

## THE EPISTEMOLOGY OF VALUE

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If a man wishes to show that a certain object is valuable for someone for some purpose, then he will, I suggest, have to show that there is some property of it that makes it so. Moreover, following one usage, we may say that any such property will constitute a criterion for validating or establishing the truth of his judgement.<sup>1</sup>

However, there are some philosophers who maintain that value judgements are neither true nor false; and that, therefore, it is not even possible to provide any criteria for establishing their truth. Hence, for example, A. J. Ayer writes, vis-a-vis "ethical judgements,"

it is impossible to find a criterion for determining the validity of ethical judgements. It is not because they have an "absolute" validity which is mysteriously independent of ordinary sense-experience, but because they have no objective validity whatsoever. If a sentence makes no statement at all, there is obviously no sense in asking whether what it says is true or false. And . . . sentences which simply express moral judgements do not say anything. They are pure expressions of feeling and as such do not come under the category of truth or falsehood. They are unverifiable for the same reason as a cry of pain or a word of command is unverifiable--because they do not express genuine propositions.<sup>2</sup>

If truth and falsehood are inapplicable to value judgements (as indeed they are to cries of pain, commands, and the like), then, clearly, it is in vain that we ask "Can we ever know that something has value (disvalue)?" For, in order for one to know that something has value (disvalue), it must, no doubt, be true that the thing in question has it.

But what grounds have we for placing value judgements outside the bounds of truth and falsehood? In this paper we propose to give good reason for not doing so, and for insisting upon the truth-value status of such judgements.<sup>3</sup>

First, we shall set forth an argument for the truth-value status of judgements about epistemic justification --that is, judgements like, e.g., "S is (epistemically) justified in believing that p," "It is (epistemically) reasonable for S to believe that p," "S is (epistemically) unjustified in believing that p," "p is directly evident for S." (Hereafter, such judgements will be referred to more simply as justification judgements.) Secondly, we shall exhibit what we take to be the salient features of value judgements. And, thirdly, we shall show that justification judgements have analogous features. Thereby, we hope to show that there is good reason for countenancing the truth-value status of value judgements. For, if we can show that justification judgements have truth-values, and, furthermore, that their analysis looks, in all other important respects, like that of value judgements, then it would appear reasonable for us to think that value judgements, as well, have truth-values.

Let us, then, turn to the argument for the truth-value status of justification judgements.

#### I. Knowledge, Truth, and Justification

We shall begin by making three assumptions, the first of which is that

- A(1) Necessarily, for all p and q, if p entails q, then, whenever it is true that p, it is true that q.

Put less formally, our first assumption is that entailment preserves truth.

Our second assumption is that

- A(2) Someone knows something entails Someone is justified in believing something.

Put more generally, our second assumption is that knowledge entails justified belief.<sup>4</sup>

Finally, let us, at least for the moment, place justification judgements outside the bounds of truth and falsehood and suppose the following:

- A(3) It is never true that someone is justified in believing something, and it is never false that someone is justified in believing something.

A(3) is thus the "justification" analogue of the thesis which denies that value judgements have truth-values. And, just as the latter thesis leads to "value noncognitivism," the former thesis leads to "justification noncognitivism." For, if A(3) is true, then it is also in vain that we ask "Can we ever know that someone is justified in believing something?"

From A(3) it follows that

T(1) It is never true that someone is justified in believing something.

From A(1) and A(2) it follows that

T(2) Whenever it is true that someone knows something, it is true that someone is justified in believing something.

And, from T(1) and T(2) it follows that

T(3) It is never true that someone knows something.

Now, T(3) is, I submit, absurd. Indeed, it is true that someone knows something. For example, it is now true that I know that I exist. Moreover, I know that I know the latter, which would be impossible if T(3) were true; inasmuch as it is not possible that one know something that is not true. Hence it is that, if T(3) is true, one must answer the ancient question "How do you know that you know?" by flatly responding "I don't."

If T(3) is absurd, then at least one of our assumptions must be mistaken. But A(1) and A(2) are, I believe, quite "safe." Indeed, entailment preserves truth: a statement entailed by a true statement must, no doubt, itself be true. And knowledge entails justified belief: it is an analytic proposition that a man is justified in believing whatever he knows. If so, then A(3) is mistaken, and justification judgements have truth-values.

A word about truth and falsehood may, however, be in order. An "emotivist" who maintains that justification judgements (or value judgements, or knowledge judgements, or knowledge judgements, etc.) are not genuine assertions--but are rather "ejaculations of feelings," "disguised commands," "performatory utterances," or the like--may, nevertheless, grant that such judgements may be said to be true or false; and he may do this in a way that is completely innocuous to his "emotivism." For, he may argue that the terms "is true" and "is false" do

not themselves describe anything. Rather, they are used to perform certain nondescriptive functions such as agreeing or disagreeing with the utterances of others, accepting or rejecting them, etc. And, as such, there is nothing incorrect about calling justification judgements (value judgements, knowledge judgements, etc.) true or false even though they are not genuine assertions.<sup>5</sup>

I do not think, however, that we have adequate grounds for accepting such an interpretation of the terms "is true" and "is false." First, we may well grant that these terms are often used to perform such nondescriptive functions as agreeing or disagreeing with the utterances of others, accepting or rejecting them, and so on. But that fact alone does not preclude the possibility of their also (simultaneously) describing certain properties --those of being true and being false, respectively.

Moreover, it appears that the terms "is true" and "is false" do not serve to perform the sorts of non-descriptive function in question when they occur in utterances with linguistic forms other than the categorical indicative form. Consider, for example, such utterances as "Make sure that is is true (false) that p," "Do you know if it is true (false) that p?" "If it is true (false) that p, then I'm a monkey's uncle," "Either it is true that p, or false that p."<sup>6</sup>

Let us now turn to our analysis of value judgements.

## II. Value Judgements

A. The Foundational Structure of Value. Suppose that a man judges that a given state of affairs p is good for someone S, e.g. that it is good for Smith that he undergoes certain thoracic surgery. It then becomes "logically legitimate" for us to ask him what it is about p in virtue of which it is good for S that p. For indeed, if it is good for S that p, then there must be something about it in virtue of which it is good for S.

What if our man claims that it is good for S that p in virtue of the fact that it brings about some further state of affairs q? Then, it would appear that our man must hold that q itself is good for S.<sup>7</sup> For, if he denied the latter, then it would hardly make any sense for him to countenance p as being good for S in virtue of the fact that it brings about q.

Suppose, for example, that our man maintains that it is good for Smith that he undergo certain thoracic surgery in virtue of the fact that it brings about the restoration of mobility in his right arm; and that,

furthermore, mobility being restored in Smith's right arm is itself something that is good for him.

However, it then becomes "logically legitimate" for us to ask our man what it is about mobility being restored in Smith's right arm in virtue of which it is good for Smith. And, if our man responds by appealing to some further causal consequence of it which he thinks is good for Smith, then we may ask what it is about that causal consequence in virtue of which it is good for Smith. So that our interrogation will continue just as long as our man continues to adduce further causal consequences to support his judgement. But how long must we go on?

The upshot is this. Unless we are prepared to countenance an infinite chain of causal consequences as that which supports the edifice of value and disvalue, we must be prepared to accept the doctrine of the intrinsically valuable and disvaluable--we must be prepared to say that there are some states of affairs that have value independently of or apart from their causal consequences, as well as others that have disvalue independently of or apart from their causal consequences.

How, then, are we to recognize the intrinsically valuable and the intrinsically disvaluable? We may, I suggest, say that a state of affairs is intrinsically good (bad) provided that an adequate answer to our question "What is it about p in virtue of which it is good (bad) that p?" fits the following formula:

It is good (bad) that p simply in virtue of the fact that p.

So that the man who has judged that it is good for Smith that he undergo certain thoracic surgery will have satisfactorily terminated our interrogation when he has finally appealed to some causal consequence of Smith's undergoing the surgery like, for example, Smith experiencing the satisfaction of being able to use his right arm again. For it is, I suggest, quite sensible to maintain that it is good that Smith experiences that satisfaction simply in virtue of the fact that he does experience it.

B. The Universalizability of Value Judgements. Whenever something has value (disvalue), there must be something about it in virtue of which it has it. However, it then appears that anything else having the same attribute must, ceteris paribus, also have value (disvalue). So that we may say that in back of our value judgements there lie certain principles of valuation.<sup>8</sup>

Suppose, for example, that a man judges that

- Q. Jones' investing in this stock is good for him.

It then becomes "logically legitimate" to ask the question "But what is it about Jones' investing in this stock in virtue of which it is good for him?" (For, consider the absurdity of maintaining that Jones' investing in this stock is good for him, but that there is nothing about his so investing in virtue of which it is good for him.) Suppose, then, that our man answers that

- R. Jones' investing in this stock is good for him in virtue of the fact that it brings about his financial prosperity.

By what may be called "the principle of universalizability," we may infer from R the principle that

- P. Whatever brings about a man's financial prosperity is, ceteris paribus, good for him.

But it then appears to be "logically legitimate" to question the principle P itself. For what, we may well ask, is it about anything of this sort in virtue of which it is good for a man?

If our man is adequately prepared to defend his judgement, then, in response to the latter question, he may say something along the following lines:

- S. Anything of this sort is good for a man in virtue of the fact that it brings about his having a happier life.

And, by applying "the principle of universalizability" to S, we may infer from it the principle that

- U. Whatever brings about a man's having a happier life is, ceteris paribus, good for him.

Need our man adduce any further reasons in support of U? It appears to me that he need not; that, rather, U constitutes an "ultimate" principle of valuation, a principle upon which our man may adequately "rest his case."<sup>9</sup>

C. Ultimate Principles of Valuation. What is the nature of our "ultimate" principles of valuation, i.e., of those principles we accept without deducing them from any further principles?

If we say that such principles can be true, and, furthermore, that they can be known to be true, then the following would appear to be that case: either such principles are analytic and hence known a priori, or synthetic and known a posteriori, or synthetic but known a priori.

May we say that such principles are analytic?

If a man denies that all bachelors are unmarried, then we can easily show him to be mistaken. For, all we need do is to point out that the correct definition of a bachelor is an unmarried man; so that the claim that there are some bachelors who are married would be contradictory.<sup>10</sup> But the case does not appear to be analogous with respect to those statements which we would wish to countenance as ultimate principles of valuation.

Suppose, for example, that a man denies the principle that "All displeasure is intrinsically bad." Can we show him to be contradicting himself? It would appear not, for we should be unable to provide an adequate definition of the term "intrinsically bad" which would render what the man says contradictory. More generally, we may say that our ultimate principles of valuation cannot be analytic, since their denials may not be said to be contradictory.<sup>11</sup>

Are our principles known a posteriori?

Suppose, for example, that a man claims to know a posteriori the principle that "All displeasure is intrinsically bad." It may then be that he claims to know his principle as a result of some induction he has undertaken. Thus, he may maintain that he has observed numerous and varied instances of displeasure and noticed that each of them was intrinsically bad. Or, it may be that our man claims to know his principle as a result of having gone out and verified numerous consequences he has deduced from his principle.

However, it appears that our man need not have observed actual cases of displeasure, or gone out and verified numerous consequences deducible from his principle, in order to have been in a position to decide whether or not all displeasure is intrinsically bad. It would have been sufficient for him to have simply thought about the various kinds of displeasure. And, mutatis mutandis, for other such principles. Thus, Professor Chisholm writes that

if we believe that charity is an invariable mark of rightness, we do not even feel the need to justify our belief by means of an inductive generalization; we do not feel the need to take samples or perform experiments. Why take the trouble to examine acts of charity to find out whether they are right? An "experiment in the imagination" will do. We need only think about various types of charitable action and if we consider all the relevant possibilities we will then be in a position to decide whether or not every act of charity is right.<sup>12</sup>

Are, then, our ultimate principles synthetic and known a priori? I do not believe that we may satisfactorily avoid an affirmative answer to this question if we are prepared to hold that such principles are knowable.

D. Value Judgements and Approval. One way of construing our value judgements, both intrinsic and extrinsic kinds, is to maintain that they have the same meaning as statements which report or assert our attitudes of approval and disapproval.<sup>13</sup> Thus, for example, we may hold that in making the judgement "Jones' undergoing the surgery is extrinsically good for him" I mean that "I (the speaker) approve of Jones' undergoing the surgery when I consider it with exclusive regard to its consequences upon him"; and that in making the judgement "Smith's torturing the cat is intrinsically bad," I mean that "I (the speaker) disapprove of Smith's torturing the cat when I disregard all of its consequences."<sup>14</sup>

If, however, we accept such an analysis of our value judgements, then we must also accept the following untenable consequences. We may find out that a given value judgement is true simply by finding out that the man who made it has a particular attitude of approval or disapproval; and that it is false simply by finding out that he does not have the attitude in question. For example, we may find out that a man's judgement that "Smith's torturing the cat is intrinsically bad" is true simply by finding out that the man in question disapproves of Smith's torturing the cat when he disregards all of its consequences; and that it is false simply by finding out that he does not so disapprove of it.<sup>15</sup>

However, consider saying, "Smith's torturing the cat is intrinsically bad, but I, in no way whatsoever, disapprove of his doing so." Indeed, if one is using words literally to make his own value judgement, then his saying this would be "logically odd." Nevertheless, it



would not, I believe, be contradictory--which would be the case if the assertive theory were true. It seems quite consistent to suppose that Smith's torturing the cat is intrinsically bad, even though I do not disapprove, in any way, of his doing so.

G. E. Moore has put our above point by distinguishing between what a man implies when he says something, and what he actually asserts. Thus, for example, he writes that

if a person were to assert that it was right of Brutus to stab Caesar, though he would be implying that, at the time of speaking, he approved, or had some similar attitude toward, this action of Brutus', yet he would not be asserting this that he would be implying, nor would this follow from anything, possibly true or false, which he was asserting. He would be implying, by saying that Brutus' action was right, that he approved of it; but he would not be saying that he did, nor would anything that he said (if anything) imply (in the sense of "entail") that he did approve of it: just as, if I say that I went to the pictures last Tuesday, I imply by saying so that I believe or know that I did, but I do not say that I believe or know this, nor does what I say, namely that I went to the pictures, imply (in the sense of "entail") that I do believe or know it.<sup>16</sup>

Analogously, we may hold that in saying that "Smith's torturing the cat is intrinsically bad" I imply, although do not actually assert, that I do, in some way, disapprove of Smith's torturing the cat. So that in saying that "Smith's torturing the cat is intrinsically bad, but I, in no way whatsoever, disapprove of his doing so" I am denying exactly what I have already implied--viz., that I do, in some way, disapprove of Smith's torturing the cat. And so too, mutatis mutandis, for other typical value judgements.<sup>17</sup>

If we take the course suggested above, then we may, I believe, do justice to the apparently justified claim that there is an intimate connection of some sort between our value judgements and our attitudes of approval and disapproval. Moreover, we may do so in a way that does not require us to accept any of the untenable consequences of the assertive theory.

E. Actions and Value Judgements. Can a man sincerely assent to a value judgement but nevertheless act contrary

to it? Suppose, for example, that a man were to judge sincerely that his undergoing certain surgery would be (extrinsically) best for him. May our man nevertheless not go through with the surgery?

Clearly, our man may conceivably not go through with it. There is nothing contradictory about supposing that he believes that his undergoing the surgery would be best for him, but (at the same time) does not go through with it.<sup>18</sup> Something may happen to prevent him from going through with it. For example, he may be overcome by an intense fear of the scalpel. Or, he may believe that he has some "overriding" reason for not doing so. Thus, for example, he may believe that, although the surgery in question would be best for him, it would also be morally objectionable.

However, in the absence of any such "extenuating" circumstances, we may, it would seem, count on our man to go through with the surgery. Indeed, it would appear "logically odd" to suppose otherwise. Consider supposing that our man sincerely believes that his undergoing the surgery would be best for him, but nevertheless (at the same time) fails to go through with it, even though he has no special reason for not doing so and nothing prevents him from it.<sup>19</sup>

What, then, is the nature of the connection between our value judgements and our actions?

One way of providing an answer to the above question is as follows. Our value judgements (or at least some of them) are "disguised commands," or they "entail" commands. Moreover, a man may not be said to sincerely assent to a command (addressed to himself) unless he is so disposed that, if he is (physically and psychologically) able to carry out the command, he will do so. And the latter, we may take it, is true by virtue of what it means to assent sincerely to such a command.<sup>20</sup>

Thus, for example, if our man sincerely assents to the judgement "My undergoing the surgery would be best for me," he will, ipso facto, sincerely assent to the command "Let me undergo the surgery." And, if he sincerely assents to the latter command, he will ipso facto, be so disposed that, if he is able to undergo the surgery, he will undergo it.

However, it would appear to be quite consistent for our man to assent sincerely to the judgement "My undergoing the surgery would be best for me" but (sincerely) to dissent from the command "Let me undergo the surgery."

He may, for example, believe that he has some "overriding" moral reason for not going through with it. We may, however, remedy this difficulty by turning the categorical command "Let me undergo the surgery" into the hypothetical command "Unless I have some special reason for not undergoing the surgery, let me undergo it." Moreover, we may then go on to say that our man will sincerely assent to the latter command only if he is so disposed that, if he has no special reason for not undergoing the surgery, and if he is able to do so, then he will undergo it.

If one accepts the above theory (or some version of it), then he may want to say that the connection between our sincere value judgements and our dispositions to act is analytic, that it is one apprehended by reflecting upon the definitions of terms. However, we may, perhaps, try to say, against such a view, that this connection is, rather, a synthetic one known a posteriori. Thus, for example, we may try to say that it is an empirical fact about human nature, and not simply a matter of definitions, that a man who thinks something best for himself will have a disposition to pursue it.

But what if, upon reflection, we find the empirical theory "counter-intuitive?" Suppose, for example, that, upon reflection, we feel that it is inconceivable, and not just contrary to experience, that a man sincerely judges that it would be best for him that p, but nevertheless does not undertake p, even though he has no special reason not to and nothing prevents him from it. And, yet, suppose that, try as we may, we are unable to come up with adequate definitions of our terms that would enable us to deduce a formal contradiction from the latter.

If we find ourselves in the above situation, then we may, perhaps, be led to say that the connection we apprehend is a synthetic one known a priori. But there may be some consolation in saying this. For one thing, we may do justice to the claim that our value judgements are "action-guiding" while remaining faithful to our "intuitions." More over, it does not require us to say that our value judgements are analyzable in terms of commands, and, therefore, that they are neither true or false.

### III. Justification Judgements

In this section we propose to show that all that we have said about value judgements may also be said, mutatis mutandis, about justification judgements.

A. The Foundational Structure of Epistemic Justification.

Suppose that a man claims that he is (epistemically) justified in believing some proposition that p; say, for example, that he is now underneath an apple tree. In such a case, it would be "logically legitimate" to ask the man for his grounds for believing that p which justify him in so believing. For, indeed, if he is justified in believing that p, then there must be such grounds.

If our man is prepared adequately to defend his justification judgement, then he may, perhaps, say the following: "What justifies me in believing that p is the fact that I now see apples hanging from branches above me." Thereby, he will have answered our above question by appealing to some further belief he holds --one about what he now sees--on the grounds of which he believes that p.

However, if our man is justified in believing that p, then he must also be justified in holding his grounds for believing that p, and in holding his grounds for holding his grounds for believing that p, and in holding his grounds for holding his grounds for holding his grounds for believing that p, and . . . . But how long must we go on?

The upshot is this. Unless we are prepared to countenance an infinite chain of justificatory grounds of belief--either a circular or linear arrangement--as that which supports the edifice of justification, then we must be prepared to say that there are beliefs a man may hold that are intrinsically justified for him--that is, we must be prepared to say that there are some beliefs a man may hold that are justified for him independently of or apart from any other beliefs he may hold.

How, then, are we to recognize the intrinsically justified? In his book, Theory of Knowledge, Professor Chisholm has suggested a formula for discerning "the directly evident" which provides us with the epistemic analogue of our formula for discerning the intrinsically valuable. For, he tells us there that the justification of a directly evident proposition can be stated simply by reiterating it: such a proposition, he says, fits the formula "What justifies me in counting it as evident that a is F is simply the fact that a is F."<sup>21</sup> Perhaps, then, we may say that an intrinsically justified belief is one whose justification is given simply by reiterating it.

So that the man who has judged that he is (epistemically) justified in believing that he is now underneath an apple tree may satisfactorily terminate our

interrogation of his grounds of belief by appealing to some belief he holds that fits the above formula. For example, perhaps he may terminate it by appealing to his belief that he seems to see apples hanging from branches above him. For, it would seem quite sensible for one to maintain that what justifies him in believing that he seems to see apples hanging from branches above him is simply the fact that he does seem to see them.

B. The Universalizability of Justification Judgements. We have seen that, whenever a man is justified in believing some proposition p, he must have some grounds for believing that p which justify him in believing it (although, in the case of the intrinsically justified, the belief and its grounds will be the same). However, it then appears that anyone else who has those (qualitatively) same grounds for believing that p will, ceteris paribus, also be justified in believing that p. So that we may say that in back of our justification judgements there lie certain principles of justification.

Suppose, for example, that an individual S judges thusly:

- J. I (S) am justified in believing that  
all K are F.

It then becomes "logically legitimate" for us to ask S what it is that justifies him in believing that all K are F. (For consider the absurdity of maintaining that S is justified in believing that all K are F, but that there is nothing that justifies him in believing it.)

Suppose that S's response is as follows:

- L. What justifies me in believing that  
all K are F is the fact that I have,  
in my vast and varied experience,  
encountered innumerable cases of K  
and never any that were not F.

Now, at this point, we may question S's grounds for believing that all K are F. Thus, for example, we may ask him "What justifies you in thinking that the cases you claim to have encountered were all cases of K, and that none of them were not F?" And, perhaps, we may then go on to question the grounds S has for holding his grounds for believing that all K are F, and then the grounds he has for holding his grounds for holding his grounds for believing that all K are F; and so on, until S finally appeals to some intrinsically justified belief, i.e., one for which he needs no independent grounds.

However, there is a different line of interrogation that we may take. By what may be called "the principle of universalizability" we may infer from L the principle that

- M. Whoever has, in his vast and varied experience, encountered innumerable cases of K and never any that were not F is, ceteris paribus, justified in believing that all K are F.

And, we can then go on to ask S for his justification for believing the principle M itself. Why, we may ask, is it that whoever has, in his vast and varied experience, encountered innumerable cases of K and never any that were not F is, ceteris paribus, justified in believing that all K are F?

If S is cooperative, he may, I suggest, sensibly respond to the above question by saying something along the following lines:

- N. Any such individual is justified in believing that all K are F in virtue of the fact that he has strong inductive grounds for believing it.

And, by applying "the principle of universalizability" to N we may infer from it the still further principle that

- O. Whoever has strong inductive grounds for believing something is, ceteris paribus, justified in believing it.

Need S adduce any further reasons in support of O? It would appear not; that, rather, O constitutes an "ultimate" principle of justification, a principle upon which S may adequately "rest his case."<sup>22</sup>

C. Ultimate Principles of Epistemic Justification. What is the nature of our "ultimate" principles of justification, i.e. of those principles we accept without deducing them from any further principles?

It may, perhaps, be tempting to say that those principles we should wish to countenance as ultimate principles of justification--or at least some of them--are analytic. For example, it may be tempting to say that the principle that "It is reasonable (or prima facie reasonable) for a man to believe a proposition if he has strong inductive grounds for believing it" is analytic.<sup>23</sup>

However, if the above-mentioned principle were analytic, then its denial would be contradictory. But the latter does not seem to be the case. Suppose, for example, a man were to maintain that one is reasonable in believing something only if the grounds upon which he believes it entail that what he believes is true. In such a case, the man in question would be committed to denying our principle of inductive justification. But, although we might criticize him for being too rigid in his theory about what counts as reasonable belief, we could not, it seems, accuse him of contradicting himself. Moreover, mutatis mutandis, the same thing seems true of any other principle we should wish to countenance as an ultimate principle of justification.

Are, then, such principles known to us posteriori? If so, then it may be that they are known to us inductively. For example, it may be that we know the principle that "If there is a state of mind such that a man believes that he is currently in it, then he is justified in so believing" as a result of having observed numerous and varied beliefs about current mental states, and having noticed that each such belief was justified. Or, perhaps it is that we know the latter principle as a result of having verified numerous consequences that we have deduced from it.

However, it hardly seems necessary that we observe actual cases of beliefs about current mental states, or that we go about verifying numerous consequences deducible from our principle, in order to be in a position to decide whether or not all beliefs about current mental states are justified. It seems sufficient for us simply to think about such beliefs and the circumstances in which they may conceivably occur. Indeed, if we can think of a single counterinstance to the principle that all beliefs of this sort are justified, then we shall be in a position to reject that principle. We need not actually go out and find a disconfirming instance. And, mutatis mutandis, so too for other such principles.

May we say, then, that our ultimate principles of justification are synthetic and known a priori? As in the case of our ultimate principles of valuation, I do not believe that we may satisfactorily avoid an affirmative answer to this question if we are prepared to hold that such principles are knowable.

D. Epistemic Approval. If we approach the theory of justification in the same way in which some philosophers have approached the theory of value, then we may say that our justification judgements have the same meaning as statements which report or assert our attitudes of epistemic approval and disapproval. Thus, for example,

we may hold that in making the judgement that "Jones is unjustified in believing that p" I mean that "I (the speaker) epistemically disapprove of Jones' believing that p"; and that in making the judgement that "Smith is intrinsically justified in believing that p" I mean that "I (the speaker) epistemically approve of Smith's believing that p when I disregard all other beliefs Smith holds."

However, if the above theory is right, then we may find out, for example, that my judgement that "Jones is unjustified in believing that p" is true simply by finding out that I epistemically disapprove of Jones' believing that p; and that my judgement that "Smith is intrinsically justified in believing that p" is true simply by finding out that I epistemically approve of Smith's believing that p when I disregard all other beliefs Smith holds. But, indeed, we should hardly want to say that the truth of such judgements (and, mutatis mutandis, their falsehood) is ever found out in this way.

But, although in making a justification judgement a man may not be reporting or asserting any attitude of approval or disapproval, he may nevertheless be implying one. Consider, for example, my saying that "Jones is unjustified in believing that p, but I, in no way whatsoever, disapprove of his believing it." Indeed, if I am using words literally to make my own justification judgement, then my saying this would appear "logically odd"; for, in saying it, I would seem to be denying exactly what I am already implying--viz., that I do, in some way, disapprove of Jones' believing that p. Although, I should not be saying anything contradictory--it may be that Jones is unjustified in believing that p, and I do not, in any way whatsoever, disapprove of his believing it.

We need not, however, suppose that in saying, for example, that "Jones is unjustified in believing that p," I am implying that I, in every way, disapprove of Jones' believing that p. For example, there would not, it seems, be anything "logically odd" about my telling you that Jones is (epistemically) unjustified in believing that p, but that I do not morally disapprove of his so believing--i.e., that I do not disapprove of it when I consider only its "moral" aspects. Nevertheless, there would, it seems, be something "logically odd" about my telling you that Jones is (epistemically) unjustified in believing that p, but that I do not epistemically disapprove of his so believing--i.e., that I do not disapprove of it when I consider only its "epistemic" aspects.



E. Beliefs and Justification Judgements. Can a man sincerely assent to a justification judgement, but never the less believe contrary to it? Suppose, for example, that a man has very strong inductive evidence that his wife is an adulteress; on the basis of which he sincerely assents to the judgement "It is (epistemically) reasonable for me to believe that my wife is an adulteress." May our man nevertheless fail to believe that his wife is an adulteress?

Clearly, our man may conceivably not believe it. There is nothing contradictory about supposing that he sincerely thinks it reasonable for him to believe that his wife is an adulteress, but (at the same time) does not believe that she is one. It may be, for example, that our man is psychologically unable to accept that his wife is unfaithful to him. Or, he may think that he has some "overriding" reason for not believing it. He may, for example, believe that one's believing such a thing about one's wife would be morally wrong.

However, in the absence of any such "extenuating" circumstances, we may, it would seem, count on our man to believe it. Indeed, it would appear "logically odd" to suppose otherwise. Consider supposing that our man sincerely assents to the judgement that "It is reasonable for me to believe that my wife is an adulteress," but nevertheless (at the same time) fails to believe that she is one, even though he has no special reason for not believing so and it is in his power to do so.

What, then, is the nature of the connection between our justification judgements and our beliefs?

If we approach the theory of justification in the same way in which some philosophers have approached the theory of value, then we may say the following. Our justification judgements (or at least some of them) are "disguised commands" to believe something, or they "entail" such commands. Moreover, a man may not be said to assent sincerely to such a command (addressed to himself) unless he is so disposed that, if he is (physically and psychologically) able to carry out the command, he will do so. And the latter, we may take it, is true by virtue of what it means to assent sincerely to such a command.

Thus, for example, if our man sincerely assents to the judgement "It is reasonable for me to believe that my wife is an adulteress," he will, ipso facto, sincerely assent to the command "Let me believe that my wife is an adulteress." And, if he sincerely assents to the latter command, he will, ipso facto, be so disposed

that, if he is able to believe that his wife is an adulteress, he will do so.

However, it would appear to be quite consistent for our man to sincerely assent to the judgement "It is reasonable for me to believe that my wife is an adulteress" but sincerely dissent from the command "Let me believe that my wife is an adulteress." He may, for example, believe that he has some "overriding" moral reason for not believing it. We may, however, remedy this difficulty by turning the categorical command "Let me believe that my wife is an adulteress" into the hypothetical command "Unless I have some special reason for not believing that my wife is an adulteress, let me believe that she is one." Moreover, we may then go on to say that our man will sincerely assent to the latter command only if he is so disposed that, if he has no special reason for not believing that his wife is an adulteress, and if he is able to do so, then he will believe it.

If one accepts the above theory (or some version of it), then he may wish to maintain that the connection between our sincere justification judgements and our dispositions to act is analytic, that it is one apprehended by reflecting upon the definitions of terms. However, we may, perhaps, try to say, against such a view, that this connection is, rather, a synthetic one known a posteriori. Thus, for example, we may try to say that it is an empirical fact about human nature, and not simply a matter of definitions, that a man who thinks it reasonable for him to believe something will have a disposition to do so.

But, what if, upon reflection, we find the empirical theory "counter-intuitive"? Suppose, for example, that, upon reflection, we find it inconceivable, and not just contrary to experience, that a man sincerely judges that it is reasonable for him to believe something, but nevertheless does not believe it, even though he has no special reason for not doing so and it is in his power to do so. And, yet, suppose that, try as we may, we are unable to come up with adequate definitions of our terms that would enable us to deduce a formal contradiction from the latter.

Should we not then be led to say that the connection we apprehend is a synthetic one known a priori? If we do say this, then we may countenance the "belief-guidingness" of our justification judgements without betraying our "intuitions." Moreover, it does not commit us to saying that our justification judgements are analyzable in terms of commands, and, hence, to the absurdity that they are neither true nor false.

If our justification judgements are "belief-guiding," then, like our value judgements, so too are they "action-guiding." For, no one can reasonably doubt that our beliefs themselves guide our actions--or, for that matter, that believing itself may be an action. "Nor is that truly a belief at all which has not some influence upon the actions of him who holds it . . . . If a belief is not realized immediately in open deeds, it is stored up for the guidance of the future."<sup>24</sup>

#### IV. Conclusion

We have seen that the central questions about value may be raised, mutatis mutandis, about justification; and that their answers appear to follow suit. Moreover, we have seen that our justification judgements have truth-values.

May we also say that our value judgements have truth-values? Once the analogy with justification judgements is grasped, and it is conceded that justification judgements have truth-values, I do not believe that we may sensibly avoid an affirmative answer to the latter question. Indeed, it would appear that, if our justification judgements are "epistemically respectable," then so too are our value judgements.

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## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> *Mutatis mutandis*, so too may we say that there are criteria for validating or establishing the truth of other sorts of judgement about value, as well as criteria for validating or establishing the truth of the various sorts of judgement about disvalue.

<sup>2</sup> Alfred Jules Ayer, Language, Truth and Logic (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1952), pp. 108-9. See also (e.g.) Rudolf Carnap, "The Physical Language as the Universal Language of Science," reprinted in Readings in Twentieth Century Philosophy, ed. William P. Alston and George Nakhnikian (New York: The Free Press, 1963), p. 430.

<sup>3</sup> For convenience, we take the term "value judgement" to include also judgements about disvalue.

<sup>4</sup> Some philosophers formulate this condition of knowledge differently. For example, Alfred J. Ayer formulates it in terms of having "the right to be sure" in The Problem of Knowledge (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1971), pp. 31-35; Roderick M. Chisholm formulates it in terms of something being "evident" for someone in Theory of Knowledge (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1966), p. 23, and in terms of having "adequate evidence" for something in Perceiving: A Philosophical Study (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1969), p. 16:

<sup>5</sup> "... the phrase 'is true' is not descriptive at all. . . . It is correct to say that utterances of any kind are true or false, if it is correct usage to signify agreement or disagreement with such utterances by means of the expressions 'true' or 'false'." P. F. Strawson, "Truth," Analysis, 9.6 (1949), p. 94. Compare also J. L. Austin's treatment of "I know" in "Other Minds," Philosophical Papers, ed. J. O. Urmson and G. J. Warnock (London: Oxford University Press, 1970), pp. 99, 103.

<sup>6</sup> Compare J. L. Austin, "Truth," Philosophical Papers, p. 133; John R. Searle, Speech Acts (London: Cambridge University Press, 1974), pp. 138-39; John R. Searle, "Meaning and Speech Acts," Philosophical Review, 71 (1962), 423-32; R. M. Hare, "Meaning and Speech Acts," Practical Inferences (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972), pp. 74-93.

<sup>7</sup> Or, he must hold that the negation of something entailed by q is bad for S. Thus, for example, he may claim that it is good for S that he undergo the surgery in virtue of the fact that it brings about S's not suffering greatly in the future.

<sup>8</sup> . . . giving a reason for any action involves reference (explicit or implicit) to a rule, maxim or principle . . . a reason cannot be a reason on just this occasion, and not on other similar occasions, any more than a rule of inference can apply in this case, but not in similar cases." R. M. Hare, "Universalizability," Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, 55 (1954-55), p. 297.

<sup>9</sup> Compare St. Thomas Aquinas' treatment of "the natural law": ". . . there belong to the natural law, first, certain most general precepts, that are known to all; and secondly, certain secondary and more detailed precepts, which are, as it were, conclusions following closely from first principles. As to those general principles, the natural law, in the abstract, can nowise be blotted out from men's hearts." Summa Theologica, 1. 11, Q. 94, a. 6. Compare also C. I. Lewis, An Analysis of Knowledge and Valuation (La Salle, Ill.: Open Court, 1971), pp. 411-12.

<sup>10</sup> In saying that the latter statement is contradictory we mean that a statement of the form  $p \ \bar{e} \ -p$  is deducible from it solely by the use of logic and the definition of the term "bachelor."

<sup>11</sup> "A man who is morally perverse may affirm that a certain act is an act of charity and yet deny that it is right. We may condemn his moral judgement; but we would not condemn his logic, as we would if he were to deny that some squares are rectangles." Roderick M. Chisholm, Perceiving: A Philosophical Study, p. 97.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 99.

<sup>13</sup> We shall refer to the latter thesis as the assertive theory.

<sup>14</sup> Compare C. L. Stevenson's analysis of the locutions "X is intrinsically good (bad)" and "X is extrinsically good (bad)" in Ethics and Language (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1944), pp. 177-78.

<sup>15</sup> Compare R. M. Chisholm, Perceiving: A Philosophical Study, pp. 107-8; G. E. Moore, "A Reply to My Critics," in The Philosophy of G. E. Moore, ed. Paul Arthur Schilpp (La Salle Ill.: Open Court, 1968), Vol. 2, p. 541;

C. L. Stevenson, Facts and Values (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967), pp. 210-14; Paul Edwards, The Logic of Moral Discourse (New York: The Free Press, 1955), p. 148.

<sup>16</sup>G. E. Moore, "A Reply to My Critics," The Philosophy of G. E. Moore, Vol. 2, p. 541. Compare also P. H. Nowell-Smith's concept of "contextual implication" in Ethics (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1969), pp. 80-81; and J. L. Austin, "Performative Utterances," Philosophical Papers, pp. 248-49.

<sup>17</sup>Our thesis here is restricted to affirmative categorical indicative value judgements. But perhaps not all value judgements of this sort are such that, in making them, a man implies his approval--or implies his disapproval. For example, it would not be quite right to hold that in saying "The sun's rising tomorrow will be good for mankind" a man implies his approval of the sun's rising tomorrow. For, the sun's rising tomorrow does not seem to be the sort of thing which a man may approve of. For an analysis of "proper objects of approval," see George Pitcher, "On Approval," Philosophical Review, 67 (1958), pp. 196-202.

<sup>18</sup>Compare Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics, Book 7.

<sup>19</sup>"If a man says that a proposal is a good one and holds up his hands with the Noes, he is making a logical mistake. But this is not because there is an analytic connexion between calling something 'good' and voting for it. He is not contradicting himself if he can produce special reasons for his apparently inconsistent behaviour . . . . But in default of such special reasons, his audience is entitled to infer that he would vote for it and not against it." P. H. Nowell-Smith, Ethics, p. 99.

<sup>20</sup>Compare R. M. Hare, The Language of Morals (London: Oxford University Press, 1969), pp. 19-20, 168-69; R. M. Hare, Freedom and Reason (London: Oxford University Press, 1970), pp. 77-79.

<sup>21</sup>Roderick M. Chisholm, Theory of Knowledge, p. 28.

<sup>22</sup>Compare John L. Pollock's notion of a "logical reason" for someone to believe something in Knowledge and Justification (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1974), p. 34.

<sup>23</sup>It is an analytic proposition that it is reasonable to have a degree of belief in a statement which is proportional to the strength of the evidence in its favour; and it is an analytic proposition, though not a proposition of mathematics, that, other things being equal, the evidence for a generalization is strong in proportion as the number of favourable instances, and the variety of circumstances in which they have been found, are great. So, to ask whether it is reasonable to place reliance on inductive procedures is like asking whether it is reasonable to proportion the degree of one's convictions to the strength of the evidence. Doing this is what 'being reasonable' means in such a context." P. F. Strawson, "The Justification of Induction, in Human Understanding: Studies in the Philosophy of David Hume, ed. Alexander Sesonske and Noel Fleming (Belmont, Cal.: Wadsworth Publishing Co., Inc., 1968), pp. 79-80.

<sup>24</sup>W. K. Clifford, "The Ethics of Belief," in The Ethics of Belief and Other Essays, ed. Leslie Stephen and Sir Frederick Pollock (London: Watts & Co., 1947), p. 73.