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REFUTATION AND JUSTIFICATION IN
MOORE'S DEFENSE OF COMMON SENSE

A Dissertation Presented

By

William Dallas Anderson

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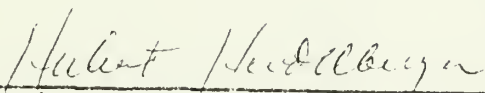
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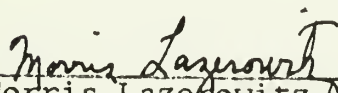
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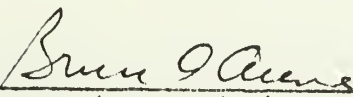
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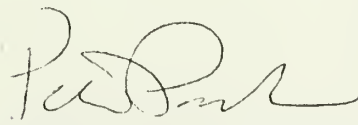
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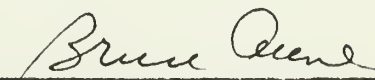
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April, 1976

ABSTRACT

REFUTATION AND JUSTIFICATION IN
MOORE'S DEFENSE OF COMMON SENSE

(April 1976)

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My purpose is to consider two important aspects of G.E. Moore's defense of Common Sense: His refutations of various philosophical views and his justification of Common Sense beliefs. I first examine two theories of Moore's refutations and attempt to establish Moore's own conception of his refutations over these two theories.

Both theories claim that Moore is not defending a set of empirical truths which we commonly believe are true. Norman Malcolm maintains that Moore's refutations are successful if and only if these consist in pointing out that certain sentences have a correct use in everyday speech. His claim is that Moore's defense of Common Sense is properly construed as a defense of ordinary language.

Malcolm's theory, I argue, is not established by the premises he uses to support it. Furthermore, the argument which he thinks Moore must employ to refute his opponents is unsound. In the course of my discussion, I pull together

arguments Moore offers to justify his own conception of his refutations -- a conception according to which his refutations are of empirical views. I find that Moore's conception withstands Malcolm's objections to it.

Morris Lazerowitz's theory consists of two separate arguments and an interpretation which these arguments jointly are supposed to justify. Lazerowitz's interpretation of Moore's defense of Common Sense represents Moore as resisting academic alterations in ordinary language: alterations which Moore's opponents introduce under the impression that they are stating important theories about the nature of things.

The first of Lazerowitz's arguments allegedly shows that Moore's opponents are not advancing empirical views. The second supposedly shows that Moore is not attacking a priori claims in his refutations. I reject this second argument when I criticize his view of logical necessity; I reject the first after replying to Lazerowitz's claim that the appearance/reality distinction cannot protect an anti-Common Sense philosopher from Moore's charge that he knows facts which render his view false.

In appealing to Common Sense propositions to refute his opponents, Moore often says that he knows that such propositions are true even though he cannot prove that they are true. Some have claimed that Moore wishes to count Common Sense beliefs as self-justified propositions. Two

such interpreters are E.D. Klemke and V.C. Chappell. They take Moore to be suggesting that Common Sense propositions are the ultimate propositions to which one appeals to justify claims to knowledge. Although Chappell's interpretation is more plausible than Klemke's, each attributes to Moore a view I believe he would want to reject.

After criticizing each of these interpretations, I present an alternative account of Moore's appeal to Common Sense beliefs in his arguments against scepticism. I suggest that when Moore's arguments are viewed in terms of his approach to criteria of knowledge, we arrive at a more reasonable interpretation of his appeal. In my interpretation I make use of a distinction Roderick Chisholm has made between two different approaches to justification. I argue that Moore can reasonably be construed as saying that the beliefs of Common Sense are completely justified but not self-justified. These beliefs are ones which our criteria of knowing should recognize as instances of knowledge, but such criteria can tell us how to justify these beliefs in terms of more basic propositions.

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I N T R O D U C T I O N

G.E. Moore sets down in his "A Defense of Common Sense"¹ a number of propositions which he claims he knows to be true. He claims to know, for example, (1) that he has a living human body; (2) that his body was born at a certain time in the past and has existed continuously ever since; (3) that his body has been in contact with or at various distances from other things forming his environment; (4) that the earth has existed for many years before he was born; (5) that he is a person who has had many different kinds of experiences such as perceiving various things around him (the bookcase in front of him, for instance). Moore also claims to know that many other persons have frequently known corresponding propositions about themselves.² There may be, says Moore, many propositions which can be called "Common Sense beliefs" and which are both false and "deserve to be mentioned with the contempt with which some philosophers speak of 'Common Sense beliefs.'" But to speak with contempt of those 'Common Sense beliefs' which I have mentioned is quite certainly the height of absurdity."³

Moore was convinced, however, that many philosophers did hold "in contempt" propositions like those he claims he and others know to be true. He was concerned to defend our

¹George Edward Moore, "A Defense of Common Sense," Philosophical Papers (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1959), pp. 32-59.

²Ibid., pp. 33-35. ³Ibid., p. 45.

belief that such propositions are true against the attacks of philosophers whose views, he claims, are certainly incompatible with them. Since 'I have a body' implies there are material things, any philosopher who declares that there are no material things is holding a view inconsistent, says Moore, with a belief of Common Sense which we all know to be true. Since 'My body has been in contact with or at various distances from other things' implies that space is real, any philosopher who maintains that space is not real is likewise holding a view incompatible with a belief of Common Sense which we all know to be true. It is a sufficient refutation of such views according to Moore, to simply point out that we do know that these Common Sense beliefs are true propositions. Any philosophical theory from which it follows that these beliefs are false is itself false. When Moore says that we all know that these Common Sense propositions are true, he means to include those philosophers who seemingly hold views incompatible with these propositions.⁴

In this dissertation I am concerned with two important features of Moore's defense of Common Sense: His refutations of various philosophical views and his justification of Common Sense beliefs. Part I of the dissertation is given over to a critical discussion of two theories of Moore's refutations. In the literature on Moore's defense of Com-

⁴Ibid., p. 41.

mon Sense, I have not run across any satisfactory attempt to show that these two theories are unsuccessful. The arguments provided by the author of each theory have, for the most part, gone unexamined. In Part I, my primary purpose is to defend Moore's own conception of his refutations against these arguments.

The two theories which I discuss both claim that Moore cannot be doing what he appears to be doing in his attempts to refute his opponents' philosophical views. Though each theory tries to argue for the notion that Moore's opponents' views are not empirical, they differ in important respects. Norman Malcolm, whose theory of Moore's defense of Common Sense is discussed and criticized in chapter I, takes Moore's opponents to be stating what they believe are a priori truths. He argues that if Moore's defense of Common Sense is to provide a refutation of his opponent's view, then Moore cannot be construed as replying to his opponent with what seems to be a simple, empirical truth. Malcolm puts forward a theory of Moore's defense of Common Sense which implies that Moore is defending ordinary language against attacks upon it and not a set of empirical truths which we commonly believe to be true. I try to show that Malcolm is not successful in establishing this theory, and that he does not provide good reasons for supposing that Moore's own conception of his refutations is mistaken. Moore took himself to be disestablishing philosophical theories with empirical truths of Common Sense.

Morris Lazerowitz's theory of Moore's defense of Common Sense is discussed in chapter II. Lazerowitz cannot accept Moore's claim that philosophers have actually held views inconsistent with what they knew to be true. They cannot reasonably be said to have held views which, if inconsistent with empirical facts of the sort Moore appears to bring against them, are so obviously inconsistent with such facts. Lazerowitz contends that philosophers know such facts and yet do not give up their views. The only reasonable conclusion to draw, he believes, is that Moore's opponents' views are not inconsistent with empirical facts of the sort with which they do seem to be inconsistent. Lazerowitz offers an argument to show that not only are Moore's opponents' views not inconsistent with empirical facts, they are not incompatible with facts which would refute non-empirical propositions. He holds a theory about logically necessary propositions which implies that if Moore's opponents' utterances actually expressed necessary truths, then they would convey information about the actual use of terminology. On the supposition, however, that Moore's opponents are using language to express necessary truths, their utterances convey misinformation about actual usage. Since Moore's opponents know ordinary usage and would, therefore, see that their views are refuted by facts of usage, it becomes unreasonable to hold that they actually believe their utterances to be expressions for necessary truths -- as language is now used.

Lazerowitz gives up the idea that Moore's opponents' views have refutations of any kind. He presents an interpretation of these views which implies that Moore's opponents are presenting concealed, academic alterations of ordinary language: concealed because these are presented in the form of speech in which we ordinarily make truth-value claims, and academic because they are not intended for practical adoption. The philosopher, says Lazerowitz, is retailoring ordinary usage under the false impression that he is announcing a theory about phenomena. Moore's refutations are construed by Lazerowitz as attempts to resist such non-practical changes in ordinary language. To be sure, says Lazerowitz, Moore would not agree that this is what his refutations amount to; Moore himself was, like his opponent, under the impression that the disputes in which he was engaged centered on the truth-value of a theory about things.

In chapter III I give my assessment of Lazerowitz's theory of Moore's defense of Common Sense. I attempt to show that two arguments involved in his theory are not good arguments. One of these arguments depends on his theory about logical necessity, a theory I critically discuss and find to imply a contradictory claim. I try to explain how it is that without the truth of his theory about necessity, we do not arrive at his interpretation of Moore's refutations. Finally, I attempt to establish that the other of his arguments is unsound and that, therefore, he has not provided a

sufficient reason for supposing that Moore's opponents' views are not empirical assertions.

Part II of the dissertation is concerned with the question as to whether Moore regarded the beliefs of Common Sense as self-justified beliefs. Would Moore claim that his refutations of various philosophical views are successful because in appealing to a Common Sense belief he is appealing to a belief which neither has nor requires a justification in terms of further propositions? After presenting one of Moore's typical arguments against scepticism I examine, in chapter IV, two interpretations of Moore's appeal to Common Sense premises in philosophical arguments of this sort. Each interpretation attributes to Moore the view that Common Sense beliefs are self-justified beliefs. E.D. Klemke claims that Moore regarded the beliefs of Common Sense as self-evident truths. On the basis of this understanding of Moore, Klemke makes a critical assessment of Moore's appeal to Common Sense. He finds Moore's appeal unsatisfactory. But his criticism, I argue, derives from a misunderstanding. I attempt to show that he has misinterpreted Moore and that he is mistaken in saying that Moore appealed to a supposed criterion of self-evidence to justify acceptance of Common Sense beliefs.

What appears to be a more sympathetic interpretation of Moore's appeal to Common Sense in his arguments against scepticism is given by V.C. Chappell. I find that we must distinguish two points in Chappell's interpretation in order

to determine whether Moore would subscribe to this interpretation. Once these two points are distinguished, I turn to an examination of passages in Moore's writings which Chappell believes support his interpretation. I develop Moore's notion of immediate knowledge and conclude that Chappell has incorrectly identified the claim that Common Sense propositions are known immediately with the claim that they are self-justified. Moore's notion of immediate knowledge is compatible, I argue, with the idea that there are propositions which can be said to justify Common Sense beliefs.

It is my contention that once we follow Chisholm in distinguishing two different approaches to what he calls the "problem of the criterion," we find an interpretation of Moore's appeal to Common Sense which seems the most reasonable to accept. It is in chapter V where I present my own interpretation of Moore's appeal to Common Sense beliefs. I claim that given Moore's position with respect to the problem of criteria of knowledge, he is not claiming that the beliefs of Common Sense are self-justified. I interpret Moore as suggesting that these beliefs are those which the criteria of knowledge should countenance as completely justified but not as self-justified. What is involved in selecting Common Sense beliefs as those which an adequate set of criteria will countenance is explained.

Moore seems to have been in favor of a foundationalist view of justification in which Common Sense beliefs are not

basic. But, as I attempt to show, he was uncertain about how these more basic propositions -- on his view, propositions about sense-data -- might justify propositions about the external world. Nevertheless, I conclude chapter V with what I believe is a plausible suggestion. This is that Moore's concerns both as a Common Sense philosopher and as a sense-datum foundationalist are complemented by an attempt to formulate, as Chisholm has done, epistemic principles which tell us how to justify propositions about the external world on the basis of certain subjective propositions.

I should briefly mention three conventions I employ in the dissertation. I follow Moore's practice of using capital "C" and capital "S" in "Common Sense belief" or "Common Sense proposition." Some authors referred to in the dissertation follow this practice but some do not. Thus, if one finds in the text no such capital letters, it is because the author in question does not follow this convention. I also follow Moore's practice of mentioning propositions by the use of single quotation marks, unless I use the locution "The proposition that." Finally, I frequently abbreviate reference to Moore's general practice of defending Common Sense by putting just the word "defense" within quotation marks.

C H A P T E R I

MOORE'S DEFENSE OF COMMON SENSE AS
A DEFENSE OF ORDINARY LANGUAGE:
MALCOLM'S THEORY

Introduction

In his most recent paper on Moore's philosophical method, Norman Malcolm makes the following statements:

. . . if Moore's so-called 'defense of common sense' has any cogency, then it is not really about common sense or common beliefs, for neither of these things is relevant to the philosophical issues in which Moore is involved. I take the philosophers with whom he is engaged to be asserting that the notion of seeing a body (or of having absolutely certain knowledge of an empirical truth, and so on) contains a logical absurdity. The actual efficacy of Moore's reply, his misnamed 'defense of common sense,' consists in reminding us that there is a proper use for sentences like 'I see the broom under the bed' or 'It is known for certain that he drowned in the lake.'¹

The claim that Moore's "defense" consists in pointing out (reminding us) that certain sentences have a proper or correct use (in ordinary language) is thought by many of Moore's commentators to involve a basic misunderstanding of his position. It is said that Malcolm has here identified Moore's "appeal to common sense" with his (Moore's) "appeal to ordinary language," and that this is a mistake because for Moore

¹Norman Malcolm, "George Edward Moore," Knowledge and Certainty: Essays and Lectures (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1963), p. 181. This paper is reprinted in Alice Ambrose and Morris Lazerowitz, eds., G.E. Moore: Essays in Retrospect (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1969), pp. 34-52. Subsequent references to this paper are from Malcolm's Knowledge and Certainty.

these two appeals are entirely different. This charge was first made by Alan R. White² but has been made since by both E.D. Klemke³ and Ralph S. Pomeroy.⁴ Coupled with this charge is the assertion that in Moore's philosophical practice "the appeal to ordinary language is subsidiary to the appeal to common sense."⁵ The best expression of what is intended by this assertion is given by White when he says:

Moore's recourse to ordinary language . . . is mainly intended to discover what a philosopher's view comes to when put into the language we all understand, namely, ordinary language, and to indicate what in fact are the beliefs of common sense by referring to what we all ordinarily say. Having established what is the philosophical view and what [is] the common sense view and that the two conflict, he can then use the appeal to the latter to refute the former.⁶

But when Malcolm is accused of mistakenly identifying two different appeals in Moore's works, he replies that his interpretation of Moore's "defense" is misunderstood.

In my own writings on Moore I have not devoted any particular attention to his practice of setting out the implications of a philosophical position in terms of concrete examples expressed in ordinary language: e.g. of drawing from the philosophical proposition 'All

²Alan R. White, G.E. Moore: A Critical Exposition (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1958), esp. pp. 5-7.

³E.D. Klemke, The Epistemology of G.E. Moore (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1969), pp. 31-39.

⁴Ralph S. Pomeroy, "Moore as an Ordinary Language Philosopher: A Centenary Tribute," Metaphilosophy 5 (1974): 92.

⁵Klemke, Epistemology p. 35. See also White, G.E. Moore, p. 7.

⁶White, G.E. Moore, p. 7.

that we know of material objects is the orderly succession of our own sensations' the alleged consequence that a person riding in a train cannot know, at the time, that the train has wheels. Moore was uncommonly skillful at this. I should have thought that the merit of this 'appeal to ordinary language,' if White wants to call it that, was beyond dispute and I agree that it is an entirely different thing from Moore's defense of Common Sense. When I conceived of Moore's defense of Common Sense as a defense of ordinary language I did not mean by the latter the above practice. What I did mean can be understood only in terms of the theory that I formed about his defense of Common Sense. . . . [and] which still seems to me to be sound.⁷

The theory about Moore's defense of Common Sense which Malcolm is referring to here is the subject of this chapter. After explaining what this theory is I answer the following two questions: (1) What does Malcolm mean when he says that Moore's defense of Common Sense is a defense of ordinary language? (2) When conceived as a defense of ordinary language, what is the difference between Moore's defense of Common Sense and Moore's practice of setting out, in terms of ordinary language, the concrete implications of a philosophical position? Another way of stating (2) is: What is the difference between what White and others call "Moore's appeal to ordinary language" and what Malcolm regards as Moore's defense of Common Sense? Once these questions are answered I then try to establish, in order, each of the following points: (1) that the premises supporting Malcolm's theory of Moore's defense of Common Sense do not entail this theory; (2) that on Malcolm's theory or interpretation, Moore

⁷Norman Malcolm, "Critical Notice" on A.R. White's G.E. Moore, Mind 69 (1960): 95-96.

does not succeed in refuting his opponents; (3) that Malcolm has not shown Moore's own conception of his refutations to be a mistaken one.

I. Malcolm's Theory of Moore's Defense of Common Sense

To understand Malcolm's theory according to which Moore's "defense" consists in pointing out that certain sentences have a proper or correct use in ordinary language, we must observe what he has to say with respect to the philosophical views Moore hopes to refute. Recall first that one of Malcolm's claims is that "if Moore's so-called 'defense of common sense' has any cogency, then it is not really about common sense or common beliefs, for neither of these two things is relevant to the philosophical issues in which Moore is involved."⁸ As Malcolm sees, for example, the philosophical issue between Moore and his opponent who claims that we do not see physical bodies such as chairs and doors, it is not one to be resolved in the way in which Moore thought it could be, namely, by recourse to what "we certainly all do, in ordinary life, constantly believe"⁹ Moore, says Malcolm, had the "mistaken idea that when he is dealing with a proposition put forward by a philosophical skeptic he is

⁸Malcolm, "George Edward Moore," p. 181.

⁹George Edward Moore, Some Main Problems of Philosophy (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1953), p. 182.

dealing with an empirical proposition."¹⁰ But "in order to find out what kind of thesis a philosopher [Moore's opponent] is maintaining, we have to consider the kind of support he offers for it."¹¹ An examination of a typical argument for the view that we do not see physical bodies shows, says Malcolm, that what is being maintained is a non-empirical thesis.¹²

After a detailed but well documented presentation of H.A. Prichard's argument for the view that we do not see bodies,¹³ Malcolm writes:

The argument may be briefly recapitulated as follows: Suppose there are two 'states,' or 'states of mind,'²⁵ A and B. They are states of either seeing or seeming to see a man in front of us; when state A occurs there actually is a man in front of us'; state B is an illusion produced by a mirror. States A and B have the same intrinsic character -- that is, if we considered state B 'in itself we could not say that it was not a state of seeing' a man in front of us.²⁶ State A, therefore, which is ordinarily called 'seeing a man in front of us' is not actually seeing a man in front of us, any more than is the admittedly illusory state B.

The reasoning is undoubtedly obscure; but at the same time it is extremely persuasive, and it is extremely difficult to put one's finger on any serious error in it.¹⁴

This argument, Malcolm adds, "is one of a number of attractive arguments that Prichard and others have used to prove, to the satisfaction of many philosophers, that we do not see bodies,

¹⁰Malcolm, "George Edward Moore," p. 180.

¹¹Ibid., p. 181. Malcolm's footnote.

¹²Ibid., p. 180. ¹³Ibid., pp. 175-176.

¹⁴Ibid., pp. 176-177. Malcolm's footnote references are to H.A. Prichard, Knowledge and Perception (New York: Oxford University Press, 1950), pp. 49-54.

and that what we really see are 'sense-data' or 'sensations.'"15

If we look at this argument it becomes evident, says Malcolm, that "Prichard's reasoning, . . . clearly implies that his thesis is non-empirical,"16 Malcolm continues:

I do not believe, . . . that Prichard's real point could have been that visual illusions do occur in point of fact. Suppose that they should cease to occur (e.g., there are no more mirrors or reflecting surfaces): would Prichard be willing to admit then that we see bodies? Obviously not. The 'state' that we call 'seeing a body' would not have changed its 'intrinsic character' and could not do so. Visual illusions would be logically possible, and this would be enough to prove that we do not see bodies.¹⁷

In other words,

Prichard is holding that if we could see bodies then visual illusions could not occur. The actual occurrence of illusions is not necessary for his position. The logical possibility of illusions suffices. The logical possibility of visual illusions is an a priori truth. When Prichard's view is drawn out in the only direction it can go, it turns out to be the claim that it is an a priori truth that we cannot see bodies.¹⁸

On Malcolm's view, since "his [Prichard's] denial that we see bodies is really the claim that it is logically impossible to see bodies,"19 Moore is not dealing with an empirical proposition or thesis when he attempts to refute a position such as the one Prichard holds. Consequently, if Moore is to refute Prichard's position, his refutation cannot, says Malcolm, consist of pointing out to Prichard that we do in

15Ibid., p. 177. 16Ibid., p. 181. Malcolm's footnote.

17Ibid., p. 178. 18Ibid. 19Ibid., p. 182.

fact see physical bodies. When Moore says, for example, "I have often perceived both my own body and other things which formed part of its environment . . . ,"²⁰ he cannot be replying to an opponent such as Prichard if we interpret his reply as stating an obvious empirical truth. Prichard was not denying the simple empirical truth that we see physical bodies.

Why should we not say that what Prichard was blind to was the fact that we do see bodies? Because, as I tried to show, his denial that we see bodies is really the claim that it is logically impossible to see bodies. Moore's assertion that we do see the moon and pennies and doors can be taken as a reply to Prichard only if it is understood as the assertion that there is no logical absurdity in the notion of seeing a body. But is it a 'common sense view' or a 'common belief' that it is logically possible to see bodies? No. It is the kind of observation that only a philosopher makes or understands.²¹

Malcolm wishes, then, to claim two things. First, that Prichard's position is non-empirical, as is (supposedly) implied by the line of reasoning he offers for his position. Second, that for Moore to refute Prichard's position, he cannot reply to Prichard with an empirical statement; he must reply with the non-empirical statement that it is logically possible to see physical bodies. Claiming these two things, Malcolm then argues that Prichard's position is refuted by the fact that sentences asserting the perception of physical bodies (perceptual sentences) have a correct use. He writes:

Prichard is holding that there is a conceptual absurdity in saying such a thing as 'I see a raccoon in your corn

²⁰Moore, "A Defense of Common Sense," p. 33.

²¹Malcolm, "George Edward Moore," p. 182.

patch,' or in making any affirmative statement expressed by a sentence whose main verb is some form of the verb 'see' used in a visual sense and taking for its object the name of a body.

If those sentences embodied some conceptual absurdity then they would not have a correct use. They could never express true statements. But those sentences do have a correct use.²²

In replying to Prichard, therefore, it "is both unnecessary and misleading for Moore to assert that he has often seen the moon,"²³ that is, to make, as he thought he did, an empirically true perceptual statement. "What is necessary and sufficient,"²⁴ says Malcolm,

and also puts the view he is attacking in its true light, is to point out that the sentence 'I see the moon' has a correct use. It is surprising that anyone should think it has not: but philosophical reasoning has a peculiar power to blind one to the obvious.²⁵

What Malcolm means in saying that Moore is defending ordinary language. Malcolm's theory of Moore's defense of Common Sense states that this defense consists in pointing out that certain sentences have a correct use in ordinary language. In terms of Prichard's view (position) that it is logically impossible to see physical bodies, Moore's "defense" consists in pointing out that sentences like "I see the moon" have a correct use (in ordinary language). The basis for this theory, as it applies to Prichard's view, is Malcolm's claim that recourse to the fact that these perceptual sentences have a correct use is both necessary and sufficient for refuting

²²Ibid., pp. 178-179.

²³Ibid., p. 180.

²⁴Ibid.

²⁵Ibid.

Prichard's position. Malcolm is saying that Moore does not have available the alternative of refuting Prichard's position by recourse to (non-linguistic) empirical fact; that is, Moore cannot refute Prichard's position by pointing out the empirical fact that he does see the moon. Prichard, on Malcolm's view, is not denying the empirical fact that we see such things when he says that it is logically impossible to see physical bodies. Consequently, Malcolm holds that if Moore's "defense" is to be a refutation of the philosophical positions he opposes, then it has to be understood as a defense of ordinary language. It has to be understood, in other words, as the assertion that certain ordinary sentences have a correct use. Only the true proposition that a certain sentence has a correct use, Malcolm is suggesting, will refute the claim that what this sentence asserts is a logical impossibility.

The difference between what White (and others) call Moore's "appeal to ordinary language" and Malcolm's conception of Moore's "defense." What Malcolm means, then, in characterizing Moore's defense of Common Sense as a defense of ordinary language is this. Moore is successful in refuting his opponents' views if and only if he points out that certain sentences have a correct use in ordinary language. What White and others are referring to, however, when they speak of Moore's own "appeal to ordinary language" is something entirely different from this thesis of Malcolm's. They are referring, as Malcolm puts it, to Moore's own practice of

setting out in terms of concrete examples the implications of various philosophical positions. Moore expressed these implications in ordinary, everyday language. In the course of examining one theory as to our knowledge of material objects, Moore asks us to consider whether this theory expresses what we ordinarily believe when, for example, we are traveling in a train. He concludes his discussion of this theory by saying:

So long as it is merely presented in vague phrases such as: All that we know of material objects is the orderly succession of our own sensations; it does, in fact, sound very plausible. But, so soon as you realize what it means in particular instances like that of the train -- how it means that you cannot possibly know that your carriage is, even probably, running on wheels, or coupled to other carriages -- it seems to me to lose all its plausibility.²⁶

In stating his opponents' views in terms of concrete examples expressed in everyday language, Moore attempts to bring out in sharp relief the difference between what these views imply in specific cases and "what we . . . believe in ordinary life;" ²⁷ He says that he is providing his opponents' views with "translations into the concrete." In connection with F.H. Bradley's assertion that Time is unreal, Moore asks:

What would most people mean by this proposition? I do not think there is much difficulty in discovering what sort of thing they would mean by it if you try to translate the proposition into the concrete, and to ask

²⁶Moore, Some Main Problems, p. 135.

²⁷Ibid.

what it implies, there is, I think, very little doubt as to the sort of things it implies. The moment you try to do this, and think what it really comes to, you at once begin thinking of a number of different kinds of propositions, all of which plainly must be untrue, if Time is unreal. If Time is unreal, then plainly nothing ever happens before or after anything else; nothing is ever simultaneous with anything else; it is never true that anything is past; never true that anything will happen in the future; never true that anything is happening now; and so on.²⁸

If these kinds of propositions are all untrue, Moore would hold, then a whole class of more specific Common Sense propositions must be false -- for example, propositions such as 'My body was born at a certain time in the past, and has existed continuously ever since.'²⁹ That is, all those propositions we ordinarily express by sentences with tensed verbs must be false.

To decide whether a philosophical theory stated in abstract terms goes against the beliefs of Common Sense, Moore first attempts to discover what it means upon "translation in the concrete." These "translations," Moore thought, allow us to see whether what the philosopher is saying when he expresses his view is something which we ordinarily believe (or know) to be true. It is this feature of Moore's philosophical practice which some philosophers, such as White and Klemke, have called Moore's "appeal to ordinary language."

²⁸George Edward Moore, Philosophical Studies (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1922) pp. 209-210.

²⁹Cf. Moore, "A Defense of Common Sense," p. 39.

The relation between Moore's "translations" and Malcolm's conception of Moore's "defense." In his "Critical Notice" on White's book G.E. Moore: A Critical Exposition, Malcolm says that Moore's practice of setting out the implications of a philosophical position (that is, his practice of "translating" such positions "into the concrete") "is an entirely different thing from Moore's defense of Common Sense."³⁰ He goes on to say that "when I conceived of Moore's defense of Common Sense as a defense of ordinary language I did not mean by the latter the above practice."³¹ We have seen what the difference is between this practice of Moore's and what Malcolm means when he claims that Moore is defending ordinary language. However, in saying that Moore's practice of "translating into the concrete" his opponents' views is an entirely different thing from Moore's defense of Common Sense, Malcolm may be overstating his case. These two things are clearly different aspects of Moore's philosophical method but they are also related. What is more, I think Moore's "translations" play a role in Malcolm's theory of Moore's defense of Common Sense.

In attempting to refute the views of his opponents, Moore generally assumes, as a typical first step of his refutations, a "translation into the concrete" of their views.

³⁰Malcolm, "Critical Notice," pp. 95-96.

³¹Ibid., p. 96.

It is to the (alleged) truth of such propositions as 'I now see a finger' to which Moore actually appeals in attempting to refute a view such as Prichard's and not the (alleged) truth of the more general proposition 'We (do) see physical things.'³² Moore would grant, of course, that if he does see a finger then it follows that he sees a physical body; but he was concerned, as Malcolm himself notes, with giving examples of true perceptual propositions in refutation of such a view as Prichard's.³³

Three basic steps are involved in Moore's refutations of what he himself takes to be his opponents' positions, even though Moore does not explicitly state each one.³⁴ Taking Prichard's position to be the empirical proposition that we do not see physical bodies, Moore first draws from this position the concrete implication that we do not see such things as fingers and doors. His next step is to argue that since, for example, he does perceive his own finger and that door, the statement implied by Prichard's position, the statement, namely, that we do not see such things, is false. His final step is to infer that Prichard's view is itself false, since only a false statement can entail a false statement.³⁵ Giving a view a "translation into the

³²Cf. Moore, Philosophical Studies, p. 226-227.

³³Malcolm, "George Edward Moore," p. 180.

³⁴See, however, pages 21-26 below where a more detailed discussion of Moore's own conception of his refutations is presented.

³⁵Cf. V.C. Chappell, "Malcolm on Moore," Mind 70 (1961): 420-421.

concrete" (the first of the three steps mentioned above) plays an important part in Moore's defense of Common Sense, as he himself conceived it. He imagined that he was defending the Common Sense belief that we do see such things as fingers and doors against the attacks of philosophers who are sceptical of our perception of physical bodies.

But it seems to me that these "translations into the concrete" also play an important part in Malcolm's conception of Moore's "defense." Malcolm's view is that it is both necessary and sufficient in refuting Prichard's position that Moore point out that sentences like "I see the moon," "I see the door," have a correct use. He takes Prichard's position to be the non-empirical proposition that it is logically impossible to see physical bodies. This proposition, says Malcolm, is refuted only by pointing out that ordinary perceptual sentences have a correct use. Malcolm's reasoning seems to be that if it were logically impossible to see physical bodies, then sentences which we ordinarily use to assert the perception of physical bodies, for example, "I see the door", would have to express logically impossible propositions. But since these sentences have a correct use, they do not express logically impossible propositions. Hence, Prichard is mistaken in claiming that it is logically impossible to see physical bodies. Malcolm is suggesting that Moore can refute Prichard's position only by pointing out that those sentences which Moore thinks express the (empirical) concrete

implications of Prichard's view have a correct use. Malcolm would not agree with Moore in saying that these "translations into the concrete" bring to our attention empirical consequences of Prichard's view. He would say rather that they bring to our attention the ordinary sentences which must lack a correct use if Prichard were right in saying that it is logically impossible to see physical bodies.

In conclusion, Moore represents his "translations into the concrete" as being the means by which we ascertain the concrete, empirical consequences of a philosophical position. Malcolm does not think that they can actually have this particular function. He does not accept Moore's notion that these "translations" are being applied to empirical views. These "translations," Malcolm would say, show us only what ordinary sentences Prichard takes to express logically impossible propositions and, accordingly, what he supposes to be sentences of ordinary language which have no correct use. Although Malcolm's conception of Moore's "translations" is quite different from Moore's own, they do have a definite place in his theory of Moore's defense of Common Sense.

II. The Premises of Malcolm's Theory

Malcolm's theory of Moore's "defense," the theory that this defense consists in pointing out that certain sentences have a correct use in ordinary language (subsequently referred to as (MT)), is based on the following claim:

(IFF) Moore refutes his opponents' views if and only if he points out that certain sentences have a correct use (in ordinary language).

With respect to refuting Prichard's view Malcolm writes:

"What is necessary and sufficient, and also puts the view he [Moore] is attacking in its true light, is to point out that the sentence 'I see the moon' has a correct use."³⁶ (IFF) is Malcolm's reason for holding (MT). Malcolm maintains that, not only are Moore's opponents' views refuted by pointing out that certain sentences have a correct use, this is the only way such views are refuted. Consequently, if Moore ever does refute his opponents' views, then his so-called "defense of Common Sense" has to be understood as the assertion that certain sentences have a correct use in ordinary language. Because Malcolm takes Moore in each case to be pointing out the fact that various sentences have a correct use, it will follow that on (MT), Moore always does refute his opponents' views. I think it is an interesting question as to whether a theory of Moore's "defense" should assume that he does in each case succeed in his defense (or in his refutations of opposing views), but we will leave this question aside. What we now seek are the premises used to support (IFF) and ultimately (MT).

The following passage contains Malcolm's argument to

³⁶Malcolm, "George Edward Moore," p. 180.

refute Prichard's position:

Prichard is holding that there is a conceptual absurdity in saying such a thing as 'I see a raccoon in your corn patch,' or in making any affirmative statement expressed by a sentence whose main verb is some form of the verb 'see,' used in a visual sense and taking for its object the name of a body.

If those sentences embodied some conceptual absurdity then they would not have a correct use. They could never express true statements. But those sentences do have a correct use.³⁷

Malcolm would allow the replacement of "a sentence embodying a conceptual absurdity" with "a sentence which expresses a logically impossible proposition."³⁸ Given this replacement, we can represent this argument, hereafter referred to as (MA), in the following way:

(1) Perceptual sentences (sentences like "I see the door before me") have a correct use, that is, they can be used to express true propositions.

(2) If these sentences expressed logically impossible propositions then they would not have a correct use -- they could never express true propositions.

Therefore, (C), Perceptual sentences do not express logically impossible propositions.

Now (C) does not, to be exact, express the negation of Prichard's view as Malcolm interprets it. Prichard's view, according to Malcolm, is the claim that it is logically

³⁷Ibid., pp. 178-179.

³⁸Ibid., p. 182.

impossible to see physical bodies; it is the assertion that the proposition 'We see physical bodies' is logically impossible. Nevertheless, we can assume, I think, that Prichard would grant Malcolm the following two things: (a) If perceptual sentences, for example, "I see that door," do not express logically impossible propositions, then the sentence "We see physical bodies" does not express a logical impossibility; (b) If the sentence "We see physical bodies" does not express a logical impossibility, then the proposition that we see physical bodies is not logically impossible.

Assuming that Prichard would grant Malcolm (a) and (b), which I think he would, then we can go immediately from (C) to:

(C') It is not logically impossible to see physical bodies.

(C') expresses the negation of Prichard's view, on Malcolm's interpretation of what Prichard is claiming. Let us call (C) the "primary" conclusion of (MA) and (C') the "secondary" conclusion of (MA).

Malcolm has not established (MT) with (MA). Notice that the soundness of (MA) does not establish the truth of (IFF), when (IFF) is put in terms of Prichard's view. If the premises of (MA) are true (since (MA) is valid), we can say that a sufficient condition for refuting Prichard's view is to point out that perceptual sentences have a correct use. In other words, if the premises of (MA) are true then we can establish the "secondary" conclusion of (MA). And, in general, we can conclude that Moore refutes his opponents' views if

he points out that certain sentences have a correct use in ordinary language. But the soundness of (MA) will not yield the consequence that a necessary condition for Moore to refute Prichard's view is that he point out that perceptual sentences have a correct use. (MA), if sound, does not warrant saying that Moore refutes Prichard's view only if he points out that perceptual sentences have a correct use. Accordingly, even if (a) (MA) is sound and (b) Moore uses (MA) as his argument against Prichard's view, we do not arrive at (MT) as applied to Prichard's view. (MT) requires that (MA) be the only argument Moore can use to refute Prichard's view. The premises of (MA), or their modification to fit views other than Prichard's, are, however, the only premises which Malcolm claims Moore appeals to in refuting his opponents. Hence, Malcolm has not established that if Moore appeals to premises like those of (MA), we must accept (MT).

Can Moore refute Prichard's view with (MA)? But if Moore appeals to the premises of (MA) to refute Prichard's view, does he actually succeed in refuting Prichard's view? That is, does (MA) supply Moore with a way of refuting Prichard's claim that it is logically impossible to see physical bodies? I believe not. To show that (MA) is unsound, consider premise (1). It seems that Prichard could accept this premise unless it is qualified. He could maintain that perceptual sentences do have a correct use, that is, can be

used to express true propositions, provided that those sentences expressed propositions other than those they do now, as a matter of contingent fact, express. If to say that such sentences have a "correct use" means nothing more than "they can be used to express true propositions," Prichard could accept premise (1) and successfully argue against premise (2) on the grounds that, from the fact that a sentence expresses a logically impossible proposition, it does not follow that it could never express a true proposition. For it is only a contingent fact that a sentence expresses a logically impossible proposition. Consequently, Prichard could argue, from the fact that perceptual sentences now express logically impossible propositions it does not follow that such sentences could never express true propositions. To hold that such sentences could never express true propositions would be to imply that such sentences could not express any propositions other than those they do now express. And Prichard could certainly say that his view does not commit him to holding this.

But when qualified, Malcolm's premise (2) reads: If perceptual sentences expressed logically impossible propositions they could never express true propositions, provided they express the same propositions they now express. This qualified version of premise (2) is, I believe, true but also unobjectionable to Prichard. On this qualified version of premise (2), premise (1) merely begs the question against

Prichard. It simply asserts what Prichard would deny.

In his "A Reply to My Critics," Moore claims that the philosophers whom he attacks would say that they know certain ordinary sentences are often used, yet are not aware that such sentences describe what could be the case.³⁹ Such philosophers would hold, says Moore, "that, on the contrary, . . . [these sentences assert] that something is the case, which could not possibly be the case."⁴⁰ Following this suggestion of Moore's, Prichard (and others) could argue that "correct use" need not be equated, in the way Malcolm does, with "can be used to make true statements." Sentences which express logically impossible propositions have a correct use; their correct use, as language is presently employed, is restricted to expressing false propositions. Were language to change, such that these sentences would no longer express the propositions they do now, they might express true propositions. But to reserve "correct use" for just those sentences which do now express true or possibly true propositions, Prichard could argue, is purely arbitrary.

I do not find that (MA) affords Moore a way of refuting Prichard's view. It seems to me that Malcolm has not shown

³⁹George Edward Moore, "A Reply to My Critics," in The Philosophy of G.E. Moore, The Library of Living Philosophers, vol. 4, 3d ed., edited by Paul Arthur Schilpp (La Salle, Ill.: Open Court, 1968), p. 673.

⁴⁰Ibid.

that even a sufficient condition for refuting Prichard's view is to point to the fact that perceptual sentences have a correct use. Unless premise (1) is qualified, pointing to the fact that a perceptual sentence has a correct use will not be pointing to anything with which Prichard disagrees, and without this qualification, premise (2) seems false. But when the necessary qualification is made, however, premise (2) is replaced by a true statement but then (the qualified) premise (1) does nothing more than assert what Prichard would clearly deny.

III. Whether Moore is Refuting Empirical Views: Moore's Own Conception of His Refutations

Is Moore, as Malcolm alleges, mistaken in supposing that the views he attacks are empirical? To deal adequately with this issue, we need to consider what is involved in Moore's assessment of the views he attacks. Malcolm has not shown that (MA) provides Moore with a means of refuting a view such as Prichard's, nor that it is the only argument available to Moore if he hopes to refute his opponents' views. Let us turn, then, to an examination of Moore's own conception of his refutations.

Moore thinks that a philosopher like Prichard who says that we do not see physical bodies is denying the empirical fact that we see such things as fingers and doors. But Moore, unlike Malcolm, does not see that it is a mistake to

suppose that Prichard is denying this. Prichard, Moore would say, is making both an empirical and a non-empirical claim when he argues that we do not see physical bodies. The non-empirical claim, namely, that it is logically impossible to see physical bodies, is Prichard's reason or ground for maintaining that we do not see physical bodies. But when he maintains that we do not see physical bodies, Prichard is making an empirical, not a non-empirical claim. Addressing himself to the philosophical view that there are no external objects Moore says:

Of course, his [the philosopher's] reason, his statement that 'There are external objects' is self-contradictory, is not an empirical statement. But he is, of course, wrong in thinking that 'There are external objects' is self-contradictory, and if so, 'There are external objects' may really be an empirical statement. It seems to me that my statement, that there are, certainly is empirical. Why should it not be the case that from his false non-empirical statement that 'There are external objects' is self-contradictory, the philosopher invalidly infers the empirical statement 'There are no external objects?' This seems to me to be what has actually happened; and that, therefore, philosophers who say 'There are no external objects' are making a false empirical statement, though they are also making a false non-empirical one, namely, that 'There are external objects' is self-contradictory.⁴¹

Now Moore does not hold, I believe, that the inference from (1), 'There are external objects' is self-contradictory, to (2), There are no external objects, is invalid, in the sense of holding that (2) does not follow from (1). The inference from (1) to (2) merely has the form $\sim \Diamond p \rightarrow \sim p$ which is an elementary, valid schema of modal logic.⁴² I believe

⁴¹Ibid., p. 672.

⁴²" \Diamond " stands for logical possibility, " \sim " for negation, and " \rightarrow " for entailment.

that what Moore meant was: Since the proposition that 'There are external objects' is self-contradictory (or logically impossible) is false, the philosopher has not established the truth of what he maintains, namely, that there are no external objects. In other words, the philosopher in question has produced a valid but unsound argument.⁴³

If we turn to a passage from Moore's Lectures on Philosophy, it becomes evident that Moore wishes to reject an inference like the one from (1) to (2) on the grounds that its premise is false and not because its conclusion does not follow from its premise. Here Moore's use of "invalid" corresponds to that of "unsound": where an argument is said to be "unsound" if either at least one of its premises is false or the conclusion does not follow from the premises. The passage reads as follows:

Now the argument: 'This desk has shape' is true ∴ it is not self-contradictory

is just as good an argument as

'This desk has shape' is self-contradictory ∴ it is false.

<What I can't understand is how anybody can think their argument a better one.>

We can argue: The premisses offered as shewing that 'This desk has shape' is self-contradictory, either can-not be true or cannot shew it, because 'This desk has shape' [is true] .

People don't see this, I think: If you know that this

⁴³It might be objected, here, that the real mistake Prichard makes is to suppose that he can infer an empirical statement from a non-empirical one. But consider: From (1) 'It is logically impossible that I am writing a paper on Moore,' I can validly deduce (2) 'I am not writing a paper on Moore.' But (2) is empirical (and false) and (1) is non-empirical (and false). The inference from (1) to (2) is merely unsound.

desk has shape, then it follows that the argument used to shew that it is self-contradictory must be invalid -- either the premisses are false, or they don't shew it. This really is a conclusive proof, provided you know that the desk has shape.⁴⁴

Moore, of course, believed that on many occasions he knew to be true such propositions as 'This desk has shape' and, hence, knew to be false a claim professing it to be self-contradictory for a thing to have shape or extension. But the issue between Moore and Malcolm here is not whether Moore knew such propositions to be true. The issue is whether Moore is correct in deducing the falsity of a proposition which both he and Malcolm agree is non-empirical, in this case, the proposition that 'This desk has shape' is self-contradictory, from a true empirical proposition -- the empirically true proposition that this desk has shape. Moore's belief that he can make this simple deduction is his reason for claiming that his opponent has unsoundly inferred a false empirical proposition from a false non-empirical one. He is willing to grant that part of what his opponent is doing is advancing a non-empirical claim. But Moore wishes to say that this non-empirical claim, which constitutes the reason for what his opponent is maintaining, can be shown to be false by deducing its falsity from an empirical fact. Consider the following important passage from Moore's Commonplace Book:

⁴⁴George Edward Moore, Lectures on Philosophy, ed. Casimir Lewy (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1966), pp. 45-46. The brackets around "is true" are Moore's own.

Suppose a philosopher says (a) 'There's a hand' is self-contradictory, ∴ (b) There are no hands.

(a) is non-empirical, (b) is empirical; though, if (a) were true, (b) would be a tautology, since, if p is a contradiction, $\sim p$ is a tautology

But 'That there are hands' can be established by empirical evidence: anything which can be established by empirical evidence, can't be self-contradictory.⁴⁵

To return to the particular dispute between Moore and Prichard. If it can be established by empirical evidence that we see such things as fingers and doors, then it cannot be logically impossible, claims Moore, to see physical bodies. Thus, Moore wishes to contend that since it is an empirical fact that he has often perceived such things as his own fingers, the (empirical) proposition that we do not see physical bodies must be false. But then so must be the non-empirical claim which Prichard offers as his reason for claiming that we do not see physical bodies: the claim, namely, that it is logically impossible to see physical bodies. Moore's reasoning here is straightforward and very simple. It is as follows:

- (1) The proposition that I see a door is true
(as established, for example, by the empirical evidence of sight)

Therefore, It is false that we do not see physical bodies.

- (2) If it is false that we do not see physical bodies then it is logically possible to see physical bodies.

⁴⁵George Edward Moore, Commonplace Book, 1919-1953, ed. Casimir Lewy (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1962), p. 202.

Therefore, it is logically possible to see physical bodies. Let us refer to this argument as (MO).

If (MO) is cogent then two important things seem to result. First, Malcolm is wrong in saying that "Moore's assertion that we do not see the moon and pennies and doors can be taken as a reply to Prichard only if it is understood as the assertion that there is no logical absurdity in the notion of seeing a body."⁴⁶ Moore's reply to what Prichard is maintaining will be the empirical proposition that he sees a door. On Moore's understanding of (MO), Prichard is maintaining the empirical proposition that we do not see physical bodies. Second, since Moore's reply to what Prichard is maintaining will itself imply the non-empirical, modal statement 'It is logically possible to see physical bodies,' Prichard's reason for saying that we do not see physical bodies, his reason, namely, that it is logically impossible to see physical bodies, will itself be refuted by the empirical fact that Moore sees a door. In short, what Prichard is maintaining, as well as what constitutes his reason for what he maintains, is refuted by one and the same empirical fact; the fact that Moore sees a door.

IV. Whether Moore is Refuting Empirical Views: Malcolm's Objections to (MO) and Replies

Malcolm would not accept (MO) as a cogent argument.

⁴⁶Malcolm, "George Edward Moore," p. 182.

Recall Malcolm's assertion that Prichard is not blind to the fact that we do see physical bodies.⁴⁷ This can be taken to mean that Prichard is not saying that it is a matter of experience that we do not see physical bodies.

When a philosopher maintains that we do not know material object propositions to be true (Hume) or that we do not see material things (Prichard), he must be holding that the notions of knowing a material object proposition to be true and of seeing a material thing are really self-contradictory. He certainly cannot be maintaining that it is a matter of experience that people do not know or see such things.⁴⁸

If Prichard is not saying that it is a matter of experience that people do not see physical bodies, then, Malcolm would claim, Moore is mistaken in thinking that appeal to the evidence of sense-experience can refute what Prichard is denying when he says that we do not see physical bodies.

Is this a serious objection to (MO)? I do not believe that it is. Prichard does not hold that it is a matter of experience that we do not see physical bodies. But from this it would be wrong to infer that he is not really denying the truth of a proposition which can be refuted by appeal to experience. Prichard does not think that he is making an empirical statement when he says that we do not see physical bodies. For he provides as his reason for saying this the proposition that it is logically impossible to see physical bodies. Clearly Prichard imagines himself to be stating a

⁴⁷Ibid.

⁴⁸Malcolm, "Critical Notice," p. 97.

necessary truth when he maintains that we do not see physical bodies. He would not accept any empirical evidence as counting against what he asserts because he believes that the truth of (1), 'No one sees physical bodies,' soundly follows from the truth of (2), 'It is logically impossible to see physical bodies.' And, of course, if (2) were true then (1) would be necessarily true and not capable of refutation by sense-experience. But since (2) is not true, Moore's belief that 'We do not see physical bodies' denies what can be established by appeal to experience, is perfectly consistent with saying that Prichard does not take it to be a matter of experience that we do not see physical bodies. Hence, Malcolm's objection to (MO) does not show that (MO) is an unsuccessful means of refuting Prichard's view.

Malcolm would not accept that his objection to (MO) has been adequately answered. He would not allow that Prichard is making an empirical statement when he says that we do not see physical bodies. He would point out that "in order to find out what kind of thesis a philosopher is maintaining, we have to consider the kind of support he offers for it."⁴⁹ And, he would continue, "Prichard's reasoning, for example, clearly implies that his thesis is non-empirical."⁵⁰

Malcolm takes Prichard's thesis to be the claim that

⁴⁹Malcolm, "George Edward Moore," p. 180. Malcolm's footnote.

⁵⁰Ibid.

it is logically impossible to see physical bodies. ". . . his [Prichard's] denial that we see bodies is really the claim that it is logically impossible to see bodies."⁵¹ But surely Prichard's reasoning, his argument to show that it is logically impossible to see physical bodies, does not imply that 'It is logically impossible to see physical bodies' is non-empirical. Prichard's argument has nothing to do with determining whether this proposition is empirical or non-empirical. The same thing holds if we take Prichard's thesis to be the proposition that we do not see physical bodies. Whether this is an empirical proposition cannot be inferred from Prichard's argument.

From a consideration of Prichard's reasoning we can, I believe, infer that what he holds is that it is logically impossible to see physical bodies, and not that it is a matter of experience that we do not see physical bodies.⁵² But this is quite different from saying that his reasoning implies that his thesis is non-empirical. To find out whether Prichard believes that the claim 'We do not see physical bodies' is an a priori or empirical truth, we have to consi-

⁵¹Ibid., p. 182.

⁵²I think Malcolm is correct in saying that the actual occurrence of visual illusions is not necessary for Prichard's position (Knowledge and Certainty, p. 178). Prichard's reasoning seems to be that one could be said to see physical bodies only if visual illusions were logically impossible. He would claim that only if visual illusions were logically impossible would the state of seeing a physical body differ in its "intrinsic character" from the state of only seeming to see a physical body -- a difference required, on his view, if we can be said to see physical bodies (See Prichard, Know

der the kind of support he offers for saying that we do not see physical bodies. An examination of the argument which Prichard provides for his assertion that we do not see physical bodies, shows that he thinks he is stating an a priori truth when he claims that we do not see physical bodies; it shows that his reason for saying that we do not see physical bodies is non-empirical. And certainly Moore would no doubt agree to this. For as we have seen, he allows that Prichard is making a non-empirical claim in arguing that we do not see physical bodies. But he wants to insist that Prichard is also making an empirical claim. Although an examination of Prichard's argument reveals that his reason for saying that we do not see physical bodies is non-empirical, it does not show that the proposition he maintains when he asserts that we do not see physical bodies is non-empirical.

Malcolm seems to have the idea that, if a philosopher does not offer as his reason for saying that we do not see physical bodies a statement prefaced with the words "It is a matter of experience that . . .," then what the philosopher says is not the straightforward empirical assertion that we do not see physical bodies. But this seems to me to be a mistake. Again, what a philosopher offers as his reason for

ledge and Perception, p. 50). But since the logical possibility of visual illusions is a necessary truth, Prichard, it seems to me, wants to conclude that the proposition 'We do not see physical bodies' is itself a necessary truth.

what he maintains shows at most what kind of thesis or view he imagines himself to be maintaining. It does not show what kind of thesis, a priori or empirical, he is actually holding when he says, for example, that we do not see physical bodies.

In one place Malcolm asserts with respect to a view Moore attacks: "If the philosopher's statement were an empirical statement, we can see how absurdly unreasonable it would be of him to make it --"53 But here again, failing to clearly distinguish between the reason for what a philosopher maintains and what he actually maintains will only bring about its seeming "absurdly unreasonable" to suppose Prichard, for example, to be making an empirical statement. It would at best be "absurdly unreasonable" for Prichard to offer as his reason for claiming that we do not see physical bodies the statement "It is a matter of experience that we do not see physical bodies." That is, it might be "absurdly unreasonable" for Prichard to believe that he is making an empirical statement when he says that we do not see physical bodies, but I do not see that it is "absurdly unreasonable" to suppose that Prichard made a false empirical statement while believing he had an argument which established his statement as an a priori truth. Certainly Malcolm has not shown this to be so.

⁵³Malcolm, "Moore and Ordinary Language," The Philosophy of G.E. Moore, p. 352.

Malcolm has not shown that, in addition to making the non-empirical claim 'It is logically impossible to see physical bodies,' Prichard is not also making an empirical claim in saying that we do not see physical bodies. Hence, Malcolm is not justified in charging Moore with having the "mistaken idea that when he is dealing with a proposition put forward by a philosophical skeptic he is dealing with an empirical proposition."⁵⁴ I do not see, then, that he has any serious objections to (MO).

V. A Closing Comment

In his early paper "Moore and Ordinary Language," Malcolm characterizes the philosophical statements which Moore opposes as "disguised linguistic statements."⁵⁵ This characterization is never elaborated by Malcolm but is highly suggestive. It suggests that, in some sense, a philosophical statement of the sort Moore opposes has linguistic content but is expressed in a mode of speech which "disguises" its content. If this characterization of a philosophical statement of the sort Moore attacks could be successfully developed, then possibly the notion that such statements are refuted by recourse to non-linguistic matters of fact could be shown to be mistaken. If it could be demonstrated, in other words, that Prichard is making a statement which has only the "verbal appearance" of making a claim about what we

⁵⁴Malcolm, "George Edward Moore," p. 180.

⁵⁵Norman Malcolm, "Moore and Ordinary Language," p. 354.

do not see when he says we do not see physical bodies, then possibly his statement is not one to be upset by recourse to (non-linguistic) empirical fact.

One gets the impression that Malcolm must still have the idea in his latest paper on Moore that Moore's opponents' statements are "disguised linguistic statements." For he never openly attempts to explain why he thinks reference to (non-linguistic) empirical fact cannot upset, for example, Prichard's claim that it is logically impossible to see physical bodies. He never explains why he believes the supposed logical impossibility of seeing physical bodies cannot, as an alternative to being refuted by pointing out that perceptual sentences have a correct use, be refuted by recourse to the fact that one sees the moon. Why is a philosopher who claims that it is logically impossible to see physical bodies not saying something which can be refuted in the straightforward, simple manner in which Moore thought it could be? What is wrong with Moore's notion that "anything which can be established by empirical evidence can't be self-contradictory [logically impossible]"?⁵⁶ We are never given an answer to these questions by Malcolm. Yet he believes it to be necessary in refuting Prichard's view to point to the fact that perceptual sentences have a correct use.⁵⁷ Malcolm even says that doing so "puts the view he [Moore] is

⁵⁶Moore, Commonplace Book, p. 202.

⁵⁷Malcolm, "George Edward Moore," p. 180.

attacking in its true light,"58 And that it is "misleading for Moore to assert that he has often seen the moon."59 This certainly creates the impression that Malcolm regards Prichard's view as being in some "disguised" way only a mistaken claim about the use of perceptual sentences.

When we turn in the next chapter to an examination of the interpretation of Moore's defense of Common Sense advanced by Morris Lazerowitz, we will find an attempt to develop the idea that the anti-Common Sense views which Moore attacks are linguistic in substance and, hence, have only the "verbal appearance" of being claims which go against what most of us take to be true propositions in everyday life. Lazerowitz argues that if a view like Prichard's were really the claim that it is logically impossible to see physical bodies, recourse to matters of non-linguistic fact would not be relevant in upsetting this claim. This claim is, on his view, simply an ontological way of claiming that the expression "sees a physical body" has no descriptive use in everyday language.60 As we shall see, Lazerowitz finds this to be a reason for giving up the idea that Prichard, for example, is really making the claim he seems to be making. A paradox is found by Lazerowitz to be associated with either the notion

58Ibid. 59Ibid.

60Lazerowitz does not maintain, however, that the two claims in question are equivalent. The relationship between these two claims is examined in our discussion of Lazerowitz's view.

that Moore's opponents' views are empirical claims or the notion that they are attempts to state a priori truths. Hence, he rejects what would seem to be two standard interpretations of Moore's defense of Common Sense in favor of a third, which has the consequence that neither Moore's opponents' views nor Moore's replies are truth-value claims.

C H A P T E R I I

MOORE'S PARADOX: LAZEROWITZ'S THEORY OF
MOORE'S DEFENSE OF COMMON SENSE

I. What is Moore's Paradox?

Moore claims that such philosophical views as 'Time is unreal,' 'Space is unreal,' 'Material objects do not exist,' have consequences which are inconsistent with propositions we know to be true, where "we" includes the philosophers who hold the views in question. A philosopher who holds the view that time is unreal knows, says Moore, that he was born at a certain time in the past; a philosopher who holds that space is unreal knows that he has been in contact with or at various distances from other things; a philosopher who says that material objects do not exist knows that he has a body.

In connection with such philosophical views, Lazerowitz believes that "Moore has formulated what is one of the most important paradoxes in philosophy."¹ This paradox, stated in Moore's own words, is that

philosophers . . . have been able to hold sincerely, as part of their philosophical creed, propositions inconsistent with what they themselves knew to be true; and . . .

¹Morris Lazerowitz, "Moore's Paradox," reprinted in his The Structure of Metaphysics, with a Foreward by John Wisdom (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1955), p. 3. This paper was previously published in The Philosophy of G.E. Moore, pp. 371-393. Subsequent references to this paper are from The Structure of Metaphysics.

this has really frequently happened.²

Lazerowitz finds this to be an "astonishing paradox."³ As he observes the matter, we need an explanation as to what "makes it possible for philosophers to hold . . . [views] in the face of plain matter of fact, with which, as seems to be the case, the views are inconsistent."⁴ In the course of his paper, "Moore's Paradox," Lazerowitz makes evident that he does not subscribe to the idea that there is an inconsistency between these views and facts of the sort Moore appears to refer to in his refutations. In fact, Lazerowitz argues against this seeming inconsistency. What he hopes to show is "how his [Moore's] paradox together with his refutations throw light on the nature of the views, so that it can be seen that those views have no refutations."⁵

Lazerowitz points out that Moore's opponents' views, if inconsistent with facts of the sort Moore refers to in his refutations, are so "obviously inconsistent with them; nothing, for example, could be more obvious than the inconsistency, if there is one, between a fact of the form 'I have a body' and the view that there are no material bodies."⁶ In spite of such facts being well known by them, however, Moore's opponents continue to hold their views. "That is,

²Moore, "A Defense of Common Sense," p. 41.

³Lazerowitz, "Moore's Paradox," p. 4.

⁴Ibid. ⁵Ibid., p. 6. ⁶Ibid., p. 5.

knowing such facts does not make them give up their views;
"7 Since there is no question, says Lazerowitz, that
 they hold their views sincerely as well as know facts which
 so obviously seem to render their views false,

. . . it is, . . . a correct paraphrase of Moore's para-
 dox . . . to say that philosophers have held 'sincerely,
 as part of their philosophical creed, propositions which
 they knew to be false.' And if his [Moore's] 'refuta-
 tions' are refutations, then philosophers have held views
 they knew to be false. This is impossible, and the only
 conclusion, . . . is that his 'refutations' are not
 refutations of their views.⁸

In response to Lazerowitz, Moore says that he does not
 see that it is impossible to suppose that philosophers have
 held sincerely views which they knew to be false. He maintains
 that Lazerowitz does not give a reason for claiming that this
 is impossible and, therefore, has not shown that his, Moore's,
 "refutations" are not refutations.⁹ Lazerowitz contends, how-
 ever, that he does not mean that it is logically impossible
 to suppose that philosophers have held views which they knew
 to be false. What he wants to hold is that it is very unlikely
 or highly improbable that they have held views which they
 knew to be false.¹⁰ More recently he has had this to say:

G.E. Moore has remarked on the strange thing that philo-
 sophers have been able to hold, in all seriousness, propo-
 sitions which, if they are what on the surface they appear
 to be, flagrantly contradict what is known to be true by
 everyone, including the philosophers themselves. In

⁷Ibid. ⁸Ibid., p. 9.

⁹Moore, "A Reply to My Critics," p. 675.

¹⁰Based on a discussion with him concerning this very
 point.

another place he has remarked that certain philosophical theories could be held only in what he called 'a philosophic moment.' If we put these two observations together, it would look as if a person is able in a philosophic moment to believe propositions which he knows to be false. A philosophic moment must indeed be something magical, creating, as it would seem, a mental split which permits a false belief to lie side by side with the knowledge that the belief is false. Now, we are presented with the choice either of accepting an unrealistic psychological explanation of the minds of philosophers or of thinking that a philosophical utterance is not what it appears to us to be.¹¹

Thus, since there is no evidence whatsoever to suppose that a philosopher suffers such a "mental split,"¹² Lazerowitz contends that it is unlikely that Moore's opponents are stating views which are inconsistent with facts of the sort Moore appears to refer to in his refutations.

II. Argument (NR)

Lazerowitz has an argument, however, which he thinks shows that Moore's opponents' views are not inconsistent with plain matters of fact. His argument to show this is part of a much longer argument the conclusion of which is that

¹¹Morris Lazerowitz, Studies in Metaphilosophy (New York: The Humanities Press, 1964), pp. 218-219.

¹²An example of what Lazerowitz seems to mean by a "mental split" is given in the case of a dispiriting parent unable to cope with the death of a son. This person may, for example, acknowledge with remorseful behavior that the son has been killed in war but, nevertheless, claim in all seriousness and with assurance against those who try to make him (her) confront reality, that someday the son will return home. The point is, as I understand it, that explanations of typical cases which permit "a false belief to lie side by side with the knowledge that the belief is false" would be inappropriately applied to the behavior of a philosopher, which Moore's "paradox" forces on us.

Moore's opponents' views have no refutations of any kind, and that, consequently, Moore's refutations are to be interpreted as having a different purpose from what is ordinarily supposed; they are not, according to Lazerowitz, aimed at upsetting a truth-value claim. My strategy will be to develop this more inclusive argument, subsequently referred to as (NR), before attempting to make any lengthy criticism of it. Since one of the premises of (NR) requires an extended discussion to appreciate its full meaning, I have divided my presentation of (NR) into two chapters. The remainder of this chapter is primarily concerned with achieving an overall understanding of (NR). In the next chapter I offer my assessment of (NR).

III. The Constituents of (NR): (EM), (AP), and (REV)

(NR) consists of two component arguments and a subsequent interpretation of Moore's opponents' views as well as of Moore's refutations of such views. I shall refer to these two arguments and the interpretation, respectively, as (EM), (AP), and (REV). (EM) is an argument to show that Moore's opponents' views are not empirical, and that if looked upon as demonstrations in which empirical facts are brought against these views, Moore's "refutations" are not refutations. (AP) is an argument to show that Moore's opponents' views are not a priori true propositions and that if we take his opponents as trying to state a priori truths, a variant of

Moore's original paradox results -- a paradox which again makes it unlikely that Moore refutes his opponents' claims. (REV) says, in effect, that Moore's opponents, though seemingly expressing views in opposition to Common Sense, are presenting concealed, academic revisions of ordinary language. Moore's refutations are here understood as attempts to resist such revisions. Given this general breakdown of (NR), let us begin our exposition of it with the subsidiary argument (EM).

Argument (EM). (EM) has two premises:

(EM₁) Recourse to actual matters of fact known by the philosopher (that is, Moore's opponent) does not result in his view being given up.¹³

(EM₂) ". . . no imaginable or describable facts . . . do so either."¹⁴

Speaking of Bradley's view that time is unreal, if taken to mean that there are no temporal facts, Lazerowitz writes:

He [Bradley] cannot describe anything, over and above the phenomena he rejects as being temporal, which he would say was the real thing, really temporal. Unlike the bored seeker for excitement who complains that nothing happens, he cannot say what it would be like for anything to happen. Nothing in actual experience, in recollection, in present experience, or in fulfilled expectation, is acceptable as disestablishing his view, and neither is anything which could be described, regardless of whether it exists or not. Unlike 'Centaur

¹³Lazerowitz, "Moore's Paradox," p. 11.

¹⁴Ibid.

are unreal,' 'There are no temporal facts' is such that nothing which we can picture to ourselves would falsify it.¹⁵

Consequently, "the philosopher who asserts 'Time is unreal' is not using it to express a proposition which could imaginably be false, i.e., an empirical proposition."¹⁶ And so, "if Moore's refutations are looked on as demonstrations in which empirical facts are brought to bear against the views, . . . his 'refutations' are not refutations."¹⁷ Let us call the conclusion that Moore's opponents are not asserting empirical propositions (EM_C), and let us call the conclusion that if Moore's "refutations" are attempts to bring empirical facts against these views they are not refutations, (EM_C'). (EM), then, consists of two premises, (EM_1) and (EM_2), and two conclusions, (EM_C) and (EM_C').

"Once it becomes clear that in holding . . . their

¹⁵Ibid., pp. 11-12. Moore says that, when expressed "in the way in which it would be expressed in ordinary life," "Time is unreal" means the same as "There are no temporal facts." See Philosophical Studies, p. 211.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 12. Throughout most of his writings, Lazerowitz uses "could imaginably be false" or "could conceivably be false" to mean could possibly be false, in the sense of logical possibility. Moreover, he frequently uses "a priori proposition" and "empirical proposition" interchangeably with the respective terms "necessary proposition" and "contingent proposition." For a recent criticism of such interchangeability, see Saul A. Kripke, "Naming and Necessity," in Donald Davidson and Gilbert Harman, eds., Semantics of Natural Language (Dordrecht: D. Reidel, 1972), esp. pp. 260-263. However, for the purposes of exposition, I shall make free use of this supposed interchangeability myself.

¹⁷Ibid.

views, Moore's opponents] are not asserting empirical propositions, the natural thing is to think that they are asserting necessary ones."¹⁸ Since a philosopher who claims that there are no temporal facts "cannot say what it would be like for anything to happen,"¹⁹ one may suppose, says Lazerowitz, that he is using the words "There are no temporal facts" to express a proposition which cannot possibly be false. Lazerowitz wants to show that, on the supposition that Moore's opponents are stating necessary truths, two things follow: One, that the disputes between Moore and his opponents have to be interpreted as disputes over points of actual linguistic usage. Second, that if this is what the disputes come to, then we are confronted with a version of Moore's paradox; a paradox which suggests that Moore's opponents have been interpreted wrongly when understood as trying to state necessary truths.

Argument (AP). We have given the name (AP) to Lazerowitz's argument to show both that Moore's opponents are not stating a priori truths and that they are wrongly interpreted as trying to state a priori truths. And we will regard (AP) as a kind of reductio ad absurdum argument. I say "a kind of" because the conclusion of (AP) is not intended by Lazerowitz to be a "reduction to absurdity" of the supposition that Moore's opponents are stating necessary truths.

¹⁸Ibid. ¹⁹Ibid.

The conclusion of (AP) is suppose to be a statement with a high degree of probability given what this supposition itself implies. The following is our rendition of (AP):

(AP₁) Suppose Moore's opponents' views are necessarily true propositions.

(AP₂) The information conveyed by sentences expressing necessarily true propositions is about the actual use of terminology.²⁰

(AP₃) But when regarded as expressions for necessarily true propositions, the sentences stating Moore's opponents' views convey misinformation about the actual use of terminology -- expressions in everyday language.²¹

(AP₄) Moore's opponents know, however, facts about the actual use of terminology which they seem plainly to deny, when their utterances are taken to express necessary truths.²²

Therefore, (AP_C), Moore's opponents are not trying to state what they believe to be necessary truths (as language is presently employed).

It is evident that (AP) requires discussion before

²⁰Ibid., p. 14.

²¹Ibid.

²²Ibid., pp. 16-18.

we can be said to know whether it is a good argument. Before an attempt is made, however, to critically examine what I think is its crucial premise, namely, (AP₂), let us acquire an understanding of what Lazerowitz has in mind by (AP). After achieving an understanding of what Lazerowitz hopes to show with (AP), we will consider his theory of logical necessity. It is this theory which elucidates the claim made by (AP₂). We will set out his view of necessity and then show how he applies this view to his interpretation of the philosophical dispute between Moore and the conventionalist philosopher who says that necessary propositions are really verbal. Here we will see in detail what (REV) asserts. The presentation of (REV) will be followed by an assessment of (AP₂) and, consequently, (AP). Finally, we will return to an assessment of (EM). These assessments are in chapter III.

(AP₂) asserts that what we know and all that we know in understanding a sentence which expresses a necessarily true proposition is a fact about the use of expressions.²³ It asserts, for example, that what we know and all that we know in understanding the sentence "A camel is an animal" is that "animal" applies, as a matter of usage, to whatever "camel" applies to, and that "camel but not an animal" has no descriptive use. Consequently, (AP₃) means this. On the assumption that the sentence "There are no temporal facts,"

²³See pp.50-57 below for a detailed treatment of (AP₂).

for example, expressed a necessary truth, what we would know in understanding it (and all that we would know) would be that "temporal fact" describes nothing actual or logically possible. But that "temporal fact" has no descriptive use -- as language is presently employed -- is a false proposition. Thus, what we would know to be true (and all that we would know to be true) in understanding the sentence "There are no temporal facts" on the assumption that it expressed a necessary truth, turns out to be a false claim about the use of the expression "temporal fact" -- the claim, namely, that it has no descriptive use.

(AP₄) says, with respect to our example, that Moore's opponent (Bradley) knows that "temporal fact" has a descriptive use. He knows that this expression, which applies to whatever expressions using tensed verbs -- for example, "was born in the past" -- apply to, describes what is both actual and possible.

What Lazerowitz wants to establish with (AP). We can now see, I believe, what Lazerowitz hopes to show with (AP). Assume, as does Lazerowitz, that (AP₂) is true. Then all that, say, Bradley would know in understanding the sentence "There are no temporal facts," if it expressed a necessary truth, would be that "temporal fact" has no descriptive use. Thus, if Bradley actually believed that his utterance, "There are no temporal facts," expressed a necessary truth, then in stating his view he would be informing us only of his belief

that the expression "temporal fact" has no use to describe anything actual or possible. In attempting to show this belief mistaken, Moore has to be construed as pointing out that "temporal fact" -- or any other expression which has an application only if "temporal fact" has an application, for example, "was born in the past" -- is an expression with a descriptive use. The dispute between Bradley and Moore becomes a disagreement as to whether temporal terminology has a descriptive use in everyday language.

However, to suppose, says Lazerowitz, that Bradley actually believed himself to be stating a necessary truth by the words "There are no temporal facts" leads us to a linguistic parallel to Moore's paradox. This new version of Moore's paradox is that

philosophers '. . . have been able to hold sincerely, as part of their philosophical creed, views according to which expressions of various sorts, which they know are used in ordinary discourse to describe real or imaginary states of affairs, have no [descriptive] use or sense.'²⁴

But this, according to Lazerowitz, is unacceptable.

Since philosophers understand the language and know how to use it, and since Moore's demonstrations only call attention to what they already know, they must see that his refutations do establish the falsity of views according to which great parts language in everyday use make no sense [descriptively]. The fact that they see this and do not give up their views would be entirely unintelligible if facts of the sort he adduces were incompatible with their views.²⁵

²⁴Lazerowitz, "Moore's Paradox," p. 15.

²⁵Ibid., p. 18.

Therefore, claims Lazerowitz, it is highly unlikely that Moore's opponents actually believe themselves to be stating necessary truths with their philosophical utterances. And if the views Moore attacks are neither empirical, as (supposedly) shown by (EM), nor a priori, as (supposedly) shown by (AP), then they have, says Lazerowitz, no refutations.²⁶

Since Lazerowitz rejects the idea that Moore's opponents actually believe their utterances to express necessary truths, he would not accept Moore's account of what his opponents are doing. Moore, recall, claims that a philosopher who says, for example, that there are no temporal facts is making both a non-empirical and an empirical assertion. The non-empirical assertion is that it is logically impossible for there to be temporal facts. According to Moore, such a philosopher is making a false non-empirical assertion in saying that it is logically impossible for there to be temporal facts, since the proposition that there are no temporal facts is (empirically) false. But Lazerowitz would not agree

²⁶Ibid. It has been argued that it is possible for a statement to have a truth-value and be neither empirical nor a priori. See J.W.N. Watkins, "Word Magic and The Trivialization of Philosophy," Ratio 7 (1965): 214. Watkins holds that a "pure existential statement," like 'There exists a metal which does not expand when heated,' could theoretically be shown to be true but is unfalsifiable in an "infinite space-time region." Lazerowitz's reply to Watkins is in Lazerowitz, "Moore's Ontological Program," Ratio 14 (1972): 56-58. I shall not take up the issue whether there can be a proposition which is neither empirical nor a priori. My criticism of (NR) will be aimed at (EM) and (AP). I try to show that these two component arguments are unsound.

with the notion that Moore's opponent is making a false non-empirical statement, that is, an a priori false statement. To suppose, Lazerowitz would contend, that Moore's opponent is making an a priori false statement in claiming that it is logically impossible for there to be temporal facts is to attribute to him the belief that the sentence "There are no temporal facts" states, as language is presently employed, a necessary truth. But this is to attribute to him the belief that "temporal fact" has no descriptive use -- a belief which, if we attribute it to him, leads to the unacceptable linguistic parallel to Moore's paradox. Thus, if it is unacceptable to suppose that Bradley actually believes the words "There are no temporal facts" express a necessary truth, then it is equally unacceptable to suppose that he is making an a priori false statement in claiming it to be logically impossible for there to be temporal facts.

IV. Lazerowitz on Logical Necessity: The Support for Premise (AP₂)

The elucidation of the claim that sentences expressing necessarily true propositions convey only verbal information -- (AP₂) -- has played an important role in most of Lazerowitz's writings. In nearly everything he has written one finds some discussion of this claim. His paper "Moore's Paradox," however, presents only a brief and somewhat sketchy treatment of the view in question. This seems to indicate that, in this very early paper, Lazerowitz had not yet fully developed

various alternative ways of supporting his position and defending it against the charge that it is really nothing more than a standard conventionalist view of logical necessity. So in turning to his later writings on this topic, we will be providing the kind of support Lazerowitz would currently offer for this crucial premise as it occurs in the overall argument (NF) given in "Moore's Paradox."

One of the most elaborate and thorough treatments of (AP₂) appears in Studies in Metaphilosophy (1964). Our attempt to reconstruct what is involved in this claim will proceed along the lines of the discussion of it in this work. However, in order to avoid certain complications which are linked with the choice of example-sentences in the relevant pages of this work, complications of a kind which are removed from our purpose, we will select for our discussion sentences which Lazerowitz uses as examples in a later but very similar treatment of the claim in question.²⁷ We need to add one

²⁷The complications involved with the sentences chosen in Metaphilosophy center around having to distinguish and explain the relationship between verbal propositions expressed by sentences of the form "'Q' means X" and their non-verbal correlates, and those of the form "'Q' applies to whatever 'X' applies to" and their non-verbal counterparts, where Q and X are words or expressions. On Lazerowitz's view, propositions expressed by the latter form of sentence are the more general of verbal correlates of necessarily true propositions. By "more general" he means that a proposition expressed by a sentence of the form "'Q' means X" will entail but not necessarily be entailed by a proposition expressed by a sentence of the form "'Q' applies to whatever 'X' applies to." The relationship between what is expressed by sentences of the latter form and sentences

sentence absent in this later treatment of the relevant claim,²⁸ so as to have analogues to those sentences of interest to us in Studies in Metaphilosophy. The following sentences, then, are for our consideration:

- (1) A camel is a herbivore
- (2) A camel is an animal
- (3) The word "animal" applies, as a matter of usage, to whatever "camel" applies to
- (4) The expression "camel but not an animal" has no descriptive use in the (English) language.

How Lazerowitz supports (AP₂). As is evident, sentence (1) expresses a true non-verbal, empirical proposition while sentence (2) expresses an a priori true proposition.²⁹ Lazerowitz hopes to establish (AP₂) by pointing out certain relations which he believes obtain among sentences (1)-(4). We now turn to these supposed relations.

expressing necessarily true propositions will suffice for our purpose.

The example-sentences we will use are taken from Morris Lazerowitz, "Necessity and Language," in Alice Ambrose and Morris Lazerowitz, eds., Ludwig Wittgenstein: Philosophy and Language (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1972), p. 249.

²⁸Sentence (4) above.

²⁹The terms "empirical" and "a priori" are generally used to indicate how the truth-value of a proposition is known, whereas "contingent" and "necessary" are used to indicate the manner in which a proposition possesses its truth-value. Unless it becomes important, we will not concern ourselves with whether or not we are using, in a certain context, the proper member of each pair of terms (a priori, necessary), (empirical, contingent).

Sentences (2) and (3). Lazerowitz claims that understanding sentence (3) implies knowing the meaning of the words it uses but does not imply knowing that what it says is true. That is, understanding (3) does not imply knowing the meaning of the words it mentions. Knowing in addition that what (3) says is true is to know a fact about usage. However, understanding sentence (2) implies knowing the meaning of all the words occurring in it; it "implies knowing that what [(3)] . . . says is true, and furthermore this is all that is known in understanding [(2)]¹"30 For, "understanding [(2)] . . ., which implies both knowing the use of ['camel'] . . . and also that ['animal'] . . . is used to apply to whatever ['camel'] . . . applies to, does not imply knowing anything in addition to this."31 According to Lazerowitz, the reason why understanding sentence (2) "is equivalent to knowing a fact about verbal usage,"32 namely, the fact we know in knowing that what sentence (3) says is true,

³⁰Lazerowitz, Metaphilosophy, p. 47. Lazerowitz's footnote should be quoted. "To avoid unnecessary misunderstanding, it should be noticed that understanding a sentence which expresses a self-contradictory proposition, e.g., the sentence, "Some siblings have no parents in common," implies knowing that the proposition it expresses is self-contradictory. And this implies knowing, and knowing nothing more than, that the sentence, 'Usage does not dictate the application of "have parents in common" to whatever "siblings" applies to,' expresses a false verbal proposition."

³¹Ibid., pp. 50-51.

³²Lazerowitz, "Necessity and Language," p. 250.

is best brought out in the following way: The fact that the sentence 'A camel is an animal' expresses a necessary [- a necessarily true -] proposition is equivalent to the fact that the sentence 'The word "animal" applies, as a matter of usage, to whatever "camel" applies to' expresses a true verbal proposition."³³

Sentences (1), (2), and (3). Since we are withholding until the next chapter our criticism of the claim which Lazerowitz is here attempting to support -- namely, (AP₂) -- let us next look into the alleged relationships among sentences (2), (3), and (1), where (1) is a sentence expressing a non-verbal, empirical proposition.

Lazerowitz contends that sentence (2)

shares with sentence [(1)] . . . the feature of mentioning no expressions, in which respect it is different from [sentence (3)] . . ., but it conveys only verbal information, the verbal information that [(3)] states It has its mode of speech in common with [(1)] . . . and its purport in common with [(3)]³⁴

In attempting to bring out in still sharper relief the likenesses and unlikenesses among sentences (1), (2), and (3), he further adds:

To put it somewhat metaphorically, the verbal content of [(3)] . . . is explicit and visible, while the verbal content of [(2)] . . . is hidden; it is made invisible by the mode of speech in which the sentence is formulated. (1) has factual content, [(3)] . . . has verbal content, and [(2)] . . . has hidden verbal content. [(2)] . . . is a grammatical hybrid which is sired by (1) and [(3)] . . . and differs markedly from both.³⁵

³³Ibid.

³⁴Lazerowitz, Metaphilosophy p. 49.

³⁵Lazerowitz, "Necessity and Language," p. 250.

To sum up this discussion with respect to sentences (1), (2), and (3), while at the same time introducing a distinction he draws, "understanding [(2)] . . . is equivalent to knowing a fact about verbal usage, although this fact is not expressed by the sentence."³⁶ It is, however,

natural to think that if what we know in understanding the sentence ['A camel is an animal'], . . . , is a fact about verbal usage, then the sentence expresses that fact. But this does not follow. We have to distinguish between what we know in understanding a sentence for an a priori proposition and what the sentence expresses, what it says.³⁷

"A camel is an animal" does not express the verbal fact that the word "animal" applies, as a matter of usage, to whatever "camel" applies to, although "it is this fact [and only this fact] that we know in understanding the sentence."³⁸ In conclusion, then, sentence (2) "shares its form of speech with (1), the ontological idiom in which words are not mentioned and are usually used to refer to things. Its content, however, what might be called its invisible subject matter, is shared with [(3)]" ³⁹

Sentences (2), (3), and (4). Finally, we have left the relations among sentences (2), (3), and (4). And the relations which, according to Lazerowitz, hold among them can be expressed in this way:

³⁶Ibid.

³⁷Lazerowitz, The Structure of Metaphysics, p. 270.

³⁸Ibid.

³⁹Lazerowitz, "Necessity and Language," p. 250.

. . . the proposition expressed by [(3)] . . . implies the proposition expressed by [(4)] , . . . or that knowing that what [(3)] . . . says is true implies knowing that what [(4)] . . . says is true. Thus, understanding [(2)] . . . implies knowing that sentence [(4)] . . . makes a true verbal claim.⁴⁰

Why Lazerowitz maintains these entailments ⁴¹ is best explained by his belief that

another and equivalent way of writing [(2)] . . . is the sentence [(2')] . . . , 'It is impossible for anything to be [a camel but not an animal]' And it can be seen that the fact that this sentence declares something to be a priori impossible implies that the sentence, "The expression ['camel but not an animal'] . . . has no descriptive use in the English language," expresses a true proposition about a combination of words.⁴²

Continuing, he writes:

The descriptive part of [(2')] -- the phrase 'camel but not an animal' -- . . . , quite plainly lacks descriptive use; for if, like the descriptive phrases, 'crystal which does not have six edges' and 'winged horse with silver hoofs,' it referred to an actual or hypothetical object, it would constitute a theoretical falsification of a proposition which has no theoretical falsification.⁴³

Supposedly, then, the reason why the proposition expressed by (3) implies the proposition expressed by (4) is that it will be a matter of usage, as opposed to a matter of non-linguistic

⁴⁰Lazerowitz, Metaphilosophy. p. 51.

⁴¹That these are intended as entailments and not material implications is based on a discussion in which he maintained this.

⁴²Lazerowitz, Metaphilosophy, p. 51. We should briefly mention that "It is impossible for anything to be a camel but not an animal" is not, it would seem, an equivalent way of writing the sentence "A camel is an animal." The former sentence is equivalent to "It is a necessary truth that a camel is an animal." To discuss Lazerowitz's reason for holding an equivalence between (2) and (2') would require an examination of his view beyond the scope of this chapter.

⁴³Ibid.

fact, that "animal" applies to whatever "camel" applies to only if the expression "camel but not an animal" has been assigned no descriptive use in the English language, that is, no use to describe an actual or hypothetical object. And the reason why understanding sentence (2) implies knowing that sentence (4) makes a true verbal claim is that what we know in understanding sentence (2) is precisely, on Lazerowitz's view, that it is a matter of usage that "animal" applies to whatever "camel" applies to. If the expression "camel but not an animal" had a use to describe an actual or hypothetical object, then sentence (2) would not express a proposition "true in all possible worlds;" sentence (2) would not express a necessarily true proposition, and what we would know in understanding it would not be that, as a matter of usage, "animal" applies to whatever "camel" applies to.

So, with respect to sentences (2), (3), and (4) we have it that

understanding [(2)] . . . implies knowing that what [(3)] . . . and [(4)] . . . says is true; and without going into the refinements of differences and similarities between [(3)] . . . and [(4)] , . . . this is all that is to be known in understanding [(2)] There is nothing in addition that we learn in getting to know that the proposition we apprehend in understanding [(2)] . . . is a priori true.⁴⁴

V. Moore and the Conventionalist:
An Example of Interpretation (REV)

Given these supposed relationships among sentences

⁴⁴ibid., p. 52.

(1) - (4), Lazerowitz believes we have an insight into the conventionalist theory about the nature of necessary propositions. This theory, he maintains, is "one of a large family of theories, and to get an inside look into it is to get an inside look into the other members of the family."⁴⁵ For the theory which claims that necessary propositions are really verbal or about the use of expressions in a language is, like the other theories which Moore opposes, a "gerry-mandered piece of terminology, which because it is presented in the ontological form of speech . . . create[s] an illusion . . . that a theory about things is being advanced"⁴⁶ and, thus, "conceals what is being done with language."⁴⁷

On Lazerowitz's view, the philosophical claim made by the sentence "Necessary propositions are really verbal" is "not put forward as a generalization which issues from an examination of instances. Instead, it is put forward as a statement to which there can in principle be no exceptions."⁴⁸ However, to suppose that what is put forward by the words "Necessary propositions are really verbal" is restatable as an entailment claim, namely, 'being a necessary proposition entails being about the use of expressions,' would also, claims Lazerowitz, be a mistake.⁴⁹ For on the assumption that the sentence in question made an assertion restatable

⁴⁵Lazerowitz, "Necessity and Language," p. 254.

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 246. ⁴⁷Ibid. ⁴⁸Ibid., p. 238.

⁴⁹Ibid., pp. 238-239.

as an entailment claim, it would "convey," although it would not express, what is openly stated by the sentence "'about the use of expressions' applies, as a matter of usage, to whatever 'necessary proposition' applies to." The conventionalist knows, however, that the phrase "about the use of expressions" does not, in point of usage, apply to whatever "necessary proposition" applies to. His view is not subject to linguistic correction, says Lazerowitz, because he is making the word "verbal" apply to whatever "necessary proposition" applies to. That is, the conventionalist is altering the actual use of "verbal," and not because he has a mistaken idea about its actual use.⁵⁰ The philosophical sentence "Necessary propositions are really verbal" introduces in the ontological mode of speech "a stretched use of 'verbal,' a use which artificially covers necessary propositions, and is not using the word 'verbal' in the normal way to make a false statement about them."⁵¹ Elaborating on this idea

⁵⁰This way of putting his point is demonstrated in connection with the philosophical sentence "Everything remains unchanged" when he writes: ". . . if 'Everything remains unchanged' denotes an a priori truth, it does so by virtue of the fact that 'remains unchanged' correctly applies, as a matter of usage, to whatever 'material thing' applies to. There is, of course, no such fact about English usage. Consequently, if the phrase 'remains unchanged' is made to apply to whatever the word 'material thing' applies to, the use of 'remains unchanged' has been altered and no longer has its ordinary use." A little further down he adds: "The metaphysical sentence uses the words 'remains unchanged' in a new way, and not because the metaphysician has a mistaken idea about its actual use in common speech. For if his usage were just a mistake, he would be open to correction, and he is not" (The Structure of Metaphysics, p. 63.).

⁵¹Lazerowitz, "Necessity and Language," p. 255.

Lazerowitz writes:

By means of this stretched use he the conventionalist brings nearer to us a similarity, while keeping at a distance a dissimilarity. Being a philosopher he dramatizes what he does by presenting it in the guise of a theory, to which, it must be said in his defense, he himself falls dupe. Instead of saying a camel is an animal is like the word 'animal' applies to whatever 'camel' applies to but is unlike it in not mentioning words, and that it is unlike a camel is a herbivore in not being about camels, he says 'The proposition a camel is an animal is really verbal.' When a philosopher uses the word 'really' he appears to be reporting a discovery, whereas, as Wittgenstein remarked, 'what he wants is a new notation.'¹⁵ A new use of 'verbal' is presented in a way which creates the impression that the true nature of necessary propositions is being revealed.⁵²

¹⁵The Blue Book, p. 57.

The conventionalist, if Lazerowitz is correct, is not making a false statement about necessary propositions. In introducing a stretched use of "verbal," the conventionalist presents, in a concealed way, a retailored use of an expression. He can thus hold his view while knowing objections which, if his view were a truth-value claim about necessary propositions, would be conclusive in refuting it. One objection, for example, is that since a proposition about the use of expressions is, if true, only contingently true, to hold that a necessary proposition is about the use of expressions is to imply that a necessary proposition could have a truth-value other than the one it has by logical necessity. Thus,

⁵²Ibid., p. 251.

Equally with the philosopher who satisfies himself that he has refuted the conventionalist theory, the conventionalist can survive refutation after refutation and remain satisfied that, all the same, his theory is not incorrect. Both the philosopher who holds the conventionalist theory and the philosopher who rejects it suffer from the fallacy which pervades all philosophy: namely, the false notion that the dispute centres on the truth-value of a theory rather than on the academic redistricting of a term.⁵³

In relating his discussion of the conventionalist theory to things Moore has said against this view, and which Moore would regard as points which refute it, Lazerowitz calls attention to a passage from Moore's paper "Wittgenstein's Lectures in 1930-33." Here Moore is discussing Wittgenstein's claim "that, e.g., ' $3+3=6$ ' 'treats only of the symbolism.'"⁵⁴ Moore goes on to remark that

he [Wittgenstein] did indeed actually assert . . . that the proposition 'red is a primary colour' was a proposi-

⁵³Ibid., p. 225. Lazerowitz's paper "Language and Necessity" is, in part, an attempt to elaborate on and argue for some iconoclastic ideas of Wittgenstein as they relate to the notion of necessity and the nature of philosophy. Some of these ideas come from unpublished notes taken by A. Ambrose and M. Masterman in the intervals between dictation of The Blue Book. In these notes Wittgenstein writes: "The fallacy we want to avoid is this: when we reject some form of symbolism, we're inclined to look at it as though we'd rejected a proposition as false. It is wrong to compare the rejection of a unit of measure as though it were the rejection of the proposition, 'The chair is 3' instead of 2' high.' This confusion pervades all philosophy. It's the same confusion that considers a philosophical problem as though such a problem concerned a fact of the world instead of a matter of expression." Quote is taken from Morris Lazerowitz, "Wittgenstein: The Nature of Philosophy," Philosophy and Illusion (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1968), p. 66.

⁵⁴Moore, Philosophical Papers, p. 290.

tion about the word 'red'; and, if he had seriously held this, he might have held similarly that the proposition . . . ' $3+3=6$ ' was merely a proposition . . . about the particular expressions ' $3+3$ ' and ' 6 '.⁵⁵

But, Moore continues:

he cannot have held seriously either of these two views, because the same proposition which is expressed by the words 'red is a primary colour' can be expressed in French or German by words which say nothing about the English word 'red'; and similarly the same proposition . . . which is expressed by ' $3+3=6$ ' was undoubtedly expressed in Attic Greek and in Latin by words which say nothing about the Arabic numerals ' 3 ' and ' 6 '.⁵⁶

Moore adds to this by noting that Wittgenstein seemed to be aware of the above sort of objection but never apparently regarded it as evidence against his view; he never tried, says Moore, to defend his seemingly conventionalist-type statements against such an objection.⁵⁷

Lazerowitz holds that Moore, like the conventionalist philosopher with whom he disputes, is of the mistaken opinion that the issue between them concerns the truth-value of a theory about necessary propositions. He claims that Moore's objection against saying that the proposition ' $3+3=6$ ' is about the expression " $3+3$ " and " 6 " -- the objection, namely, that the same proposition which is expressed by the sentence " $3+3=6$ " is expressible in other languages by words which say nothing about the Arabic numerals " 3 " and " 6 " -- has a verbal point. Moore is

calling attention to a grammatical similarity between sentences which express necessary propositions and those

⁵⁵Ibid., p. 291.

⁵⁶Ibid.

⁵⁷Ibid.

which make factual claims about the world, while pushing into the background the likeness between sentences which express necessary propositions and those which express propositions about usage.⁵⁸

Although this is what his objection amounts to, Lazerowitz would hold, Moore imagines himself to be upsetting a truth-value claim rather than bringing forward grammatical points in favor of resisting a stretched use of the phrase "about the use of expressions," or a stretched use of the word "verbal."

To see more clearly what Lazerowitz is charging Moore with here, consider the following six sentences, three of which come from our discussion of Lazerowitz's theory of necessity. These are the six sentences:

- (1) A camel is a herbivore
- (2) Ein Kamel ist ein Pflansenfresser
- (3) A camel is an animal
- (4) Ein Kamel ist ein Tier
- (5) The word "animal" applies, as a matter of usage, to whatever "camel" applies to
- (6) The word "Tier" applies, as a matter of usage, to whatever "Kamel" applies to⁵⁹

The view of necessity which Lazerowitz holds is consistent with the fact that, since (3) and (4) above express

⁵⁸Lazerowitz, "Necessity and Language," p. 254.

⁵⁹This list of sentences is given on page 236 of "Necessity and Language."

the same proposition, neither sentence says anything about the words which occur in it. That is, (3) and (4) do not express respectively what (5) and (6) express. On his view, not only is it correct to say that sentences (1) and (2) have the same meaning,⁶⁰ it is also correct to say that sentences (3) and (4) mean the same but incorrect to say that (5) and (6) mean the same.⁶¹ Sentence (1) and (2), he claims,

say the same thing about the same subject. This feature of the pair of sentences gives us one condition for the correct application of the phrase 'mean the same.' Sentences (5) and (6) do not satisfy this condition: they say similar things about their subjects, but their subjects are different, which makes it incorrect to apply the phrase 'mean the same' to them. By contrast, (3) and (4) have no subjects; but it is correct English, nevertheless, to say that they mean the same. They have the same meaning, although they make no declaration about anything.⁶²

To maintain that sentences (3) and (4) have no subjects does not imply, however, that they "say nothing or that they are literally meaningless. To put the matter briefly, understanding them comes down to knowing facts about the use of terminology, although terminology is not the subject of these assertions."⁶³ Recounting a point Lazerowitz

⁶⁰For purposes of our discussion, it is unimportant that we identify, as does Lazerowitz, 'have the same meaning' with 'express the same proposition.' However, for a criticism of the view that a proposition is correctly described as the meaning of an indicative sentence, see Richard Cartwright, "Propositions," Analytic Philosophy, ed. Ronald Butler (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1962), pp. 81-103.

⁶¹Lazerowitz, "Necessity and Language," p. 252.

⁶²Ibid. ⁶³Ibid., p. 253.

writes:

The sentence 'A camel is an animal' is a grammatical crossbreed with one foot, so to speak, in the correlated verbal sentence in the same language, and the other in related non-verbal fact-claiming sentences. (3) and (4) translate into each other, which is a feature that makes it correct to apply the term 'mean the same,' or 'have the same meaning,' to the sentences, despite their not being about anything.¹⁷ But a person who understands both sentences will know facts of usage in different languages, while a person who understands only one of these sentences would not know the fact of usage exhibited by the other.⁶⁴

Thus, what can be concluded is that

The phrase 'mean the same' is used to refer to one feature when applied to sentences in the hybrid idiom and is used to refer to a further feature when applied to fact-claiming sentences. But by artificially equating 'mean the same' with 'say the same thing about the same subject' -- under the rule that a literally meaningful indicative sentence must be about something -- a philosopher creates the illusion that (3) and (4) have . . . [a subject, and in fact the same subject].⁶⁵

When Moore, then, points out that such sentences as (3), "A camel is an animal," and (4), "Ein Kamel ist ein Tier," express the same proposition and, thus, that neither can express the same proposition as (5), "The word 'animal' applies, as a matter of usage, to whatever 'camel' applies to," and (6), "The word 'Tier' applies, as a matter of usage, to what-

⁶⁴Ibid. Lazerowitz's footnote reads: "It should be noted that 'mean the same' does not apply to all sentences which translate into each other, for example, to equivalent non-sensical sentences in different languages. A person who insists that sentences which translate into each other must mean the same is stretching the expression 'sentences which mean the same' so as to give it the same range of application that 'sentences which translate into each other' has."

⁶⁵Ibid.

ever 'Kamel' applies to," respectively, he highlights, according to Lazerowitz, a point of actual usage. His reply to the conventionalist brings to our attention that "express the same proposition" correctly applies to the pair of sentences (3) and (4). Moore's reply, accordingly, brings out a likeness between the pair of sentences (3) and (4) and the pair of sentences (1), "A camel is a herbivore," and (2), "Ein Kamel ist ein Pflanzenfresser"; but it pushes into the background an important difference concealed by this point of actual usage. His reply pushes into the background the fact that in understanding sentences (3) and (4), a person will know different verbal facts. Under the false impression, however, that he is correcting a mistaken theory about the nature of necessary propositions, Moore does not view his "refutation" or "objection" to conventionalism as an attempt to highlight a point of usage -- at the expense of muting a distinction -- in order to resist an "ontologically presented, . . . revision of grammar."⁶⁶

Moore always had the idea that he was refuting an important theory about the nature of various phenomena in attacking his opponents' views. But according to Lazerowitz,

⁶⁶Ibid., p. 263.

though he had this idea, his refutations are in each case "designed to oppose an idle innovation in a language which works well enough [that is, ordinary language] ."67

⁶⁷Lazerowitz, Metaphilosophy, p. 213.

C H A P T E R I I I
 AN EVALUATION OF
 LAZEROWITZ'S THEORY:
 ARGUMENTS (AP) AND (EM)

I. (AP₂) as the Crucial
 Premise of (AP)

Premise (AP₂) asserts that the information conveyed by a sentence expressing a necessarily true proposition is about the actual use of terminology.¹ (AP₂) is, it seems to me, the crucial premise of (AP). Without (AP₂) Lazerowitz cannot establish three important claims required to justify acceptance of interpretation (REV). The first claim he cannot establish is this: In believing that his utterance expresses a necessary truth -- as language is now employed -- Moore's opponent has a belief only about a certain verbal proposition. For example, the truth of (AP₂) is suppose to imply that if Bradley actually believed that the sentence "There are no temporal facts" expressed a necessary truth, then his belief would be equivalent to a belief that the proposition '"Temporal fact" has no descriptive use' is true. (AP₂) is suppose to mean: What one knows and all that one knows in understanding a sentence which expresses a necessary truth is that a certain verbal proposition states a fact of usage. If we assume that Bradley would claim to understand the sentence which he uses to express his view, then

¹See p.45, chapter II.

(AP₂) seems to imply that Bradley has a belief only about a (false) verbal proposition when he believes that his sentence expresses a necessary truth.

The second claim Lazerowitz cannot establish without (AP₂), if I am right, has an important consequence for Moore's refutations. If (AP₂) is false, then Moore's opponent can be said to have a belief about a non-verbal proposition which Moore takes his opponent's utterance to express, when his opponent claims to be asserting a necessary truth. For example, Moore takes Bradley to have the belief that the non-verbal proposition 'There are no temporal facts' is a necessary truth. Lazerowitz, as we have seen, distinguishes between the non-verbal proposition which a sentence asserting a necessary truth expresses and the verbal proposition we know to be true in understanding this sentence. In holding (AP₂), however, he implies that if "There are no temporal facts" expressed a necessary truth, what one would know precisely in understanding it is a verbal proposition which now happens to be false -- the proposition that "temporal fact" has no descriptive use. Hence, given Lazerowitz's view of necessity, Moore is not attempting to refute a supposed non-verbal proposition which Bradley believes that the sentence "There are no temporal facts" expresses, when the latter takes his utterance to express a necessary truth. Lazerowitz says that Moore is to be construed as refuting a mistaken verbal claim on the hypothesis that Bradley believes

that the sentence "There are no temporal facts" expresses a necessary truth. It would seem, then, that if (AP₂) is false, then Moore can refute Bradley's belief that the non-verbal proposition expressed by the sentence "There are no temporal facts" is necessarily true by showing that this proposition is, in fact, false -- false because Moore knows, for example, that he was born at a certain time in the past.

A final claim that Lazerowitz will not be able to establish if (AP₂) is false bears on his interpretation of Moore's dispute with the conventionalist. If the likenesses and unlikenesses Lazerowitz finds among sentences expressing empirical, a priori, and verbal propositions do not all obtain, then he is not justified in his interpretation of what both the conventionalist and Moore are doing with language. Lazerowitz's claim that the conventionalist stretches the use of "verbal" in order to bring nearer to us a similarity between sentences expressing necessary propositions and those expressing verbal propositions implies that the similarity in question exists. This similarity, according to Lazerowitz, is that each conveys the same information though in different modes of speech. This will not be true if (AP₂) is false. Furthermore, if (AP₂) is false, Moore cannot be said to be pushing into the background a likeness between such sentences in his reply to the conventionalist.²

²See p. 66, chapter II.

II. A Critique of Lazerowitz's View
of Logical Necessity:
Rejection of (AP₂)

According to Lazerowitz, the concept (U), understanding a sentence which expresses a necessarily true proposition, is logically equivalent to (and hence, entails) the concept (K), knowing that the sentence expresses a necessarily true proposition.³ For he claims that understanding the sentence (2), "A camel is an animal," entails and is entailed by knowing that what sentence (3), "The word 'animal' applies, as a matter of usage, to whatever 'camel' applies to," says is true. And, given his alleged equivalence between the proposition (S), that the sentence "A camel is an animal" expresses a necessarily true proposition, and the proposition (S'), that the sentence "The word 'animal' applies, as a matter of usage, to whatever 'camel' applies to" expresses a true verbal proposition, Lazerowitz hopes to conclude that, understanding sentence (2) entails and is entailed by knowing that (2) expresses a necessarily true proposition. Finally, he hopes to conclude that (U) is equivalent to (K). Put in argument form, we have:

³Similarly, 'understanding a sentence which expresses a necessarily false proposition' implies, on his view, 'knowing that the sentence expresses a necessarily false proposition.' See his footnote on pp. 47-48 in Metaphilosophy where he explicitly says this.

(Argument N)

(1) Understanding (2) entails and is entailed by knowing that what (3) says is true.

(2) (S'), The proposition that what (3) says is true is equivalent to (S), the proposition that (2) expresses a necessary truth.

Therefore, (C), Understanding (2) entails and is entailed by knowing that (2) expresses a necessary truth.

Therefore, (C'), (U) is equivalent to (K).

Is Argument N a good argument? To begin with, its more general conclusion (C') seems to be false. For if (U) entailed (K) it would follow that, in commencing a proof of a mathematical proposition the truth-value of which is unknown to us, we would not be understanding the sentence expressing this proposition -- in the sense of grasping the proposition which this sentence expresses. Not until the proof itself was completed, which we would ordinarily say brings us to the knowledge that the proposition we already apprehend is either (necessarily) true or false, would we understand the sentence in the sense of grasping the proposition expressed. And this is, indeed, paradoxical. For what is it that we would be setting out to prove if not the proposition we apprehend and which the sentence expresses?

In her paper "Believing Necessary Propositions"

and elsewhere,⁴ Alice Ambrose has tried to meet the above objection. Her claim, that to understand a sentence expressing a necessary proposition implies knowing the truth-value of the proposition in question, has been recently criticized, however.⁵ Nevertheless, the support which I believe she intends to offer for this claim and, in particular, the line of reasoning she seems to employ in order to meet the above objection has not been criticized. And it seems to me that the argument she would offer to meet the above objection makes explicit use of Argument N, the soundness of which we will shortly challenge.

From a number of assertions made in her more elaborate paper,⁶ we can put together what seems clearly to be her attempt to meet the objection that it is paradoxical, if not just false, to maintain: a person commencing a proof of a mathematical proposition the truth-value of which is unknown to him does not understand the sentence expressing it -- in the sense of grasping the proposition expressed -- until he

⁴Alice Ambrose, "Believing Necessary Propositions," Mind 83 (1974): 286-290. See also "Proof and the Theorem Proved" in her Essays in Analysis (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1966), pp. 13-25, and "Mathematical Generality" in Ludwig Wittgenstein: Philosophy and Language.

⁵See Donald McQueen, "Necessity and Probability: A Reply to Professors Ambrose and Lazerowitz," Mind 83 (1974): 291-295.

⁶Ambrose, "Mathematical Generality," esp. pp. 303-318.

learns of the proposition's truth-value at the end of the proof. Her reasoning is essentially as follows.

In speculating about whether the proposition expressed by a sentence of, say, the form "All f's are g's" is necessarily true, we are actually speculating about whether the sentence "All f's are g's" expresses a necessary truth. This is because, if the sentence in question does express a necessary truth, then a person understands that sentence if and only if (where 'if and only if' means mutual entailment) he knows that what the sentence "The expression 'g' applies, as a matter of usage, to whatever 'f' applies to" says is true. So, if a person does not know that this latter sentence states a verbal fact, he cannot speculate about whether the proposition expressed by "All f's are g's" is a necessary truth -- unless, of course, he knows that this proposition is a necessary truth independently of his understanding of the English sentence expressing it. For although the verbal fact is not what the sentence "All f's are g's" expresses, if this sentence expresses a necessary truth, a person will not know what the sentence does express, what it says, unless he knows the verbal fact that "g" applies, as a matter of usage, to whatever "f" applies to. Hence, since

The proposition that what the sentence "'g' applies, as a matter of usage, to whatever 'f' applies to" says is true

is equivalent (logically) to

The proposition that what the sentence "All f's are g's" says is necessarily true,

'speculating about whether the proposition that all f's are g's is necessarily true' "is a convenient, though misleading locution"⁷ for talk of a speculation about whether the sentence "All f's are g's" expresses a necessary truth. In view of the equivalence above, such a locution amounts to talk of speculating about whether a certain verbal proposition states a fact of usage.⁸

Ambrose's reasoning here could be put somewhat differently. On her view, a person will not know that the sentence "'g' applies, as a matter of usage, to whatever 'f' applies to" expresses a true proposition unless he knows that the phrase "f but not g" has no descriptive use. Consequently, she holds that prior to finding out that "f but not g" has no descriptive use, one "does not know what the proposition is which is expressed by . . . ["All f's are g's"] , . . ."⁹ -- where "All f's are g's" expresses a necessary truth. Since termination of the proof brings about the knowledge that the phrase "f but not g" has no descriptive use, "to know the truth-value of what is expressed by a sentence terminating the statement of proof is to know what

⁷Ambrose, "Believing Necessary Propositions," p. 289.

⁸Cf. "Mathematical Generality," pp. 317-318.

⁹Ambrose, "Proof and the Theorem Proved," p. 19.

is expressed."¹⁰ Hence again, to talk about a conjecture at the commencement of a proof as to whether the proposition that all f's are g's is (necessarily) true, is a "convenient substitute"¹¹ for talk about a conjecture as to whether a certain verbal proposition states a fact of usage -- in this case, the verbal proposition 'The expression "f but not g" has no descriptive use.' Such a conjecture does not imply understanding the sentence "All f's are g's" in the sense of knowing what it expresses. For the verbal fact which we get to know when we do understand the sentence, and about which we conjecture until the proof terminates, is not what the sentence expresses.

Has Ambrose satisfactorily met the objection we raised on page 72 concerning the conclusion of Argument N, namely, the conclusion that (U) entails and is entailed by (K)? To see that she has not requires seeing what is wrong with Argument N itself, upon which her line of reasoning to meet this objection depends. And in returning to Argument N now, let us first consider premise (1).

According to Lazerowitz,¹² premise (1) means: what we know and all that we know in understanding the sentence (2),

¹⁰Ibid., p. 19.

¹¹Ambrose, "Believing Necessary Propositions," p. 290.

¹²And Ambrose, since it is Lazerowitz's theory of logical necessity she refers to and employs in her argument we constructed to meet the above objection concerning what we know at the outset of a proof.

"A camel is an animal," is that what sentence (3), "The word 'animal' applies, as a matter of usage, to whatever 'camel' applies to," says is true.¹³ Now an immediate objection to premise (1) might be the following: If what we know in understanding sentence (2) is precisely what we know in knowing that what sentence (3) says is true, then the proposition expressed by (2) must be the same proposition as that which we know, when we know that what sentence (3) says is true; that is, the proposition expressed by (2) must be one stating a verbal fact. It is here, however, that Lazerowitz would maintain:

It is natural to think that if what we know in understanding the sentence 'Blue is a color,' . . . is a fact about verbal usage, then the sentence expresses that fact. But this does not follow. We have to distinguish between what we know in understanding a sentence for an a priori proposition and what the sentence expresses, what it says.¹⁴

But why, exactly, do we have to make such a distinction? What argument can be given in its favor? The reason he provides for its introduction consists of (a) his belief that premise (1) is true, and (b) his acknowledgement that sentence (2) does not express the same proposition as that which we know in knowing that what sentence (3) says is true. But I think there is at least one good reason for believing that premise (1) is false. This is that if premise (1) were true, then in understanding sentence (2), a sentence

¹³See Lazerowitz, Metaphilosophy, p. 47.

¹⁴Lazerowitz, The Structure of Metaphysics, p. 270.

which expresses a necessarily true proposition, we do not get to know the proposition it expresses, what it says.¹⁵ But knowing the proposition expressed, in the sense of apprehending it, would seem to be a necessary, if not sufficient, condition for fully understanding the sentence in question.

It needs to be pointed out that, in her argument to meet the objection we raised against the conclusion of Argument N, Ambrose recognizes that in understanding a sentence which expresses a necessary proposition we get to apprehend the proposition it expresses. Her claim, that a person cannot speculate about whether the proposition expressed by the sentence "All f's are g's" is necessarily true unless he knows to be true the verbal proposition expressed by "'g' applies, as a matter of usage, to whatever 'f' applies to," implies that when the proof is completed, the person gets to know what is expressed by the sentence "All f's are g's."¹⁶ Her argument is intended to show that only at the end of the proof, when we are made aware of the verbal fact that "g" applies, as a matter of usage, to whatever "f"

¹⁵A similar problem confronts Lazerowitz's account of sentences expressing necessarily false propositions. He claims that in understanding such sentences we know only that a certain correlative sentence expresses a false verbal proposition. See his footnote on pp. 47-48 in Metaphilosophy.

¹⁶Ambrose, "Proof and Theorem Proved," p. 19.

applies to, can we be truly said to know what the sentence "All f's are g's" says. But her holding the generalized version of premise (1), Argument N -- the generalization, namely, that what we know and all we know in understanding a sentence which expresses a necessarily true proposition is a fact of usage -- prevents her from successfully showing what she intends to show. For if this generalized version of premise (1) is true, neither at the outset nor at the end of a proof do we get to know what a sentence expressing a necessarily true proposition says.

Thus, for the success of her argument that we do not understand -- in the sense of apprehending what it says -- a sentence expressing a necessary proposition¹⁷ until the demonstration terminates, Ambrose makes use of a condition for understanding a sentence which, by her holding a generalized version of premise (1), is ruled out. This condition is that to understand a sentence is to know what it says, to apprehend the proposition it expresses.

Now Lazerowitz himself wishes to hold each of the following statements:

- (a) Understanding a sentence which expresses a necessarily true proposition, for example, "A camel is an animal," implies knowing and knowing only a verbal fact -- in this case the verbal fact that the

¹⁷More exactly, a sentence expressing a necessary proposition which requires a demonstration to know its truth-value.

word "animal" applies, as a matter of usage, to whatever "camel" applies to.

- (b) A sentence expressing a necessarily true proposition does not express what we know in understanding it.
- (c) Understanding a sentence which expresses a necessarily true proposition "is all that is required in order to know that what it says is true,"18
- (d) "There is nothing in addition [to the verbal fact that 'animal' applies, as a matter of usage, to whatever 'camel' applies to] that we learn in getting to know that the proposition we apprehend in understanding, . . . ["A camel is an animal"] is a priori true."19

But it seems to me that if (a) and (b) are both true, then (c) and (d) are both false. For given (b), since the sentence "A camel is an animal" does not express what we know in understanding it, we do not get to know that what it says is true in understanding it and, thus, (c) is false in

¹⁸Lazerowitz, Metaphilosophy, p. 50. See also The Structure of Metaphysics, p. 270 and "Necessity and Language," p. 250.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, p. 52. Ambrose writes: "Although the fact that 'Lions are felines' expresses a true a priori proposition is equivalent to the fact that '"Feline" applies to whatever "lion" applies to' expresses a true verbal proposition, the first sentence does not state what it is, i.e., the verbal fact, that we must know in order to know that what it says (the proposition it expresses) is true" *Mathematical Generality*, p. 307). *Italics mine.*

claiming that understanding it is all that is required in order to know that what it says is true. Further, given (b), it follows that the proposition we apprehend in understanding the sentence "A camel is an animal," that is, what we know in understanding it, is not the proposition that a camel is an animal. By (a), the proposition we apprehend in understanding the sentence "A camel is an animal" is the proposition that the sentence, "The word 'animal' applies, as a matter of usage, to whatever 'camel' applies to", expresses a truth. But then (d) is false on the grounds that the proposition we get to know in understanding the sentence "A camel is an animal" according to (a), is not a priori true but only contingently true.

Lazerowitz would seem to blame the inconsistency between (b) and (c) on the one hand and the inconsistency between (b) and (a), and (d) on the other, on the alleged fact that "the sentence 'A camel is an animal' is a grammatical crossbreed with one foot, so to speak, in the correlated verbal sentence in the same language and the other in related non-verbal fact - claiming sentences."²⁰ That is, he would blame these inconsistencies on the supposed fact that the sentence "A camel is an animal "

shares with . . . [(1), the sentence 'A camel is a herbivore,'] the feature of mentioning no expression, in which respect it is different from . . . [(3), the sentence 'The word "animal" applies, as a matter of

²⁰Lazerowitz, "Necessity and Language," p. 253.

usage, to whatever 'camel' applies to"], but it conveys only verbal information, the verbal information that [(3)] states.²¹

For in one place he says:

A person can hardly be blamed if he feels like the peasant in the fable who is told by the satyr that he blows on his fingers to warm them and on his soup to cool it. It would seem to require a semantic satyr to say, on the one hand, that to know that a proposition is logically necessary all that is required is knowledge of rules for the use of words, and on the other hand, that the proposition is nevertheless not verbal!

What makes it difficult to explain the nature of a priori necessity and creates the impression that we are blowing both verbally hot and verbally cold, is the form of speech in which a sentence must be cast in order to express a necessary proposition.²²

I suggest, however, that the inconsistencies we have just brought to light are not due to the sentence "A camel is an animal" being a "grammatical crossbreed"; rather, they are due to his holding two false statements, namely, (a) and (b) above. For in understanding the sentence "A camel is an animal," either we get to know the proposition it expresses or we do not. If we get to know the proposition it expresses, then since it expresses a necessary proposition and not a contingent verbal one, what we know in understanding it cannot be the same as what we know in knowing to be true what its correlated verbal sentence says. And if we do not get to know the proposition expressed by the sentence "A camel is an animal" in understanding it, then a

²¹Lazerowitz, Metaphilosophy, p. 48.

²²Morris Lazerowitz, "Metaphilosophy," Critica 5 (1971): 17.

necessary, if not sufficient, condition for fully understanding the sentence is not satisfied on his view. For it is self-contradictory to maintain that a person fully understands a sentence "S" but does not know what it says.

Clearly, in (d) above Lazerowitz intends that the proposition we apprehend in understanding the sentence "A camel is an animal" be identified with the a priori true proposition that a camel is an animal. But by (b) and (a), what he intends to be the case cannot be the case on his view. In other words, he wishes to have it, as evidenced in statements (c) and (d), that in understanding the sentence "A camel is an animal" we do get to know the a priori true proposition it expresses. He wishes to hold that in understanding the sentence "A camel is an animal" the condition of getting to know what it says is satisfied. But this wish has to be denied in conjunction with his holding statements (a) and (b).

It seems to me, then, that if in saying that the information conveyed by sentences expressing necessarily true propositions is verbal Lazerowitz means "What we know and all we know in understanding a sentence for a necessarily true proposition is a verbal fact,"²³ then he has

²³In the case of sentences expressing necessarily false propositions, that a certain verbal proposition is false.

attached a self-contradictory meaning to the word "conveys." For if the above is what he means by "conveys verbal information," it will imply the self-contradictory claim that a person can understand a sentence "S" and never come to know what it says. But the above is what he means by "conveys verbal information." Hence, I think we have to conclude that he has attached a self-contradictory meaning to the word "conveys" in his claim that the information which a sentence expressing a necessarily true proposition conveys is verbal, or about the actual use of terminology.

I do not believe, then, that Lazerowitz can establish the crucial premise (AP₂) of argument (AP). As a result, it seems that he cannot establish the three claims mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, two of which are required to justify acceptance of (REV) in general, one of which is required to justify (REV) in its application to the philosophical dispute we examined. These three claims were:

(1) that in believing that his utterance expresses a necessary truth (as language is now employed), Moore's opponent has a belief only with respect to a certain verbal proposition; (2) that if Bradley, for example, has the belief that the sentence "There are no temporal facts" expresses a necessary truth, then Moore cannot refute what it is Bradley believes to be true unless he points out that "temporal fact" has a descriptive use -- that is, unless he points out that the verbal claim "'temporal fact' has no use to describe

what is actual or possible' is false; (3) that the conventionalist is bringing nearer to us, by a stretched use of "verbal," the similarity between sentences expressing necessary propositions and those expressing verbal propositions, and that Moore's reply to the conventionalist pushes into the background this similarity.

III. (EM) and the Appearance/Reality Distinction

At more than one place in his paper "Moore's Paradox," Lazerowitz maintains that "Moore is entirely right in saying that philosophers who hold these views know facts of the sort which by their views they seem plainly to deny."²⁴ Thus, one might suppose that Lazerowitz's initial reason for saying that there is no inconsistency between Moore's opponents' views and facts of the sort he appears to refer to in disputing them is ill-based. For in accepting the notion that a philosophical sceptic knows such facts, Lazerowitz is, like Moore, committed to holding what most assuredly would be dismissed by the sceptic as question-begging. Surely Bradley would say that he does not know, nor does he believe to be true, propositions describing temporal facts of the sort Moore claims he does know. Why not pursue the possibility that Bradley does not know such propositions to be true and see what can be said in his defense?

²⁴Lazerowitz, "Moore's Paradox," p. 8.

Now Lazerowitz has, in several of his writings, considered this possibility as well as noting how an anti-Common Sense philosopher would respond to Moore. In his latest published paper on Moore, Lazerowitz observes:

Philosophers whose views collide with common sense can hardly be expected to assent to Moore's charge [as stated in his paradox]. And to be sure, some philosophers have declared that Moore's paradox begs the question, that it assumes what is in dispute. If confronted with the paradox, a metaphysical philosopher like F.H. Bradley would no doubt say that far from knowing his views to be false, he knows them to be true and the so-called truisms of common sense to be mere common sense superstitions.²⁵

In another place he notes:

Instead of accepting the evidence of his senses, the metaphysician calls to his aid the philosophical distinction between appearance and reality, behind which he makes his position secure. He will grant that there do appear to be material things [or temporal facts, etc.]; but he will insist that the appearance is delusive, 'mere appearance.'²⁶

But according to Lazerowitz, this kind of defense by the metaphysician against the charge that he knows facts of the sort which render his view false will not work. In reference to the philosophical view that motion does not exist because it is logically impossible for it to exist, Lazerowitz argues:

For if, as he maintains, motion is impossible because its existence would imply a self-contradictory state of affairs, then the illusion of bodies being in motion is

²⁵Lazerowitz, "Moore's Ontological Program," p. 47.

²⁶Lazerowitz, The Structure of Metaphysics, p. 34.

also logically impossible, for the same reason.²⁷

Quite in general, his argument continues,

a statement which makes a logical claim that \emptyset is impossible implies that the corresponding statement that \emptyset exists in appearance is self-contradictory. What cannot exist, because its existence would imply a contradiction, cannot exist as 'mere appearance,' because the existence of the appearance would also imply a contradiction. What is self-contradictory not only cannot exist but cannot appear to exist; and there can no more be self-contradictory appearances than there can be self-contradictory realities.²⁸

Thus, Lazerowitz would contend, by invoking the appearance/reality distinction to protect himself against Moore's charge that he knows facts which falsify his view, the metaphysician merely introduces or presents us with another version of Moore's original paradox. This new variant of Moore's paradox is

that philosophers have been able to believe in earnest either of two things. One, that they have established contradictions in propositions while knowing they have not done this, or two, that they, and others as well, perceive appearances which they know cannot exist. For if the appearances exist, they know what the corresponding reality would be like and know consequently that they have not established contradictions in the relevant propositions; and if they have established contradictions in the propositions, they know that the supposedly perceived appearances cannot exist.²⁹

Has Lazerowitz shown, then, that the introduction of the appearance/reality distinction is not a possible defense against the charge made by Moore in the statement of

²⁷Ibid., p. 43.

²⁸Ibid., p. 209.

²⁹Lazerowitz, Metaphilosophy, p. 220

his paradox -- the charge, namely, that the metaphysician knows empirical facts of a sort which are inconsistent with his philosophical view? It seems to me that Lazerowitz has not shown this. And in order to see why he has not, consider first his words in the quote above to the effect that "if the appearances exist, they [the philosophers in question] know what the corresponding reality would be like and know consequently that they have not established contradictions in the relevant propositions;" What is being maintained here? The following statement helps clarify what is intended by these words: "In general, anyone who says, 'x is not really \emptyset ; it only appears to be,' implies that he knows what it would be like for x really to be \emptyset ." ³⁰ The plain implication of this statement is that a philosopher like, say, Bradley who says that temporal facts do not really exist; they only appear to exist, implies that he knows "what it would be like" for temporal facts to really exist. And, thus, if "knowing what it would be like" for temporal facts to really exist were to imply, as is suggested by the words extracted from the above quote, the logical possibility of their existence, Bradley implies that what is logically impossible is logically possible.

But in conjunction with his claim that it is logically impossible for temporal facts to exist, why should we grant that Bradley is committed to holding that he "knows

³⁰Lazerowitz, Philosophy and Illusion, p. 110.

what it would be like" for temporal facts to exist -- in a sense of this phrase which implies that it is logically possible for temporal facts to exist -- simply because he holds that temporal facts only appear to exist and do not really exist? It would seem that Lazerowitz wishes to maintain that, in descriptive expressions of the form "appearance of there being a \emptyset ," " \emptyset " must be a term which denotes or expresses a concept that has theoretical instances. For in one place he writes:

Put verbally, a word, 'w,' which denotes a concept that is not open to exemplifications cannot function to describe exemplifications, and therefore cannot function descriptively in such a phrase as 'appearance of there being a w.' For if it functioned descriptively in the appearance-phrase it would have a conceivable range of application. And if it does not function descriptively in the appearance-phrase, the phrase cannot describe an appearance.³¹

It seems to me, however, that Lazerowitz's inference from

- (1) "w" cannot function to describe actual or theoretical instances of things because it denotes a concept not open to exemplification

to

- (2) The phrase "appearance of there being a w" cannot describe an actual or theoretical appearance, is certainly questionable. Why must "w" function descriptively (as Lazerowitz intends this term) in the appearance-phrase, namely, in "appearance of there being a w," in order

³¹Lazerowitz, Metaphilosophy, p. 146.

for the appearance-phrase itself to function descriptively?

Consider a similar situation taken from mathematics. It is a fact that in reductio ad absurdum arguments, we suppose a self-contradictory concept to have exemplifications, or an exemplification, in order to "reduce to absurdity" the supposition that such a concept is open to exemplification. For example, we suppose the concept of a rational number $\frac{s}{t} = \sqrt{2}$, where s and t are relatively prime, to have an instance or exemplification in order to show that the existence of such a number is impossible. The reasoning runs as follows:

Suppose there exists a rational number $\frac{s}{t} = \sqrt{2}$, where s and t are relatively prime. Then $s^2 = 2t^2$, which implies that s is even: $s=2n$. For if the square of a number is even, the number itself is even. Now since $s=2n$ and s and t are relatively prime, t is odd. But since $s^2=4n^2$, $2t^2=4n^2$. However, then $t^2=2n^2$ and so $t=2n$; t is even. Thus, t is both even and odd. But this is a contradiction. Hence, no such rational number as $\frac{s}{t} = \sqrt{2}$ exists.

Now simply because we discover that the concept of such a number is not open to exemplification and, hence, that the expression "rational number $\frac{s}{t} = \sqrt{2}$ " does not function to describe what could possibly exist, we do not conclude that the phrase "supposition that there be a rational number $\frac{s}{t} = \sqrt{2}$ " describes no supposition. The

fact that the concept of supposing there be such a number has an exemplification does not imply that the concept of such a number has an exemplification. Thus it would seem that the fact that we can entertain a self-contradictory concept in the sense of drawing consequences from the supposition that it is open to exemplification, does not entail the logical possibility of the concept having any instances. Put somewhat differently, the logical impossibility of something existing does not imply that its existence cannot be entertained and that it is not a possible object of thought. So, if 'S supposes that \emptyset exists' were to entail 'S knows what it would be like for \emptyset to exist' and if this further entailed that the existence of \emptyset is logically possible, then we could never do what we, in fact, often do in mathematics.

If the logical impossibility of \emptyset existing does not preclude \emptyset from being a possible object of thought, I can see no reason why the logical impossibility of \emptyset existing should preclude \emptyset from appearing to exist. In other words, I see no reason for counting the inference from (1) to (2) above as valid. And to put the matter in terms of Bradley's view, he could, I believe, successfully hold the following: From the fact that it is logically impossible for there to be temporal facts, it does not follow that there being temporal facts cannot be entertained. And since what we can entertain as existing could appear to us to exist, temporal

events existing in reality is beyond the bounds of possibility but the appearances of there being such facts are not. Hence, Lazerowitz has not shown, it seems to me, that the appearance/reality distinction is not a possible defense against Moore's charge in his paradox that philosophers know facts of the sort which he, Moore, calls attention to in his refutations of those views.

In his argument (EM) we noted that as reasons for the assertion that Moore's opponents are not announcing empirical theories, Lazerowitz offers these two premises:

(EM₁) No known facts count against these theories.³²

(EM₂) No "imaginable or describable facts" count against these theories.³³

(EM₁) is not intended to assert that there are no facts which count against, for example, Bradley's view that time is unreal, when construed as the claim that there are no temporal facts; (EM₁) asserts that a philosopher such as Bradley knows it to be a fact that there are temporal facts and that his knowing this does not count against his view. (EM₁) assumes, then, that Bradley could not successfully claim to know that there only appear to be temporal facts and that temporal facts do not really exist. But if our argument above is sound, Bradley can successfully claim, as indeed he would claim, to know only that there are appearances of there being tem-

³²Lazerowitz, "Moore's Paradox," p. 11.

³³Ibid.

poral facts.³⁴ Thus, the conjunctive assertion made by (EM₁) above is not justified, I believe, since I do think our argument above is sound.

Furthermore, it will not do to argue that since Bradley does not "know what it would be like," nor can he say what it would be like, for there really to be temporal facts, his view that there are no temporal facts is not empirical. We have shown, I believe, that there is no inconsistency in his believing himself to have established a contradiction in the concept of time while allowing that he and others are being appeared to³⁵ as if there are temporal facts. However, from the fact that Bradley cannot say what it would be like for there to be temporal facts, in the sense of being able to describe a possible world in which temporal facts really exist, it follows only that he imagines or believes that the concept of time, or temporal facts, is self-contradictory.

³⁴On page 24 of Philosophy and Illusion Lazerowitz says: "The proposition that time only appears to exist, and that there only appear to be occurrences, implies quite plainly that there are certain occurrences: it implies that there occurs a succession of sensible appearances of various happenings taking place. And the proposition that there are certain occurrences implies, obviously, the existence or reality, of time." But I think this is wrong. The proposition that time only appears to exist, and that there only appear to be occurrences, implies at most that there appears to occur a succession of sensible appearances of various happenings taking place.

³⁵Roderick Chisholm's way of putting it.

We need to distinguish between an argument that professes to establish a contradiction in a concept and an argument that establishes a contradiction in a concept. Bradley's argument professes to establish a contradiction in the concept of time.³⁶ Thus, he cannot, consistent with the belief that his argument does establish a contradiction in the concept of time, describe a possible world in which temporal facts exist. But it will not follow from this that the proposition 'There are no temporal facts' is not empirical; that 'There are no temporal facts' is not empirical will follow only if Bradley's argument establishes a contradiction in the concept of time.

³⁶Bradley's argument can, I believe, be paraphrased in the following way:

The existence of time implies the existence of a present moment of time -- the now. If the existence of the now implies a contradiction then so does the existence of time. The basic divisions of time are past, present, and future, and these are mutually exclusive parts of time. The present cannot contain any past or otherwise it would imply that something is happening which is no longer happening. The present cannot contain any future or otherwise it would imply that something is happening which has not yet happened. But the present is either a time span -- it has some duration however short -- or is "simple and divisible" and not a time span. If it is a time span, then (1) part of the present will have elapsed and still be present and (2) part of it will not yet have been reached and yet be present. The now, in other words, will include some past as well as some future if it is a time span. This is a contradiction. But if the present is not a time span, it cannot be a part of time. To say, however, that the present is not a part of time is a contradiction. Thus, the proposition that time exists has either of two logically impossible consequences and is false. Time is unreal and there exists only the delusive appearances of there being temporal facts. See F.H. Bradley, Appearance and Reality (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1920), ch. IV. For this paraphrase of Bradley's argument I am indebted to Morris Lazerowitz, "Paradoxes," Philosophy and Illusion, p. 23.

Lazerowitz seems to hold, however, that whether an argument establishes a contradiction in a concept or only professes to establish a contradiction in a concept, it cannot have empirical consequences. He argues:

An argument that establishes or professes to establish a contradiction in a concept or a proposition is a piece of analysis; and, in general, a proposition whose truth-value is determined by analysis is a priori.

It will be plain, without arguing the matter, that an a priori claim cannot have non-a priori consequences, and thus that the proposition that matter does not exist (which carries with it a factual, empirical air) is not logically different from the proposition that the concept matter is self-contradictory. A little reflection makes it clear also that Moore's translations into the concrete of the philosophical view that matter is self-contradictory cannot be the empirical propositions they appear to be.³⁷

According to Lazerowitz, this is because "a translation into the concrete of an a priori statement will itself be an a priori statement."³⁸

As we have seen, Moore claims that a philosopher who says 'Matter does not exist' -- to use Moore's example in his "A Reply to My Critics," 'There are no external objects,' -- is making both an empirical and a non-empirical claim. The non-empirical claim is the proposition that it is logically impossible for matter to exist, or the proposition that the concept of matter is self-contradictory, and the empirical claim is simply that matter does not exist. Moore also

³⁷Lazerowitz, "Moore's Ontological Program," p. 49.

³⁸Ibid., p. 51.

holds that a proposition constituting a translation into the concrete of 'Matter does not exist' -- for example, 'I do not have a body' -- is empirical. But if, as Lazerowitz asserts, an a priori claim cannot have non-a priori consequences, then since Bradley's claim that the concept of time is self-contradictory is an a priori claim,³⁹ any proposition inferrable from it -- in particular, the proposition that time is unreal -- is a priori and, thus, "not logically different from" the proposition that the concept of time is self-contradictory. Further, it will follow that Moore's translations into the concrete of the view that time is unreal are non-empirical, since these constitute propositions entailed by the view in question. It will follow that a proposition such as 'I was not born in the past' is not an empirical proposition.

It is not the case, however, that all a priori claims need have a priori consequences;⁴⁰ only if an a priori claim is true does it follow that all of its consequences are a priori (true).⁴¹ Hence, there is no inconsistency whatever in Moore's

³⁹As we have seen in chapter II, Lazerowitz does not actually hold that the philosophical proposition 'The concept of time is self-contradictory' is to be construed as an a priori claim, although he acknowledges that it appears to be one.

⁴⁰See my footnote number 43 in chapter I.

⁴¹From various discussions and things he has written, I gather that Lazerowitz is objecting to the idea that since a necessarily false proposition strictly implies any proposition whatever, any strict implication having a necessarily false antecedent is such that its antecedent is "not deductively relevant" to its consequent. See pp. 44-45 in Meta-

saying that the proposition 'The concept of Time is self-contradictory' is a priori but that the proposition 'There are no temporal facts' is, as well as its translations into the concrete, empirical. I suggest, then, that Lazerowitz has not provided sufficient reasons to warrant his contention, stated in "Moore's Paradox," that the views which Moore hopes to refute are not empirical.

philosophy where a similar charge is made in relation to the claim that a necessarily true proposition is said to be strictly implied by every proposition and therefore by empirical propositions. However, an idea coming from a suggestion by Wittgenstein and which Lazerowitz makes frequent use of in his writings on other philosophers can, it would seem, be applied to what he is doing in these pages: objecting to the use of a word while creating the false impression of denying a claim about the nature of something -- in this case the nature of entailment. For it appears that he merely wishes to restrict the use of "entailment" to cases where $\sim \Diamond (p \wedge \sim q)$ and where neither $\sim \Diamond p$ nor $\sim \Diamond \sim q$. See especially p. 45. I say he "merely" seems to be urging a restricted use of "entailment" because he allows, for instance, that when we have $\Diamond p$ and $\Diamond \sim p$ and $\sim \Diamond \sim q$, p strictly implies q , although he says that p does not entail q .

C H A P T E R I V

MOORE'S APPEAL TO COMMON SENSE AS AN APPEAL TO SELF-
JUSTIFIED BELIEFS: THE INTERPRETATIONS OF
KLEMKE AND CHAPPELL

Introduction

I begin this chapter by briefly setting out one of Moore's typical arguments against scepticism. In this argument Moore makes an appeal to what he seems to regard as a Common Sense proposition: to a proposition of a kind which "we certainly all do, in ordinary life, constantly believe" ¹ I then consider separately two interpretations of Moore's appeal to such propositions in philosophical argument. Each interpretation assumes, unlike the interpretations by Malcolm and Lazerowitz, that Moore is in fact appealing to certain empirical truths in attempting to refute his opponents.

What both interpretations attempt to establish, however, is that when understood in the way Moore conceived of it, his appeal to Common Sense propositions is an appeal to beliefs which neither have nor require a justification for their acceptance; supposedly Moore hopes to refute his opponents by appealing to what he regards as self-justified beliefs. But whereas the first interpreter, E.D. Klemke, ² claims that Moore does not refute his opponents in appealing

¹Moore, Some Main Problems, p. 182.

²Klemke, Epistemology, esp. chapter II, pp. 13-30.

to these beliefs, the second interpreter, V.C. Chappell,³ claims otherwise. Chappell holds that Moore does succeed in refuting his opponents by appeal to beliefs which are indeed self-justified. His own interpretation, he believes, provides "a good and sufficient justification for Moore's appeal to common sense, i.e. for the use of simple, common truths, matters of everyday knowledge, in the refutation of certain philosophical positions."⁴

After attempting to show that both Klemke and Chappell have misunderstood Moore on various points -- points which although different in each case lead to their shared understanding of what Moore is doing in his refutations -- I then conclude this chapter with a suggestion. The suggestion is that, once we appreciate the epistemological approach involved in Moore's appeal to Common Sense, it is plausible to say that we can, according to Moore, justify Common Sense beliefs in terms of more basic propositions. An understanding of this epistemological approach is best achieved, I believe, if we relate Moore's appeal to what Roderick Chisholm calls the "problem of the criterion." Making a distinction between two different approaches to justification of claims to knowledge, a distinction which Chisholm has called to our attention, is necessary for what I think is the most reason-

³Chappell, "Malcolm on Moore," pp. 417-425.

⁴Ibid., p. 423.

able interpretation of Moore's appeal to Common Sense. This distinction and how it affects what Moore is doing in his refutations is my concern in the final chapter. If the interpretation, or at least the outline of an interpretation, which I develop in chapter V is successful, then we have a plausible interpretation of Moore's defense of Common Sense according to which the beliefs he defends are empirical but not self-justified. The interpretation which I develop is not, I believe, to be found in any of the literature on Moore's philosophical practice, and yet I find it to be the one we should accept.

I. Moore's Argument Against Hume's Principles

Moore claims in Some Main Problems of Philosophy that certain principles, which he attributes to Hume, have been thought to support the sceptical view that no one ever knows of the existence of any material object. He formulates Hume's principles in terms of two epistemic rules:

I will call the first the rule: That nobody can ever know of the existence of anything which he has not directly apprehended, unless he knows that something which he has directly apprehended is a sign of its existence. And I will call the second the rule: That nobody can ever know that the existence of any one thing A is a sign of the existence of another thing B, unless he himself (or, under certain conditions, somebody else) has experienced a general conjunction between things like A and things like B. And the important thing to remember about this second rule is that nobody can be said to have experienced a conjunction between any two things, unless he has directly apprehended both the things.⁵

⁵Moore, Some Main Problems, pp. 109-110.

Moore later refers to these rules as "Hume's principles." According to Moore, it will follow that if these two principles are true, we cannot (and hence, do not) know that material objects exist. For one thing, we are not directly acquainted with them; we are directly acquainted only with sense data.⁶ Secondly, if Hume's rules are true, we cannot say that the sense-data which we directly apprehend are a sign of material objects unless we have experienced a general connection between sense-data and material objects. On Hume's rules, no one can experience a general connection between sense data and material objects unless he is or has been directly acquainted with both sense-data and material objects. But Moore agrees that no one can be directly acquainted with material objects. Hence, he agrees that if Hume's rules or principles are true, then we cannot know that material objects exist.⁷

Moore assents, then, to the first premise of his opponent's argument, namely, to the truth of the conditional: If Hume's principles are true then no one can know that material objects exist. But he questions whether his opponents are correct in affirming the antecedent of this conditional.⁸ Since Moore does not think that Hume's principles are true, he wants to prove false the second premise of the following argument:

⁶Ibid., p. 119.

⁷Ibid.

⁸Ibid.

(1) If Hume's principles are true then no one knows that material objects exist.

(2) Hume's principles are true.

Therefore, No one knows that material objects exist.

How does Moore hope to refute his opponents second premise? In his familiar way, he first provides a translation into the concrete of the view he is opposing -- a more specific statement of fact entailed by the view in question and a statement which permits us to see what is being maintained by his opponent in a particular case.⁹ In this instance, the view happens to be his opponent's conclusion that no one knows that material objects exist. And so Moore writes: "If I do not know of the existence of this pencil now and here, I can hardly ever know of the existence of any material object at all. I do not suppose I have ever had better evidence for the existence of any than I have for this."¹⁰

Hence, he wishes to maintain that

if Hume's principles are true, I have admitted, I do not know now that this pencil -- the material object -- exists. If, therefore, I am to prove that I do know that this pencil exists, I must prove, somehow, that Hume's principles, one or both of them, are not true. In what sort of way, by what sort of argument, can I prove this?

It seems to me that, in fact, there is no stronger and better argument than the following. I do know that this pencil exists; but I could not know this, if Hume's principles were true; therefore, Hume's principles, one or both of them, are false. I think this argument really is as strong and good a one as any that could be used; and I think it really is conclusive.¹¹

⁹Cf. pp. 9-11 above.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 116.

¹¹Ibid., p.

Moore grants, however, that his argument

(1) If Hume's principles are true then I do not
know (here and now) that this pencil exists.

(2') I do know that this pencil exists.

Therefore, Hume's principles are false,
will not convince those who think Hume's principles are
true, nor those who think that he really does not know that
the pencil in question exists. His argument, he claims, has
the appearance of begging the question.¹² Nevertheless, he
insists that his argument "really is a good and conclusive
argument."¹³ This he intends to show.

A good and conclusive argument, says Moore, is one
which enables us "to know that its conclusion is true."¹⁴
At least two conditions are necessary, he adds, if an argu-
ment is to enable us to know this. The first is that the
conclusion must actually follow from the premises.¹⁵ In this
respect, both Moore's and his opponent's arguments are equally
good. Both arguments are valid. But the second condition
necessary for an argument to enable us to know that its
conclusion is true "is this: that we should know the premise
to be true."¹⁶ Since Moore agrees that both his and his
opponent's arguments satisfy the first condition, "the only
way, . . . of deciding between my opponent's argument and mine,

¹²Ibid. ¹³Ibid. ¹⁴Ibid. ¹⁵Ibid. ¹⁶Ibid., p. 121.

as to which is the better, is by deciding which premise [(2) or (2') above] is known to be true."¹⁷ But in attempting to decide this, Moore goes on to claim that although he does know his second premise to be true, the premise, namely, that I do know that this pencil exists, he has no argument to support the contention that he knows this. He knows, he says, no proposition or set of propositions from which his second premise follows.¹⁸

We should observe briefly that we encounter a similar situation in another of Moore's arguments in which he appeals to a Common Sense proposition as a premise which he says he is unable to justify by further argument. In his "Proof of an External World," Moore adduces in support of the proposition that things exist external to us, the premise 'Here's one hand, and here's another.' He maintains that this proof is conclusive, that it is a "rigorous proof."¹⁹ Two of the three conditions he thinks are necessary for this proof to be conclusive are identical to the ones we have already discussed in connection with his argument against Hume's principles. These two conditions are that the conclusion logically follows from the premise and that the premise is a proposition known to be true.²⁰ Moore believes that both these conditions were satisfied when he then argued: Here's one hand,

¹⁷Ibid. ¹⁸Ibid., pp. 124-125.

¹⁹Moore, "Proof of an External World," Philosophical Papers, p. 146.

²⁰Ibid., p. 146.

and here's another, therefore, two human hands exist -- consequently, two external objects exist.²¹

About this "proof" Moore says that many philosophers will most likely be dissatisfied with it on either of two grounds. First, that he has not provided a "proof of an external world" unless he can prove that his premise 'Here's one hand, and here's another' is true. Second, that if he cannot give a proof of his premise, then he does not know that his premise is true.²² But Moore insists that he does know this premise to be true even though he cannot prove that it is true. "I can know things, which I cannot prove; and among things which I certainly did know, even if (as I think) I could not prove them, were the premises of my two proofs."²³

II. A Preliminary Statement

Two interpretations have been offered to explain why Moore thought he was justified in claiming to know premises like those involved in both his argument against Hume's principles and his "proof" of an external world, even though he has no argument in favor of such premises. The basis for each interpretation is the belief that Moore regards such propositions as 'I know that this pencil exists' and 'Here

²¹Ibid. ²²Ibid., pp. 149-150.

²³Ibid., p. 150. Moore actually gives two "proofs" and not just one. The first is a "proof" that two external objects existed at the time at which he gave the proof. This is the one referred to above. The second that two external objects existed prior to that time (pp. 147-148).

is one hand, and here is another' as self-justified propositions. That is, both interpretations take Moore's position to be that, when we reach propositions like those used as Common Sense premises in both his argument against Hume's principles and his "proof" of an external world, we have arrived at propositions which are ultimate -- ultimate in that, although they may constitute reasons for accepting other propositions as being true, there are no further propositions which justify our accepting them. Of these two interpretations the one advanced by Klemke is the more radical. Klemke identifies the sense in which Moore is alleged to hold these Common Sense propositions as ultimate with the notion of self-evidence. We shall examine his view first and then consider whether Chappell's less radical account of Moore's appeal to Common Sense propositions in philosophical argument is not more successful.

III. Klemke's Interpretation and Criticism of Moore's Appeal

In the second chapter of his book The Epistemology of G.E. Moore, Klemke poses the question: "What are Moore's criteria . . . for accepting some of these special common sense statements as being true"?²⁴ According to Klemke "Moore implicitly has such criteria,"²⁵ for even though "he never

²⁴Klemke, *Epistemology*, p. 20.

²⁵*Ibid.*

called them criteria of common sense, . . . he did appeal to one or the other of them on different occasions."²⁶

However, of the two criteria Moore supposedly appeals to as criteria for accepting "some of these special common sense statements" as being true, Klemke cites only one criterion which he believes Moore uses in both his argument against Hume's principles and his "proof" of an external world. This criterion will be discussed shortly, but we should note that Klemke never explains why Moore's alleged two criteria do not cover all the propositions of Common Sense, nor does he explain, either, what makes "special" those to which the criteria apply, or why these criteria apply to only some of these "special" propositions. Apparently the class of propositions to which both criteria apply does not include all the propositions of Common Sense nor even the entire class of those propositions which are "special." Klemke simply does not specify what class of propositions is supposedly covered by the criteria in question.

In addition to the criterion Moore supposedly has for accepting as true those propositions he claims to know without proof, there is, says Klemke, the criterion of inconsistency upon denial.²⁷ Allegedly Moore uses this criterion only in cases where he attempts to show that certain philoso-

²⁶Ibid., p. 21. ²⁷Ibid., pp. 22-23.

phers either hold as part of their views propositions which contradict what they otherwise believe, or, hold views which are self-contradictory. In such cases, Klemke believes, Moore uses one of three versions of this criterion to justify accepting the propositions of Common Sense.²⁸ But the assessment of this criterion as well as Klemke's assertion that Moore uses it, is not important for our purposes. In the final chapter I hope to show that Klemke has altogether misunderstood Moore's intentions with respect to the issue of criteria for accepting Common Sense propositions. We shall confine our present discussion, then, to an assesment of what Klemke takes to be Moore's criterion at least for accepting as true the Common Sense premises of both his argument against Hume's principles and his "proof" of an external world.

Klemke believes that Moore's "ultimate criterion for holding the statements of Common sense to be true is that they are self-evidently true."²⁹ And after briefly stating Moore's "proof" of an external world, Klemke goes on to explicitly say that

a statement like 'Here is one hand, and here is another' may be called self-evident. It is neither proved (derived as a conclusion from other premisses) nor verified (Moore holds that the only time where the latter would be appropriate) would be the case, say, in which Moore had a wooden hand).³⁷ ³⁰

³⁷"Prf.," PP, p. 149.

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹Ibid., p. 24.

³⁰Ibid., p. 25.

Somewhat later in his book Klemke remarks: "In Some Main Problems of Philosophy we constantly encounter statements which Moore claims to know, assertions like 'This pencil exists,' and 'I do know that this pencil exists.' How does Moore know these things? . . . About them he often says that they are known immediately or that they are self-evident."³¹

Klemke, however, leaves it unclear here as to whether he thinks knowing a proposition immediately is, on Moore's view, the same or not with that proposition being self-evident: whether he means to identify these two notions or intends to say that such propositions are characterizable in either one of two different ways -- known immediately or self-evident. I suspect that he is identifying a proposition's being known immediately with its being self-evident. But whether or not I am right, I hope to show in section VII of this chapter, where we examine Moore's notion of immediate knowledge, that it would be a mistake to make this identification. In our present examination of Klemke's view we will show that Klemke has provided no evidence whatsoever to support his contention that Moore said, let alone suggested, that even some Common Sense propositions are self-evident, including the two propositions which serve, respectively, in Moore's "proof" of an external world and his argument against Hume's principles. But before we do this, let us

³¹Ibid., pp. 142-143.

observe what further points Klemke wishes to make, given his assertion that Moore regards as self-evident certain propositions of Common Sense.

Klemke's Criticism. Once Klemke attributes to Moore the view that certain Common Sense propositions are self-evident and that their being self-evident is the criterion for accepting them, he then goes on to criticize this criterion. Moore's criterion is inadequate as a criterion for accepting propositions of Common Sense because it implies that "we do not need a basis, i.e., evidence, grounds, etc., for accepting [such propositions]." ³² He continues: "Moore suggests that we somehow just see or intuitively apprehend that such statements are self-evident" ³³ and that is all there is to the matter. In connection with Moore's statement to know, for example, that here is a hand, a statement which on Klemke's interpretation Moore justifies by appeal to the criterion of self-evidence, Klemke writes:

I suppose that, taken on the commonsensical level and limited to it, nearly all philosophers would agree that . . . common sense statements in this sense of 'know' are known to be true. But there is another sense of 'know' in which some philosophers have held that statements concerning the existence of physical objects, for example, are false, or are false in certain respects, or may be false, or cannot be known to be true, or cannot be known to be true with absolute certainty. Statements of this kind involve . . . epistemological considerations They involve epistemological considerations because these philosophers, in saying that we do not know that certain objects, such as material objects, exist, are using 'know' in a technical sense Moore, when making the plain, ordinary ploy and attempting to refute various

³²Ibid., p. 25.

³³Ibid.

philosophers, completely ignores these points.³⁴

And on the basis of these remarks he concludes that

Moore's defense does not either defend or refute anything with respect to peculiarly philosophical problems. More specifically, his defense does not establish that what we all know commonsensically to be true may be known to be true in an epistemological sense, where grounds, evidence, verification etc., enter in.³⁵

IV. Klemke's Position Assessed

Klemke does not identify what philosophers he has in mind who allegedly use "know" in a technical sense. Nor does he attempt to support his crucial assertion that there is some sense of "know" according to which Moore's sceptical opponents would agree that propositions like 'Here is a hand' are known to be true -- not to mention Klemke's contention that "nearly all philosophers" would agree that commonsensically we are justified in claiming to know such propositions because they are self-evident! Klemke merely says that if Moore's claim to know, for instance, that here is a hand were confined to "plain, ordinary knowledge which the plain, ordinary man has . . ."³⁶ then "one could hardly quarrel with him."³⁷ He simply does not offer reasons for the points intended to support his conclusion that "Moore's defense does not establish that what we all know commonsensically to be true may be known to be true in an epistemological sense,

³⁴Ibid., p. 27.

³⁵Ibid., p. 29.

³⁶Ibid., p. 26.

³⁷Ibid.

where grounds, evidence, verification etc., enter in."³⁸

The basis for Klemke's interpretation. But now to the most important question. Is Klemke justified in attributing to Moore the view that there are some Common Sense propositions which are self-evident, whether we are talking about the acceptance of such propositions in ordinary life or their acceptance as premises in philosophical argument?

The answer to this question is that he is not. For the only passage to which Klemke refers in which Moore himself actually uses the expression "self-evident" is one which, when only partially quoted as in Klemke's presentation, is removed from context.³⁹ What Klemke cites is this partial passage from Some Main Problems of Philosophy:

"What are we to say of these two principles? They do seem to me to be self-evident."⁴⁰ But when Moore's words are seen in their surrounding context, it becomes apparent that it is not propositions of Common Sense which are self-evident but

³⁸Italics mine.

³⁹Klemke does refer to a passage in Principia Ethica, but here Moore only defines "self-evident" as it relates to his belief "that the fundamental principles of Ethics must be self-evident" (George Edward Moore, Principia Ethica (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1962; 3d paperback ed.), p. 143). Moore defines "self-evident" here as follows: "The expression 'self-evident' means properly that the proposition so called is evident or true, by itself alone; that it is not an inference from some proposition other than itself" (Ibid.). But Klemke certainly has not shown that Moore intended the beliefs of Common Sense to fall under this definition.

⁴⁰See Klemke, Epistemology, p. 25.

only two principles with respect to Time which he regards as necessarily true. Moore writes:

. . . it may be equally well assumed that time is infinite in extent both ways - both towards the past and towards the future. And this assumption merely involves the principles that before any or every length of time, there must have elapsed one other equal to it, and that after any or every length of time, there must have elapsed one other equal to it. What are we to say of these two principles? They do seem to me to be self-evident; but I confess I do not know exactly how to set about arguing that they are self-evident. The chief thing to be done is, I think, to consider them as carefully and distinctly as possible, and then to see whether it does not seem as if they must be true;⁴¹

Now would Moore wish to hold that the proposition 'Here's a hand' is such that to determine its truth-value you consider the proposition "as carefully and distinctly as possible and then . . . see whether it does not seem as if . . . [it] must be true; . . ."? Moore makes it clear in more than one place that the beliefs of Common Sense are not propositions which must be true but are rather contingent propositions,⁴² and there is no evidence whatever to support the idea that Moore thought a contingent proposition is one whose truth-value could be decided by merely reflecting, in some sense, on the proposition itself.

I think we must say that Klemke has placed on Moore a

⁴¹Moore, Some Main Problems, p. 191.

⁴²See, for instance, these papers: "A Defense of Common Sense," p. 42; "Certainty," also in Philosophical Papers, p. 230; "A Reply to My Critics," p. 673

view concerning the beliefs of Common Sense which Moore himself never held. There is, I believe, no evidence that Moore regarded any Common Sense propositions as self-evident. And I hope to show in chapter V that it is just as much a fundamental error on Klemke's part to suppose Moore even thought it appropriate to have criteria for knowing propositions of Common Sense in order to be justified in accepting them. Once we focus our attention in chapter V on the issues surrounding the notion of criteria for knowledge, I think we will see how Klemke's interpretation results from a fundamental misunderstanding of Moore's epistemological approach.

But first, let us see if there is not, after all, some basis upon which to construct a less radical account of the idea that Moore's Common Sense premises are those which have no justification beyond themselves for being accepted. Let us turn to Chappell's interpretation of Moore's appeal to Common Sense in the refutation of certain philosophical views. Although not subscribing to the idea that Moore takes some beliefs of Common Sense to be self-evident beliefs, Chappell does think that Moore regards them as self-justified. In other words, Chappell, unlike Klemke, does not attribute to Moore the view that we "intuitively apprehend"⁴³ that Common Sense propositions are true, but he nevertheless takes Moore to be saying that such propositions neither have nor require justification in terms of other propositions.

⁴³Klemke, Epistemology, p. 25.

V. Chappell's Interpretation

Chappell holds that Moore is justified in claiming to know, even though he cannot prove, a proposition like 'Here is a hand' since

Moore's statement is not the sort of truth for which reasons need or even can be given. It is logically impossible to have reasons for thinking that everything we take to be true is true (cf. "Not every premise can be proved"). Hence some propositions among those we claim to know must be ultimate in the sense that although they may be reasons for thinking other propositions to be true they themselves do not have reasons. Moore's statement is a clear case of a proposition which is ultimate in this sense. Even to ask for reasons for thinking it true is out of place; we would not know how to comply with such a request. And in fact we do not ask for reasons for statements of its sort. We take them to be true on their 'intrinsic evidence.' Furthermore we are justified in doing so; just because they are so obvious and held with such certainty (even though they may be false) they stand, so to speak, innocent until proven guilty. Such statements constitute our ultimate appeal in all matters of truth and falsehood; hence they have a kind of natural authority. Being justified in taking them to be true does not consist, as it does with other statements, in being able to give reasons for them. They are themselves the reasons finally, which we give for other statements, but we do not require anything to justify our accepting them beyond that they be obvious and certain (cf. Principia Ethica, pp. 143 f.).⁴⁴

Chappell claims that his account of Moore's 'defense,' only part of which is presented here, shows Moore's appeal to Common Sense to be "'an interesting and tenable philosophical position' when it is interpreted in the way that Moore him-

⁴⁴Chappell, "Malcolm on Moore," pp. 422-423. Throughout his article Chappell uses as an example of one of Moore's Common Sense propositions the proposition 'My mail arrived this morning after breakfast was served.' Thus, when he refers to "Moore's statement" in the above passage, it is this proposition and not 'Here is a hand' about which he is speaking. Nevertheless, it is clear from his article that he intends his interpretation to be such as to cover Moore's refutations in general.

self conceived it."⁴⁵

VI. An Initial Problem in Chappell's Interpretation

Now I think there are at least two different points referred to in what Chappell is maintaining and these need to be distinguished from one another in order to determine what is really at issue. With respect to Moore's Common Sense propositions, one point Chappell wishes to make is that "in fact we do not ask for reasons for statements of . . . [their] sort. We take them to be true on their 'intrinsic evidence.'"⁴⁶ A second point he wants to establish is that Moore's Common Sense propositions are "not the sort of truth[s] for which reasons . . . can be given."⁴⁷ These propositions, Chappell claims, "constitute our ultimate appeal in all matters of truth and falsehood;"⁴⁸

Chappell is not clear as to how he imagines the first point to bear on the second point he wishes to establish. It is certainly true that in ordinary circumstances we do accept propositions which Moore would regard as Common Sense propositions without asking that reasons be given for them. If a man says that he perceives a pencil directly before him, we ordinarily accept what he says and do not go on to ask him what justifies his thinking that he knows that what he perceives before him is a pencil. Furthermore, Chappell may

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 423. ⁴⁶Ibid., p. 422. ⁴⁷Ibid.

⁴⁸Ibid.

even be right in saying that his statement is among those which "stand, so to speak, innocent until proven guilty."⁴⁹ Nevertheless, neither from the fact that in everyday situations we do not go on to ask a person to justify his claim to perceive a pencil before him, nor from the fact that we take such propositions to be "innocent until proven guilty" can we arrive, I think, at the view that such propositions are evidentially ultimate in that there is no justification for their acceptance. The fact that in everyday situations we accept a person's claim to perceive a pencil before him without further questioning does not entail that such claims are actually self-justified. Nor does the fact that we take such claims to be "innocent until proven guilty" entail this. Let us see, in their turn, why neither of these two entailment claims would hold.

First, there seems to be a pragmatic element to consider in connection with questions of justification. Ordinarily whether a justification is necessary depends in part on how much others -- those to whom the justification would be given -- are willing to grant without further questioning.⁵⁰ If one believes that a person is willing to grant in various situations that when a thing looks to have a certain property F it has that property F, one may have only to

⁴⁹Ibid.

⁵⁰Cf. Keith Lehrer, Knowledge (Oxford: Claredon Press, 1974), pp. 156-157.

point out that the object looks to have F in order to justify (for that person) the claim that the object has the property F. But what a person is willing to grant in certain circumstances will not always, even in ordinary life, coincide with what he is willing to grant in other circumstances. As Lehrer points out:

. . . when a great deal (our personal safety for example) hinges on the matter of whether . . . [a] person saw a bear-print or something else, then we become instantly more cautious and exacting. We require a man who knows a bear-print when he sees one We are epistemically casual about the justifiability of a belief until something of practical importance or epistemic consequence rests on the question.⁵¹

When something of practical importance or epistemic consequence rests on the question, we are not willing to grant what we would otherwise grant. As the case of a person who claims to see a bear-print indicates, we may not be willing to grant such a person in certain circumstances that if something looks like a bear-print then it is a bear-print. We may grant to him the fact that it looks like a bear-print but require further evidence from him to justify his claiming to see a thing of the sort he says he sees.

Once we consider this pragmatic element involved in the notion of justification, it seems to me that it becomes less plausible to infer from the fact that we ordinarily accept certain Common Sense propositions without further questioning, that such propositions neither require (under any

⁵¹Ibid., p. 105.

circumstances) nor have a justification beyond themselves. Beliefs which for the most part we all share in our everyday lives are those we are willing in numerous circumstances to accept on their "intrinsic evidence." Nevertheless, this does not show that such beliefs constitute their own justification; it does not show that such beliefs are self-justified.

Furthermore, even if we do accept the assumption that Common Sense propositions are those we regard as "innocent until proven guilty," in other words, justified until shown to be unjustified, it will not follow that such propositions are self-justified. To suggest that a person's claim to perceive a pencil before him can be justified by appeal to further propositions is not, so far as I can see, to suggest that what he says should be regarded as unjustified until shown to be justified. That Common Sense propositions are open to further justification does not commit one to any attitude of scepticism or suspicion with respect to their truth.

In asking a logician, for instance, to justify a deductive inference, one need not be expressing any doubt as to whether the inference is in fact justified. The person asking for a justification may be wanting to learn merely what rules the logician has for counting as valid an inference the person in question accepts as valid. His request for justification does not, in other words, presuppose that there is a reason to regard the inference as suspect. Likewise, there

is no reason to suppose that questions about the justification of Common Sense propositions need be challenges or expressions of doubt with respect to their truth.⁵² A person can hold, it seems to me, that Common Sense propositions are those which (for the most part) we should regard as justified until shown to be unjustified and set about to determine what reasons or principles he thinks he has for counting these justified beliefs as justified; he can set about to determine this, I suggest, without implying that he does not, after all, regard these beliefs as justified. In short, that Common Sense propositions may be open to justification by other propositions does not commit one to the view that Common Sense propositions are "guilty" by presumption.

Thus, I do not see how Chappell hopes to establish the stronger of the two points we have distinguished, the point, namely, that Moore's Common Sense propositions are not open to justification by further propositions -- that they are evidentially ultimate propositions. And the question as to whether Moore himself wishes to make this stronger point attributed to him by Chappell is, I think, what is really at issue in discussing Chappell's interpretation of Moore's appeal to Common Sense beliefs in the refutation of certain philosophical positions. Upon what basis does Chappell attribute this position to Moore? This is what we will now consider.

⁵²Cf. Roderick Chisholm, Theory of Knowledge (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1966), p. 25.

VII. Whether Chappell's Interpretation is Sound

Chappell's interpretation of Moore, according to which Common Sense propositions are "not the sort of truth[s] for which reasons . . . can be given,"⁵³ seems to be based primarily on certain passages surrounding Moore's argument against Hume's principles. Here Moore says that although one way in which a proposition can be known to be true (and hence count as a justified belief) is if it follows from some premise already known to be true, this cannot be the only way in which a proposition can be known to be true. If it were, it would imply that

no man ever has known any proposition whatever to be true in the slightest degree probable. For if I cannot know any proposition whatever to be either true or probably true, unless I have first known some other proposition, from which it follows, to be so; then, of course, I cannot have known this other proposition, unless I have first known some third proposition, before it; nor this third proposition, unless I have first known a fourth before it; and so on ad infinitum.⁵⁴

In other words, Moore claims,

. . . it would follow that no man has ever known any proposition whatever to be even probably true, unless he has previously known as absolutely infinite series of other propositions. And it is quite certain that no man ever has thus known a really infinite series of propositions.⁵⁵

And so if any argument, including Moore's argument against Hume's principles and his opponent's argument in defense of

⁵³Chappell, "Malcolm on Moore," p. 422.

⁵⁴Moore, Some Main Problems, p. 122.

⁵⁵Ibid., p. 123.

Hume's principles, is a good one it must be the case, says Moore, "that we are capable of knowing at least one proposition to be true, without knowing any other proposition whatever from which it follows. And I propose to call this way of knowing a proposition to be true, immediate knowledge."⁵⁶

What Moore wishes to hold is this. Since the condition necessary to make an argument conclusive -- the condition, namely, that its premise be known to be true -- can be satisfied when the premise is known immediately as well as when there are further arguments in its favor, his argument against Hume's principles "may be just as good an argument as any other, even though its premise -- the premise that I do know that this pencil exists -- is only known immediately."⁵⁷ However, Chappell's interpretation of what Moore intends here seems to commit Moore to the view that a proposition known immediately is one which is not open to justification by further propositions. For Chappell argues that since "to prove anything at all requires premises which themselves do not need proving in order to be accepted,"⁵⁸ it follows that "some propositions among those we claim to know must be ultimate in the sense that although they may be reasons for thinking other propositions to be true they themselves do do not have reasons."⁵⁹ And according to Chappell, "Moore's

⁵⁶Ibid. ⁵⁷Ibid., pp. 124-125.

⁵⁸Chappell, "Malcolm on Moore," p. 422.

⁵⁹Ibid.

statementment [in this context, Moore's premise that he knows that this pencil exists] is a clear case of a proposition which is ultimate in this sense."⁶⁰

But given Moore's notion of immediate knowledge, I do not believe that from the fact that there are premises which do not need proving in order to be accepted, we can infer that some propositions are ultimate in Chappell's sense. Nor, I suggest, do we have a reason for saying that Moore's premise is an instance of a proposition which is ultimate in this sense. In terms of what Moore wishes to maintain I think that Chappell's point, namely, that to prove anything at all requires premises which themselves do not need proving in order to be accepted, can be put this way. If any of our beliefs are justified because we know propositions which entail them, then at least one of our beliefs must be justified when no proposition is known which entails it. Moore himself expresses this point as follows, in terms of his distinction between immediate and mediate knowledge:

. . . if any proposition whatever is ever known by us mediately, or because some other proposition is known from which it follows, some one proposition at least, must also be known by us immediately, or not merely because some other proposition is known from which it follows.⁶¹

Let us put Moore's point here somewhat differently. The fact that a premise is known immediately -- not because

⁶⁰Ibid.

⁶¹Moore, Some Main Problems, p. 124.

some other proposition is known which entails it -- cannot be a sufficient reason for rejecting as inconclusive the argument in which that premise figures. If it were, it would imply that no argument is conclusive. If an argument could be rejected merely on the grounds that its premise is not known to follow from some other proposition, then the implication is that an argument is conclusive only if its premise is known to follow from some other proposition. And this, as Moore points out, leads to the absurd consequence that an argument is conclusive only if an infinite series of propositions is known to be true.

Moore's argument against Hume's principles (or any other argument) cannot, then, be rejected merely on the grounds that he does not know some further proposition from which his premise -- the premise that he knows that this pencil exists -- follows. But we cannot conclude from this that an argument against Hume's principles cannot be constructed in which Moore's premise is known mediately, and so we cannot conclude that his premise is ultimate in Chappell's sense; that is, ultimate in the sense that although it may be a reason for thinking other propositions to be true, it does not have a reason. For Moore writes:

. . . it is important to insist that even when you do know a proposition immediately, you may also at the same time know some proposition from which it follows: you may know it both immediately and also because you know some other proposition from which it follows. If, therefore, we give the name mediate knowledge to all cases in which you know a proposition, because you know some other from

which it follows; the result is that you may at one and the same time know the same proposition both mediately and also immediately.⁶²

Hence, it would be incorrect to infer from the fact that Moore's premise, or for that matter, from the fact that any proposition of Common Sense is known immediately, that it cannot also be known mediately -- known also because some other proposition is known from which it follows. And if this is so, I believe it would also be incorrect to conclude, as Chappell does, that a Common Sense proposition is not one for which a reason can be given.

Again, to rephrase Moore's central contention as it relates to his argument against Hume's principles: Since some premise must be known immediately if there are any conclusive arguments at all, his argument against Hume's principles can count as conclusive even when he knows no further proposition from which his Common Sense premise can be deduced. And given his distinction between immediate and mediate knowledge, we can see that this is a far more restricted point to make with respect to Common Sense propositions (which serve as premises in Moore's arguments) than is the one Chappell takes Moore to be making. Moore's distinction between immediate and mediate knowledge does not permit one to infer from the fact that some propositions are justified

⁶²Ibid.

without the need of proof that there are propositions which cannot be proved. And so, this distinction does not permit one to infer from the fact that a Common Sense proposition may be justified when there is no argument in its favor that such a proposition is self-justified.

I believe a case can be made for saying the following. Moore would not regard an argument against Hume's principles in which his premise, 'I know that this pencil exists,' is deduced from some further proposition as being a better argument than his own. Moore claims that his premise is more certain than any premise from which it might be deduced. He says:

. . . whether the exact proposition which formed my premiss, namely: I do know that this pencil exists; or only the proposition: This pencil exists; or only the proposition: the sense-data which I directly apprehend are a sign that it exists; is known by me immediately, one or other of them, I think, certainly is so. And all three of them are much more certain than any premise which could be used to prove that they are false; and also much more certain than any other premise which could be used to prove that they are true.⁶³

Nevertheless, from the fact that his premise is more certain than any other proposition which might be used to prove it true, we still cannot infer that Moore regards his premise as evidentially ultimate. The above passage plainly allows for the possibility that there are propositions which justify Common Sense propositions and which are still more certain or more ultimate than they. What is ruled out

⁶³Ibid., p. 125. Italics mine.

by a careful reading of this passage is only that there be a proposition from which we can deduce Moore's Common Sense premise and which is more certain than it. In being faithful to Moore's position, then, we will have to say that if there are propositions which he would regard as being both (a) more certain than Common Sense propositions (or at least, certain in a sense in which they are not) and (b) capable of justifying these, the relation of justification must be construed as a non-deductive one.⁶⁴ The suggestion that there may be such propositions becomes quite plausible, it seems to me, once we identify and explain Moore's position with respect to a fundamental, epistemological issue involved in his rejection of certain anti-Common Sense views such as Hume's. This we will do in chapter V.

⁶⁴Moore claims that the beliefs of Common Sense are absolutely certain. See, for example, "Certainty," p. 236. Thus, we will have to say that for Moore, there are no propositions about the external world which are more certain than the beliefs of Common Sense. For an interesting discussion of various definitions of "certainty" in which no proposition about the external world seems to be certain, see Roderick Firth, "The Anatomy of Certainty," The Philosophical Review 76 (1967): 3-27.

C H A P T E R V
MOORE'S APPEAL TO COMMON SENSE
AND CRITERIA OF KNOWLEDGE

Introduction

In chapter IV we tried to establish two main points. The first had to do with Klemke's view. We attempted to show that Klemke has no basis for his contention that Moore appealed to a criterion of self-evidence in an effort to justify the acceptance of Common Sense propositions. Furthermore, his critical comments on Moore's appeal to Common Sense mistakenly assume that Moore did, in fact, regard some of the beliefs of Common Sense as self-evident beliefs. The second main point we tried to establish was that Chappell's interpretation is not likely the one which best expresses Moore's intentions: at least as this relates to certain claims which Moore makes about immediate knowledge in Some Main Problems of Philosophy, claims which Chappell seems to think support his interpretation. Now our purpose will be to offer an interpretation of Moore's appeal to Common Sense which is, in my opinion, more in accord with his more inclusive epistemological approach both as a Common Sense philosopher and as a sense-datum philosopher. To reach this interpretation, I am suggesting, we need to obtain a much broader perspective of the epistemological position involved in Moore's appeal to Common Sense. This broader perspective is achieved by viewing Moore's appeal to Common Sense

in terms of an answer he gives with respect to a fundamental problem in epistemology: a problem which Roderick Chisholm calls the "problem of the criterion."

I. The Problem of the Criterion

Chisholm distinguishes two pairs of questions:

- (A) What do we know? What is the extent of our knowledge?
- (B) How are we to decide whether we know? What are the criteria of knowledge?¹

And what he terms "the problem of the criterion" presents itself in the following way: It would seem that if you do not have an answer to the second pair of questions, then you will not obtain an answer to the first pair of questions. On the other hand, it would also seem that if you do not already have an answer to the first pair of questions, you will not arrive at an answer to the second.

Put differently, if you have no criterion or criteria for sorting out what things you know from those you do not know -- if you have no way of deciding whether you do, in fact, know the things you think you know -- then you cannot hope to arrive at an answer to question (A); you will not know what it is you do know or how far your knowledge extends. Yet, it would seem equally true that if you do not already know what things you do know or how far your knowledge extends,

¹Roderick M. Chisholm, The Problem of The Criterion, The Aquinas Lecture 1973 (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1973), p. 12.

you will not obtain an answer to question (B); you will not know how to go about deciding whether you know, you will not know what the criteria for knowing are. For to know whether your criteria actually succeed in sorting out cases of knowledge from cases that are not, you already have to know what it is you do know and what it is you do not know.² And so, one position to take with respect to this problem is to contend that, since you cannot answer either question without answering the other, neither question can be answered. You do not know what are the criteria of knowing and you do not know what it is you know.

Chisholm gives the name "sceptic" to a philosopher who takes this position.³ It is to be understood, however, that a sceptic with respect to the problem of the criterion is not the same as a sceptic with respect to our knowledge concerning the external world. A sceptic with respect to our knowledge concerning the external world will say that we do have an answer to question (A). He will say that we know little if anything to be true and that our knowledge does not extend beyond, say, what we know to be true about our own subjective mental states. Following Chisholm's practice, we will use quotation marks to indicate when we are talking about the sceptic ("sceptic") with respect to the problem of the criterion.

²Ibid., pp. 12-14.

³Ibid., p. 14.

There are at least two other positions to take, as Chisholm observes, with respect to the problem in question. Each of the two positions he mentions implies that we can answer one of the two pairs of questions (A) and (B) without presupposing an answer to the other. The "methodist" will be a philosopher who says that he does have an answer to question (B) and that in terms of this answer he can figure out an answer to question (A). The "methodist" thus begins with a criterion (criteria) of knowing and then on the basis of it, decides what it is he and others know and what the extent of our knowledge is.⁴

We observed that Hume's first principle says, in effect, that the way you decide whether your belief in the existence of anything you have not directly apprehended is a genuine case of knowledge and, hence, completely justified is to see whether you know that something which you have directly apprehended is a sign of its existence. And if you follow the second principle telling you whether what you directly apprehend is a sign of the existence of something in which you believe, you will find that you do not know that material objects exist -- this principle tells you that your belief in the existence of material objects is not a justified belief. Thus, Hume takes the "methodist" approach to the problem of the criterion. He assumes that

⁴Ibid., pp. 15-18.

in order to really know and, thus, be completely justified in our belief that material things exist, we need a principle or set of principles to which we appeal to decide whether we know such things. His principles, if accepted, have the consequence that the Common Sense belief that we do in fact know that material things exist is never a justified belief.

A third alternative to either the "sceptic's" position or the "methodist's" is what Chisholm labels "particularism." The "particularist" is a philosopher who begins with the assumption that "in order to find out whether you know such a thing as that this is a hand, you do not have to apply any test or criterion."⁵ In other words, the "particularist" will maintain that there are certain beliefs which we are completely justified in accepting -- and assuming the other conditions of knowledge are met, know to be true -- without our having to appeal to principles to decide this, and that on the basis of these beliefs we then go on to formulate our principles or criteria of knowledge. The "particularist" believes that he has an answer to question (A) above and then, if he carries out his program, will attempt to arrive at an answer to question (B).

Thus, a "particularist" does not wish to hold that our knowledge is, so to speak, "unprincipled" in the sense that there is no distinction which can be drawn between justified and unjustified beliefs. He simply denies that we

⁵Ibid., p. 22.

must be aware of what these principles are before we can decide in specific cases whether we know certain propositions to be true. Unlike the "methodist" in his approach to the problem of the criterion, the "particularist" begins with the assumption that these principles will countenance specific cases in which we think that we already have knowledge and, so, completely justified beliefs.

In formulating such principles we will simply proceed as Aristotle did when he formulated his rules for the syllogism. As 'particularists' in our approach to the problem of the criterion, we will fit our rules to the cases -- to the . . . [beliefs] we know to be good and to the . . . [beliefs] we know to be bad. Knowing what we do about ourselves and the world, we have at our disposal certain instances which our rules or principles should countenance, and certain other instances which our rules or principles should rule out or forbid. And, . . . we assume that by investigating these instances we can formulate criteria which any instance must satisfy if it is to be countenanced and we can formulate other criteria which any instance must satisfy if it is to be ruled out or forbidden.⁶

II. Moore as a "Particularist"

I am suggesting, along with Chisholm, that Moore was a "particularist" in his approach to the problem in question.⁷ And although Chisholm only mentions Moore in passing, I think we can elaborate on Moore's "particularist" approach and its consequences for his appeal to Common Sense.

In his refutation of Hume's principles Moore claims that

"the strongest argument to prove that Hume's principles are false is the argument from a particular case, like this in which we do know of the existence of some material object [that is, like the case in which Moore

⁶Ibid., pp. 35-36.

⁷Ibid., pp. 20-21.

(believes he) knows that this pencil exists]."⁸

Some pages later he adds to this by saying:

Unless it is obvious that, in fact, I do not know of the existence of a material object in any particular instance, no principle which asserts that I cannot know of the existence of anything except under conditions which are not fulfilled in the case of material objects, can be regarded as established. The mere fact that in any particular instance I did know of the existence of a material object, in spite of the fact that the conditions named were not fulfilled, would be sufficient to upset the principle and to prove that it was not true.⁹

Moore goes on to make it clear, however, that this should not be taken to imply that

all attempts to lay down general principles as to the limits of our knowledge must be hopeless and useless. It only follows that in our survey of the particular instances upon which our principle is to be based, we must be very careful not to reckon as instances of the cases where we obviously do not know something, instances in which it is by no means obvious that we do not know the thing in question.¹⁰

It is my contention that, when viewed at a more fundamental level, Moore's rejection of Hume's principles is really the rejection of a methodological assumption which is implied by one's acceptance of these principles over Moore's simple claim to know that this pencil exists. The assumption in question is that we need criteria or principles to decide whether we are completely justified in claiming to know such a proposition as that this pencil exists. And it is important to keep in mind that it is this "methodist"

⁸Moore, Some Main Problems, pp. 125-126.

⁹Ibid., p. 143. ¹⁰Ibid.

assumption which Moore is here denying and that he is not expressing the view that singular propositions, for example, 'This pencil exists,' are more certain than general philosophical principles such as Hume's. Although Moore would agree that his specific claim to know that this pencil exists is more certain than Hume's general principles, this is not the crucial point he is making as a "particularist" in his approach to the problem of the criterion. The "particularist" is not opposed to general principles, as Moore's words above make evident, but rather to the idea that a knowledge of these principles is required to decide in specific cases whether we know, for example, that material objects like this pencil exist. If we do have such knowledge in specific instances, then so much the worse for a principle which, like Hume's, says that these cases are not cases of knowledge.

In challenging Hume's principles with a specific instance in which a material object is known to exist, Moore is defending the "particularist" approach to the problem of the criterion. On my view, what Moore would offer as a justification for accepting his simple claim to knowledge over Hume's principles is his belief that here is a case one can recognize as an instance of knowledge without appeal to a principle to decide this. More fundamentally, it is Hume's "methodist" position that Moore is challenging when he rejects Hume's two principles. For these two principles are formulated on the assumption that we do not already have an answer

to the question, "What do we know?" And it is the rejection of this fundamental assumption that underlies Moore's defense of simple Common Sense propositions against sceptics such as Hume.

If I am correct, then, it is Moore's "particularist" approach to the problem of the criterion which actually calls for the rejection of Hume's principles and not his alleged view that his Common Sense belief in the existence of this pencil is a self-justified belief. Klemke, it seems to me, makes Moore out to be a "methodist" in saying that Moore appealed to the criterion of self-evidence to justify his acceptance of Common Sense propositions.¹¹ But it is Moore's belief that we do not need to appeal to criteria in accepting a proposition such as 'This pencil exists' which actually defines his disagreement with a philosopher like Hume. Not only is Klemke mistaken in representing Moore as a "methodist," Moore simply does not hold the view that Common Sense propositions are self-evident, as we have seen.

Nor does Moore hold the view that Common Sense propositions, though not self-evident, are evidentially ultimate in that there are no further propositions which justify our acceptance of them. As we have also seen, Moore, in all likelihood, does not subscribe to Chappell's view that Common Sense proposition cannot be justified by more basic propositions. Moore holds only that a Common Sense belief, such

¹¹See page 108 above.

as the one used in his refutation of Hume's principles, is going to be more certain than any other proposition from which it may follow or be deduced. At least this is what he holds in Some Main Problems of Philosophy. And this view of Moore's is compatible with saying: (1) that there are propositions which are certain in a sense in which no Common Sense proposition about the external world is certain;¹² (2) that these propositions serve to justify our acceptance of Common Sense propositions; (3) that the relation between Common Sense propositions (about the external world) and the more basic propositions which justify them is not deductive. In short, Moore's position is quite compatible with the idea that criteria can be formulated which countenance the beliefs of Common Sense and which provide a non-deductive means of justifying such beliefs in terms of still more basic propositions. What is involved in this idea will be briefly discussed under the heading "Completing the 'Particularist' Program" -- the last part of this chapter.

III. Selecting Common Sense Propositions

Moore suggests that it is indeed possible to formulate certain principles which state the conditions under which our beliefs are justified and the conditions under which they are

¹²The qualification "about the external world" seems necessary in view of the fact that 'I have had feelings of many different kinds' is among Moore's list of Common Sense beliefs. See "A Defense of Common Sense," p. 34.

not.¹³ But, consistent with his "particularist" approach, he suggests that the adequacy of such principles is to be tested in accordance with whether they countenance or forbid those cases we antecedently recognize as cases of knowledge. As he puts it: "The mere fact that in any particular instance I did know of the existence of a material object, in spite of the fact that the conditions named were not fulfilled, would be sufficient to upset the principle and to prove that it was not true."¹⁴ One might contend, therefore, that there is a sense in which Common Sense beliefs are basic, ultimate beliefs for Moore or any "particularist." For a "particularist" simply says that any adequate set of criteria or principles will countenance propositions like 'This is a hand' and for this contention he provides no defense. If Common Sense propositions are simply those which Moore or any "particularist" selects as being propositions which any adequate set of criteria for knowing should countenance, then are they not, after all, being held as basic, self-justified beliefs? Let us consider this point.

Chisholm has remarked that "we can deal with the problem [that is, the problem of the criterion] only by begging the question. It seems to me that, if we do recognize this fact, . . . then it is unseemly for us to try to pretend that

¹³See last passage quoted above.

¹⁴Moore, Some Main Problems, p. 143.

it isn't so."¹⁵ His point, which I think is correct, is that it is not a matter of demonstration as to which approach to the problem in question is the right one. We will not be able to "prove" that the "sceptic" is mistaken in his belief that to deal with the problem of the criterion involves a circularity, nor that the "methodist" or the "particularist" is right or wrong, as the case may be, in beginning with their respective answers to the pair of questions (A) and (B). To deal with the problem at all involves assuming that the other approaches are mistaken.¹⁶ Thus, in selecting "particularism" over, say, "methodism," there is a sense in which the acceptance of Common Sense propositions is an arbitrary matter. But from this it will not follow that the "particularist" must hold the beliefs of Common Sense to be basic or self-justified beliefs within his epistemology.

I think we must distinguish two different tasks: (1) the task of freely choosing the "particularist's" position and, hence, of selecting Common Sense propositions as those which our criteria of knowing will countenance, and (2) the

¹⁵Chisholm, The Criterion, p. 37.

¹⁶Beginning with their own assumptions about the nature of philosophical problems in general, some philosophers will hold that the problem of the criterion is not a problem at all but only the appearance of one, and that it has no solution but only a "dissolution." See, for example, Ludwig Wittgenstein, Philosophical Investigations (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1953), p. 47. It is beyond the scope of our purpose, however, to answer this particular charge.

task of reconstructing the justification of our knowledge concerning the external world. In beginning this second task, the decision to accept "particularism" as a solution to the problem of the criterion has already been made and the job for the epistemologist now becomes one of setting forth explicit principles for the justification of propositions about the external world. Once these principles are formulated, the question "What counts as your justification for accepting this (or that) proposition"? does not call for an arbitrary decision. What counts as a correct answer is now determined by the principles set forth.

What is involved in this distinction can, I think, be likened to what is involved in Rudolf Carnap's distinction between "external questions," questions which call for a decision to be made concerning the adoption of some conceptual framework, and "internal questions," that is, questions which are answered within some antecedently accepted framework according to its rules.¹⁷ Once the decision is made to accept the "particularist" position and, hence, to accept Common Sense propositions as those which any adequate set of criteria of knowing will countenance, such propositions need not count as basic, self-justified beliefs in an effort to carry out the second of the two tasks mentioned. The criteria

¹⁷See Rudolf Carnap, "Empiricism, Semantics, and Ontology," Meaning and Necessity: A Study in Semantics and Modal Logic (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, Phoenix Books, 1958), pp. 205-221.

of knowing which are formulated in an attempt to carry out this second task, although they will countenance the beliefs of Common Sense, are principles which state the conditions under which such beliefs will be justified in terms of what the "particularist" may hold are still more basic propositions within his epistemology. If we make the distinction between (1) and (2) above, there is no reason to suppose that, because Common Sense beliefs are those freely chosen to be countenanced by his principles, they will serve as evidentially ultimate propositions for the "particularist" when he embarks on the task of reconstructing our justification for knowledge concerning the external world.

Although one of the two tasks we have distinguished makes the acceptance of Moore's Common Sense propositions a matter of choice, it seems to me that his "particularist" approach to the problem of the criterion parallels a more promising approach to the problem of justifying inductive inference. Nelson Goodman observes that "the problem of induction is not a problem of demonstration but a problem of defining the difference between valid and invalid predictions."¹⁸ When Goodman says that the problem of justifying induction is not one of demonstration, he means that it is not a problem of showing that there is "some way of distinguishing antecedently between true and false predictions"¹⁹ Accord-

¹⁸Nelson Goodman, Fact, Fiction, & Forecast (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1955) p. 66.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 65.

ing to Goodman, "predictions are justified if they conform to valid canons of induction; and the canons are valid if they accurately codify accepted inductive practice."²⁰ Hence, "the basic task in justifying an inductive inference is to show that it conforms to the general rules of induction."²¹ And what he calls the "new riddle of induction" we face is, quite in general, the task of formulating these rules in such a way that they will countenance the inferences we already accept and recognize as good inductive practice and forbid those inferences we already accept as bad inductive practice.

To justify an inductive inference, then, will be to show that it conforms to rules we have formulated on the basis of having already recognized certain inferences as the ones we wanted our rules to countenance as valid and certain others as those we wanted our rules to forbid. Like the "particularist" in his approach to the problem of the criterion, a philosopher sympathetic to Goodman's approach to induction will assume that he needs no antecedent criteria to decide whether certain inferences are good and, hence, should be countenanced by the rules in question, or whether certain others are not good and should be forbidden by his rules of valid induction. On the basis of these good and bad instances, he will then attempt to formulate his rules stating what conditions any inference must satisfy if it is to be accepted or rejected.

²⁰Ibid., p. 67. ²¹Ibid., p. 66.

IV. Sense-data and Justification

It must be conceded that Moore never set for himself the task of formulating criteria for knowledge. In particular, he never set for himself the task of constructing, by means of certain epistemic principles, a theory of justification for our knowledge concerning the external world. After having affirmed that he had an answer to the question "What do we know?," Moore never went on to provide an answer to the question "What are the criteria of knowing?" This is simply to say that he never completed the "particularist" program. But it seems to me that had Moore considered such principles, he would have claimed that propositions about sense-data should figure in the justification we have for claims to know propositions about the external world.

In Some Main Problems of Philosophy Moore says that "the sense-data which we directly apprehend are signs of the existence of a material object" ²² He believed, in other words, that the direct apprehension of certain sense-data provided some sort of evidence for the belief in the existence of material objects. But here Moore seemed to think that he might, nevertheless, know immediately the proposition 'This pencil exists.'

It might be said: I certainly do not know immediately that the pencil exists; for I should not know it at all, unless I were directly apprehending certain sense-data, and knew that they were signs of its existence. And of

²²Moore, Some Main Problems, p. 116.

course I admit, that I should not know it, unless I were directly apprehending certain sense-data. But this is again a different thing from admitting that I do not know it immediately. For the mere fact that I should not know it, unless certain other things were happening, is quite a different thing from knowing it only because I know some other proposition. The mere direct apprehension of certain sense-data is quite a different thing from the knowledge of any proposition; and yet I am not sure that it is not by itself quite sufficient to enable me to know that the pencil exists.²³

Although the direct apprehension of certain sense-data may be a different thing from the knowledge of any proposition, I do not see why Moore could not say that the proposition that he is directly apprehending certain sense-data is one which confers some sort of evidence on the proposition that this pencil exists -- given his view that the direct apprehension of certain sense-data constitutes a sign of the existence of a material object. Moore could allow that 'This is a pencil' is known immediately and yet claim that the proposition 'I am directly apprehending certain sense-data' provides some sort of evidence, though not deductive evidence, for the proposition 'This is a pencil.' Recall that in Some Main Problems of Philosophy, a proposition known immediately is one known to be true but not because some other proposition is known from which it follows.²⁴

²³Ibid., p. 125.

²⁴Ibid., p. 124.

As Casimir Lewy points out,²⁵ there are certain passages in Moore's writings which indicate that at times he was not absolutely certain whether or not propositions about the external world could be deduced from propositions about sense-data. Moore never says that they can be, but after maintaining that he "cannot help agreeing with Russell" that only propositions such as those about one's memory or other subjective states are known immediately, Moore claims in "Four Forms of Scepticism" that he is more certain that this is a pencil than he is of the assumption that this proposition does not follow logically from any proposition known immediately.²⁶

Furthermore, during a course of lectures given in 1928-29, Moore says that, whether a proposition such as 'This is a physical thing' is known immediately or is deducible from what is, depends partly on the analysis of this proposition. After considering a number of arguments to prove that he does

²⁵In a letter received from him in response to a written request of mine. I asked Dr. Lewy if he could direct me to passages in Moore's writings which would indicate that Moore did take propositions about sense-data to be more ultimate than Common Sense propositions. In this letter he expressed his agreement with the idea that Moore does not regard Common Sense propositions as those which are "ultimate" in Chappell's sense of this expression. See page 115 for the sense in which Common Sense propositions are "ultimate" on Chappell's interpretation of Moore's "defense."

²⁶Moore, "Four Forms of Scepticism," Philosophical Papers, pp. 225-226. As a proposition about one's memory, Moore cites 'There was a sound like "Russell" a little while ago.' p. 225. And he holds that sounds are sense-data. See Some Main Problems, p. 32.

not know that this is a physical thing (where in the context of his remarks he is pointing to a blackboard), Moore states one final argument having among its premises these two statements, and I here quote them:

- (1) No human being has ever known immediately: This is a physical thing.
- (2) No human being has ever known this by formal deduction exclusively from premises that were known immediately.²⁷

Moore's comment on these two premises is: "Now I don't feel perfectly certain of (1) and (2): . . . whether they are true partly depends on what I am believing or knowing when I believe or know 'This is a physical thing,' i.e., on the analysis of this proposition or fact."²⁸

It is not clear why Moore in his lectures of 1928-29 seemed to think that the analysis of, for example, 'This is a pencil' partly determines whether this proposition is deducible from what is known immediately.²⁹ But there may be an explanation for his saying then that, whether this proposition is known immediately, in the sense in which sense-

²⁷Moore, Lectures on Philosophy, p. 50.

²⁸Ibid., p. 50.

²⁹Moore may have been toying with the idea that 'This is a pencil' is analyzable strictly in terms of sense-data. Professor Bruce Aune has pointed out to me that if this is the case, then Moore might have had something like this in mind. Suppose 'This is a pencil' is analyzed as 'This is a set of certain sense-data.' 'This set exists' might then be deducible from 'These sense-data exist,' where the latter proposition is known immediately.

datum propositions are, depends in part on its analysis.

Three years before these lectures were given, Moore's "A Defense of Common Sense" first appeared.³⁰ In this paper Moore says:

It seems to me quite evident that my knowledge that I am now perceiving a human hand is a deduction from a pair of propositions simpler still -- propositions which I can only express in the form 'I am perceiving this' and 'This is a human hand.'³¹

With respect to propositions like 'This is a human hand,' Moore claims that "two things only seem to me to be quite certain about the analysis of such propositions" ³²
These two things are

that whenever I know, or judge, such a proposition to be true, (1) there is always some sense-datum about which the proposition in question is a proposition -- some sense-datum which is a subject (and, in a certain sense, the principle or ultimate subject) of the proposition in question, and (2) that, nevertheless, what I am knowing or judging to be true about this sense-datum is not (in general) that it is itself a hand,³³

As these passages seem to indicate, Moore not only believed that sense-data play a definite role in the justification we have for knowledge about physical things, they figure in the very analysis of propositions about physical things. If Moore still thought that this was the case in his lectures of 1928-29, we can understand his saying that

³⁰It first appeared in Contemporary British Philosophy, 2d series, vol. 2, ed. J.H. Muirhead (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1925), pp. 193-223.

³¹Moore, "A defense of Common Sense," p. 53.

³²Ibid., p. 54. ³³Ibid.

whether the proposition 'This is a physical thing' is known immediately depends partly on its analysis. For I should think that, if Moore still believed to be true about the analysis of propositions like 'This is a hand' what he did in his "A Defense of Common Sense," he would hold that at least part of what these propositions assert is something known immediately; sense-data are "in a certain sense," as made explicit by analysis, the ultimate subjects of such propositions.

Moore does seem to have been inclined toward some version of a foundation theory of justification in which propositions strictly about the external world are not basic. But in taking sense-data to be involved in the analysis of propositions like 'This is a hand' (that is, propositions which, on Moore's view, constitute one of a pair of simpler propositions from which one's knowledge that he is perceiving a physical thing is deduced), Moore is holding what clearly seems to be a more radical notion that is necessary for a foundationalist view. It is my belief that Moore was wrong in suggesting that the subject matter or content of those beliefs which one regards as basic on a foundationalist view, whether this content be sense-data or some other subjective item of experience, should figure in the analysis of propositions about the external world. However, we can appreciate how this more radical notion of his might bring about an uncertainty as to what principles are required to justify

propositions about the external world in terms of subjective propositions about sense-experience. On Moore's view, what would otherwise count as being only the content of a subjective proposition is already (implicitly) involved as an ultimate subject in propositions about the external world.

Moore appears to have considered a number of ways in which subjective propositions -- on his view, propositions about sense-data -- might be said to be involved in the justification of our knowledge concerning the external world. At times he expressed some uncertainty as to whether from these propositions we could deduce propositions about the external world; at other times he thought that whether propositions about the external world are known immediately or are deducible from purely subjective propositions depended in part on the analysis of propositions like 'This is a pencil' or 'This is a hand.' He even considered the possibility that his knowledge or belief that this is a pencil might be based on an analogical or inductive argument. In the course of examining one of Russell's sceptical arguments, Moore writes:

. . . he [Russell] assumes: (1) My belief or knowledge that this is a pencil is, if I do not know it immediately, and if also the proposition does not follow logically from anything that I know immediately, in some sense 'based on' an analogical or inductive argument; and (2) what is 'based on' an analogical or inductive argument is never certain knowledge, but only more or less probable belief. And with regard to these assumptions, it seems to me that the first must be true in some sense or other, though it seems to me terribly difficult to say exactly what the sense is. What I am inclined to dispute, therefore, is the second: I am inclined to think that what is 'based on' an analogical or inductive argument,

in the sense in which my knowledge or belief that this is a pencil is so, may nevertheless be certain knowledge and not merely more or less probable belief.³⁴

He closes these remarks, however, with his familiar sort of claim that he is more certain that he does know that this is a pencil than he is of either one of Russell's assumptions.³⁵

Moore was never certain as to how propositions about sense-data might provide evidence for one's belief in the existence of an external world. But once his sense-datum philosophy is brought in line with his "particularist" approach to the problem of the criterion, I think we are justified in saying this: Whatever criteria or epistemic principles Moore might have agreed were the ones required to countenance the beliefs of Common Sense, they will be principles telling us how we can justify our Common Sense beliefs in terms of still more basic propositions.³⁶ If we are right in saying this, then I think we have at least the outline of an interpretation of Moore's defense of Common Sense which, unlike Chappell's interpretation, reflects both Moore's methodological approach as a "particularist" and his epistemological concerns as a sense-datum philosopher.

³⁴Moore, "Four Forms of Scepticism," pp. 225-226.

³⁵Ibid., p. 226.

³⁶However, given Moore's "particularist" approach, he would say that one does not need to be aware of these principles in order to be justified in claiming to know a Common Sense proposition.

V. Completing the "Particularist" Program

Chisholm has developed further the "particularist" position which, I have suggested, may be found in Moore's defense of Common Sense. He has gone on to offer a set of epistemic principles which tell us under what conditions various subjective propositions "tend to confer reasonableness, or tend to confer acceptability, . . ." ³⁷ on propositions about the external world. These principles, if correct, provide a non-deductive (as well as a non-inductive) means of justifying propositions about the external world in terms of more ultimate propositions. Chisholm believes that what will count as the more ultimate, subjective propositions to which these principles apply are those describing "self-presenting" states. He writes:

A man's being in a certain state is self-presenting to him at a given time provided only that (i) he is in that state at that time and (ii) it is necessarily true that if he is in that state at that time then it is evident to him that he is in that state at that time. ³⁸

Examples of what Chisholm calls "self-presenting" states are the state of thinking that one perceives (or seeming to perceive) and the state of thinking that one remembers (or seeming to remember). ³⁹

Chisholm's idea here is that if, for example, a per-

³⁷Chisholm, Theory of Knowledge, forthcoming revised edition, p. 133.

³⁸Chisholm, The Criterion, p. 29.

³⁹Ibid., p. 30.

son thinks that he perceives something to be a hand then it follows from his so thinking, that he is justified in thinking that he perceives something to be a hand.⁴⁰ In other words, thinking that one perceives something to be a hand is a "mark of its own evidence"⁴¹ and, furthermore, under certain conditions confers reasonableness upon the proposition that one perceives something to be a hand as well as the proposition that something is a hand. So on Chisholm's view, to say that a person's being in the state called "thinking that he perceives that something is F" is a criterion for the proposition 'something is F' being one that is reasonable for that person, can be explicated by the following epistemic principle:

(B) If S believes [thinks] that he perceives something to have a certain property F, then the proposition that he does perceive something to be F, as well as the proposition that there is something that is F, is one that is reasonable for S.⁴²

This principle is one of four such principles which, Chisholm would hold, provide the "particularist" with cri-

⁴⁰Chisholm is not suggesting that propositions describing "self-presenting" states are incorrigible. He does not hold the view that if a person believes that he is thinking that he perceives something to be a hand, then it follows that his belief is true. For a criticism applicable to Chisholm's definition of "self-presenting states," especially condition (ii) in his definition, see Lehrer, Knowledge, pp. 119-121.

⁴¹Chisholm, The Criterion, p. 30.

⁴²Chisholm, Theory of Knowledge, p. 45.

teria for justifying our beliefs about the external world in terms of other, still more basic beliefs.⁴³ And the more general idea motivating the formulation of such principles is the contention that

in addition to the 'rules of deduction' and the 'rules of induction,' there are also certain basic 'rules of evidence.' The deductive logician tries to formulate the first type of rule; the inductive logician tries to formulate the second; and the epistemologist tries to formulate the third.⁴⁴

In accordance with this contention we might alter a suggestion of Moore's. Moore says in "A Defense of Common Sense" that he is not at all sceptical about the truth of Common Sense propositions but only uncertain about their correct analysis.⁴⁵ In light of Chisholm's conception of the task facing the epistemologist we might say, and I think this sums up the "particularist" point of view: There is no doubt as to the truth of Common Sense propositions but only an uncertainty as to exactly what "rules of evidence," epistemic principles, will be required to countenance these propositions as completely

⁴³In all there are nine epistemic rules stated in his Theory of Knowledge, but only four of these tell us how to justify propositions about the external world on the basis of certain subjective propositions. See pp. 44-54.

Objections by way of counterexamples to Chisholm's rules as formulated in his Theory of Knowledge can be found in Herbert Heidelberger, "Chisholm's Epistemic Principles," Noûs 3 (1969): 73-82. Chisholm's revisions and corrections are to be found in his paper "On the Nature of Empirical Evidence" in Roderick M. Chisholm and Robert J. Swartz, eds., Empirical Knowledge: Readings from Contemporary Sources (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1973), pp. 224-249.

⁴⁴Chisholm, Theory of Knowledge, p. 2.

⁴⁵Moore, "A Defense of Common Sense," p. 53.

justified.

Conclusion

Chisholm's specific version of the criteria or epistemic principles which a "particularist" seeks may not have met with Moore's exact approval, that is, had Moore himself carried out the "particularist" program in full. Furthermore, it is certainly controversial whether the evidentially ultimate propositions to which the principles should apply will be of the sort Chisholm defends.⁴⁶ Nevertheless, I think it is plausible to view Chisholm's principles, or some modification of them, as being in the spirit of the epistemological position involved in Moore's defense of Common Sense. Once Moore's defense of Common Sense is freed of the notion that when understood in the way Moore conceived it, it is a defense of certain self-justified beliefs, there is no reason to suppose that at least some version of Chisholm's principles do not genuinely supplement Moore's position.

Moore's "particularist" approach to the problem of the criterion, when conjoined with his sense-datum epistemology, lends itself less naturally to Chappell's interpretation than to the following interpretation. Although the beliefs

⁴⁶See, for example, Roderick Firth's paper "Ultimate Evidence" in Perceiving, Sensing and Knowing, ed. R.J. Swartz (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1965), pp. 486-496. Firth claims that since a person may have adequate sensory evidence that an object is F even though he does not believe that he perceives it to be F, propositions describing sense-experience, and not propositions describing Chisholm's "self-presenting states," are the ones to which these principles should apply.

of Common Sense are going to be those we want our theory of knowledge to countenance as completely worthy of our acceptance, they are not going to be the evidentially ultimate propositions we start with in attempting to provide criteria for the justification of our knowledge concerning the external world. On this interpretation, Moore's appeal to certain Common Sense propositions as premises in philosophical argument is not an appeal to what he thought were self-justified beliefs but rather an appeal to the "particularist" approach to the problem of the criterion.

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