of decisions. But even were this possible it seems an unwarranted over-simplification of moral facts to assume that : (a) every situation determines one single objective duty, or a limited number of objectively right solutions, and (b) that all entirely sincere intuitions would hit on the same decisions ; *unless* we assume, as Carritt most emphatically does not, a transcendent universal and simple ground for all moral obligations. Inside the limits of the occasionalist theory we have every reason to believe that different acts would be right for different people. Moreover, it seems unduly optimistic to assume that all sincerely good-willed people would intuit the same right act if left to do so on the basis of particular instances. Indeed I should think that different persons would of necessity, even if cognisant of all the pertinent facts, plump for different duties, since different people have different axiological attitudes : they differ in the evaluation of facts. A moral problem is therefore not to be solved by quibbling about the facts of a situation unless the persons in question already possess the same or nearly the same set of values in an identical hierarchical order. Nor does an agreement on "facts" necessarily entail moral agreement. It is not around facts but around the relative merits of the values represented by those facts that moral disputes rage, and it is in an agreement on the relative merits of these values that a solution must be sought. Thus, Dewey postulates the *melioration* of a situation, *i.e.* progress, to be the value which gives the right moral direction to particular decisions. Carritt though he mentions at one point the general duty to give "the satisfactions which are due in a given situation to whom they are due," does not press the point. However, with Dewey as with Carritt the sense in which we are to take "melioration," or "satisfaction" remains a moot point. In the given situation of a witch trial, for instance, the intuitive decision of the inquisitor would be to burn the witch, thereby cleansing the community of her evil but temporal influence, and at the same time possibly saving her soul from eternal perdition ; a more meliorating act than this could hardly be conceived under the circumstances. A painter present at the time would probably intuit his chief meliorative duty to be the production of an impressive pictorial account of the flames and the folds of the hangman's mask. A humanist would probably protest and get himself burnt as a fellow-sorcerer which could hardly be counted a noteworthy "melioration" of the situation from his own point of view, though quite possibly the inquisitor might think it so. In

any case the quarrel of whether melioration and satisfaction mean more beauty, more truth, more progress or more equity cannot be decided without recurrence to an outside arbiter as values are not commensurable and the attitudes which determine their choice cannot be altered or influenced by proof of fact. The attitude which postulates the primacy of the moral law, and the value of morality, fulfils the function of such an arbiter. It proclaims the supreme binding power of the Moral Law and its prerogative to regulate and check all actions induced by the pursuit of other values. Above all it expresses our *determination* to accord such power to the moral law. This our determination is the only conceivable reason for the existing consensus, as far as it does exist, on ethical judgements and the one hypothesis which accounts for all the implications of moral experience.

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This attempt led him in two divergent directions. On the one hand he insisted that a citizen could be morally autonomous in a state only if he made the laws under which he lived. This led him to his defence of direct democracy or popular sovereignty as the only legitimate form of government. It led him to reject representative forms of democracy and to insist that every law must be the expression of the active wills of the citizens.

Rousseau was, however, well aware of the difficulties of this view. In the first place no law is likely to be passed unanimously. Popular sovereignty means majority sovereignty. Then again majorities do not necessarily make good laws. Majority sovereignty may be majority tyranny. What of the minority? They at any rate do not make the laws under which they live. There is also the practical difficulty that, particularly in a large and complex state, a referendum on every law would be impossible and legislation would be a full-time job. Rousseau tried to forestall this objection by insisting that states should be small; but he had to leave unsolved the problems resulting from the need of federation into larger units. He also seems to have believed that the laws should be completely general in form and could therefore be few in number, and the task of applying them could then be left to an executive body (the "government") which need not necessarily be democratic in its working.

All these difficulties gave rise to another line of development. This is indicated in many passages in Rousseau but never pulled together and clearly stated by him. It is the line which is of most importance for our present purpose, because it developed through Kant to Hegel and is represented in English in the works of Bradley and Bosanquet, where it links together the ideas of moral autonomy and political obligation.

On this view I must distinguish between my actual desires and my true interest, which is indicated by reason. Besides my temporary and fleeting impulses I have a rational will which is my real will, my higher or true self. The achievement of this higher self is the harmonisation of my desires. So long as these desires remain merely external to each other I am a battleground and not an individual. But I find myself in a world of other individuals. So long as these individuals remain merely external to each other, human relationships are a battleground and not a community. Reason requires a unity higher than the individual will, a self wider than the personal self, a harmony in which private interests are not destroyed but unified. Thus the rational will becomes the general will, my true interest the common interest, my real self the corporate self. In the state alone can all these demands for harmony and rationality be satisfied. Other associations serve particular purposes. Each of them is just one desire writ large and not the whole individual made complete and perfect. As Hegel puts it, "a single person is something subordinate and as such he must dedicate himself to the ethical whole. . . . Hence if the state claims his life the individual must surrender it."¹

By this argument moral freedom or moral autonomy is identified with obedience to law or service of the state. The law is the voice of the general will, which is my real or rational will. A drug addict is a slave to his habit and attains freedom only when he masters it. A criminal is a slave to his

¹ *Philosophy of Right*, section 70. Addition. English translation, T. M. Knox, p. 241.