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This thesis – entitled –

" THE   STRUCTURE   OF   MORAL ACTION

As it is Given in the Experience

of   Moral Approval

(A Descriptive Analysis) "

is submitted for the degree of Bachelor of Philosophy
of the University of St.Andrews
by me,

Harald Delius, Dr.phil.(Göttingen).

1st   March   1952

Decalartion.

I declare that the thesis is a record of research work carried out be me, that the thesis is my own composition, and that it has not been presented previously for any other degree.

The research was carried out in the Department of Moral Philosophy of the University of St.Andrews under the direction of: Mr John Kemp, M.A.

<u>"Certificate by the Advisor of Studies"</u>

This is to certify that the conditions of Ordinance No.40 and the Regulations for the presentation of this thesis have been fulfilled.

Signed

_____
(Advisor of Studies)

THE STRUCTURE OF MORAL ACTION

As it is Given in the Experience
of Moral Approval

A Descriptive Analysis

C o n t e n t s

PART III. PHENOMENOLOGY AND ETHICS

N o t e:-

In the text of this paper the following signs will
be used:

1. <u>Underlining</u> (as in: <u>moral</u> value), indicating that
   a word or sentence holds a position of particular
   relevance within the context (as is often, in print,
   indicated by italics).

2. <u>Simple inverted commas</u> (as in: the 'cognitive' act),
   indicating

   a) words or phrases taken as a philosophical term
      the special meaning of which has been, or will be,
      made clear in the course of the paper;

   b) collections of words used to describe a single
      and unitary feature of some phenomenon;

   c) quotations within quotations.

3. <u>Double inverted commas</u> (as in: the word "approval"),
   indicating

   a) Quotations from books, standard terminologies, or
      common usage;

   b) direct speech, or phrases as they would occur in
      direct speech;

   c) pseudo-applications of words, i.e. their use in
      contexts in which they do not "properly" belong.

The use of signs as explained in 2.a and 3.c may be
dropped after a term has been introduced, or reintro-
duced, by them.

Preface

    With regard to the method used in this paper
I am indebted above all to Edmund Husserl; with
regard to contemporary systematic research in ethics
to Nicolai Hartmann, G.E.Moore, Sir David Ross, Max
Scheler, and – with a view to the discussion of
moral personality – especially to Kurt Stavenhagen.
I am also indebted, in methodological as well as in
systematical respects, to A.J.Ayer and Gilbert Ryle
for that particularly valuable stimulus which we
receive from those with whom we disagree.

I. METHODOLOGICAL INTRODUCTION.

1) Ethics and the Notion of Fact.

Writings in the field of ethics may be divided into
four classes. While (a) some are concerned to answer the
question "What ought we to do?" by arriving through pro-
cesses of reasoning at some basic formal or material
principle, others (b) try to show that this and similar
questions and all possible answers to them are devoid of
meaning; some again (c) confine themselves to pointing
out and describing what they consider to be the avail-
able fact material in this field; and still others (d)
are content to ruminate on the multifarious views that
have been advanced and facts that have been pointed out,
to weigh them carefully against each other, and to ex-
pose the difficulties which apparently none of the
theories can avoid encountering. Without attributing
any importance to the choice of terms one might name
the first of these classes (a) 'constructive', the
second (b) 'sceptical', the third (c) 'descriptive',
and the fourth (d) 'contemplative'. Although no book
on ethics is likely to belong to one of these classes
only, it will always be possible to say with respect
to its parts of which of these classes each of them is
a member.

The characteristics of ethical writings according
to which such a classification can be made are the ways
in which they are concerned with "the facts". (a) Con-
structive writers either introduce "facts" by way of
reasoning (e.g. Kant introduces the "moral law" as

"Faktum der Vernunft" 1)), or they derive moral pre-
scriptions or rules - which themselves cannot be pro-
perly called "facts" - from certain facts (e.g. from
the fact that human beings desire certain things, or
that certain states of affairs are pleasant). (b)
Sceptical authors are concerned with facts by way of
denying some of them altogether and by doubting the
ethical relevance of others (so the "fact" that there
is an "intuition" or "cognition" of moral obligations
or values is denied; the facts that people feel certain
claims to act in certain ways are deprived of ethical
relevance; they are said to be results of "habit",
"education", etc.). (c) Descriptive investigation in
the field of ethics has the sole function of registering
and describing whatever facts there can be found in
"moral experience". (d) Into the contemplative con-
sideration facts enter in many ways, either strengthen-
ing or weakening the positions discussed, according to
the extent to which they have received attention or
have been neglected by the respective writers.

It appears from such a consideration that "facts",
which in some way or other form the (often the only)
subject-matter of every branch of empirical research,
hold a central position in ethical research also, how-
ever much it may be necessary (though, perhaps, not
possible) to transcend them in order to "pass from
factual reasons to an ethical conclusion" 2). According-
ly it is the descriptive part of ethical research,
concerned with the nature of the facts only and not

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1) "Kritik der praktischen Vernunft", ed.Kehrbach; p.37.
2) cf.Stephen Toulmin, "The Place of Reason in Ethics"
   (1950); p.4.

anxious to reach certain conclusions about them, which
must be given a basic place within the array of all the
other possible activities in this field. This is all
the more the case as even the existence of these facts
is still the object of continual controversy. It is
maintained by some that the occurrences in question do
not deserve the name "facts" at all, if this concept is
taken in the sense which it has in the empirical sciences.
A short elucidation of the concept "fact" will, therefore,
be necessary in order to substantiate the view just ad-
vanced that description holds a basic place in all
ethical research.

Even in the empirical sciences (e.g.chemistry) the
word "fact" is not unequivocal. First of all it stands
for all individual (hic et nunc) occurrences which are
given as independent of any investigator observing them.
In the second place it is often employed to denote what
is generally called a "law (of nature)". Thus we speak
of the "fact" that hydrogen and oxygen are liberated
when an electric current is passed through water. What
is meant by "fact" in this sense cannot be found, as it
could in the first case, in any single occurrence of the
observable world. The term "fact" here stands for an
"abstraction" from many single cases (the "facts" in the
first sense). "Fact" also often stands for what we may
call a "statistical fact". Thus one refers to "the fact
that the population of Dundee in 1931 was 175,000".
This, too, is a fact not open to any direct inspection.
But it shares the characteristics of the other two: to
be independent of any person observing it or of any of
his activities employed to assess it. This element,
I think, is the essential criterion which determines
our wider use of the word "fact". It is, however, clear

that not all of the occurrences denoted by this term can
be objects of description. All those, for example, which
have been arrived at by any process of reasoning (e.g.
inference, statistical calculus) are not capable of being
described, for the condition for an object to be des
scribable is the self-presence and immediate accessibi-
lity of it. We cannot describe anything which is not
itself present in our field of attention. And of all the
facts so far reviewed only the occurrences denoted by
"fact" in its first sense fulfil this condition.

When talking of facts in the field of ethics it is
first of all this type of facts that we have in mind.
We think, for instance, of the particular moral expe-
riences which people have, the reactions they evince
when certain things happen to them, or the judgements
they formulate on certain occasions. In the present
paper it is the experience of 'moral approval' which
will be in the focus of attention and, through it, the
'structure of moral action' in so far as it forms the
object of that experience. Such descriptions of the
"facts of moral experience" have been frequently under-
taken, introspectively, behaviouristically, in the
"common sense" fashion, or even as a linguistic account
of what people would say and what they would not usually
say. Of many of these descriptions, especially of the
instrospective ones, we have come now to be very sus-
picious. We know that they are influenced by the re-
spective viewpoints of the describing persons. Some
philosophers even hold that the old concept of "de-
scribing facts" is altogether spurious, and that when
people thought they had discovered something about
facts by describing them they have, in fact, only dis-

covered something about the way in which they use the
words employed in that description. In any case, the
naive faith in description as an elementary means in
philosophy of assessing "what is" has gone or, at least,
is deeply shaken. For this reason a new attempt to do
descriptive work in ethics requires justification. And
as the matter is involved and pregnant with possible
misunderstandings a somewhat detailed preliminary dis-
course cannot be avoided.

2) Forms of Understanding.

When embarking on a course of scientific or philo-
sophical enquiry it is well to bear in mind the scope
of methods and the range of possible achievements that
are relevant to the special subject under discussion.
A botanist, wanting to know whether a special plant will
be affected by a certain fungus or not, will infect the
plant with the fungus and can then expect a negative or
positive answer to his clearly put question. Someone
who does not understand why the expression "$(a+b)^2$" should
be equivalent to "$a^2+2ab+b^2$" knows that the discovery of
an intermediate step will supply him with that under-
standing. If I am puzzled by my friend's refusal to
come to a certain party, I know that I need enquire in-
to the motives of his behaviour in order to solve the
puzzle. And if the intention should be to ascertain the
substance and formation of other heavenly bodies, tele-
scopes, spectral analysis, and the like will be the
means to apply, and an account of their substance and
formation is the possible result.

In all these cases not only are different objects

of knowledge concerned, but, what is more, different
types of knowledge are intended. The botanist's and
the astronomer's activities aim at a factual (asserto-
ric) knowledge of what is the case and, also, of what
are the conditions for something to be the case. A per-
son doing algebra expects a different kind of knowledge,
namely an (apodictic) knowledge of certain a priori
formal implications and relations. And somebody who
desires to understand another person's behaviour, or
somebody who wishes to understand a certain utensil
which is unintelligible to him, will gain a particular
sort of insight as soon as he learns about the motive
"behind" that behaviour - or the function of the utensil
- which is not comparable to either the scientist's or
the mathematician's sort of knowledge. I propose, for
present purposes, to call this last type of knowledge
'hermeneutical understanding' 3), while the scientist's
understanding may be called 'causal' (or, in cases
where no interest in causal laws is involved, simply
'factual'), and that of the mathematician 'formal'.

By calling all three of these types of knowledge
an 'understanding' I want to draw attention to the
feature which all of them have in common. This feature,
upon which I shall presently enlarge, is the essential
constituent of all understanding, or, to put it in a
different fashion: wherever we encounter this feature
we find it adequate to speak of our "understanding"
something. (It may be remarked in parenthesis that

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3) In this sense the term was used for the first time
by Wilhelm Dilthey (cf. "Werke", V,1; ed. by G.Misch).
It has been taken up by other continental philoso-
phers, notably by Hans Lipps and Martin Heidegger.

when now investigating 'understanding' in general and, later, different forms of it in particular, I am concerned exclusively with a person's experience of 'understanding something' and its differentiations; not with the word "understanding", or with any rules for its usage. For an attempt to clarify the difficulties here involved see chapter 3,c of this part). A preliminary outline of the various forms of understanding will provide us with a wider setting in which to place and make clear the partichlar kind of knowledge aimed at in the present paper.

Generally speaking all understanding is 'understanding of <u>something as something</u>' 4). That is to say: to understand something (A) is to apprehend a relation between it and something else (B) in such a way that our knowledge of B (partially or totally) 'explains' A. Such an 'explanatory' relation between B and A I take to obtain wherever the fact that B is what it is (partially or totally) conditions (makes possible, calls into being) the fact that A is what it is. Or, to put it negatively: wherever the fact that B is not the case conditions that A (or part of A) is not, or is different from, what it would have been if B had been the case. This notion of 'A being conditioned by B' must be taken in the widest possible meaning, and it must by no means be mistaken for a 'causal' relation between A and B. A causal relation - or, at any rate, what in traditional terminology we still call a "causal relation", such as the relation between an electric current going through

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4) The first explicit mention of this structure was made by Martin Heidegger in "Sein und Zeit" (1927); pp.150ff.

a wire and the ringing of a bell - is only one case of
such conditioning and, as will appear later, not a very
relevant one in the present context. It is to be noticed
that both A and B are facts of some complexity, i.e.
they always consist of more than what would be described
by only one "atomic" expression. 'A', for instance,
could never just be what is meant by "red" or "dog".
It has to be at least a conjunction of two such ex-
pressions. If, for example, a red colour quale 5) were
located at a particular place (e.g."there is a red colour
quale on the ceiling") this would be enough to permit of
the question "Why is there a red colour quale on the
ceiling?", for which an explanatory answer may be ob-
tained by adducing some B, for instance: "Because the
sun is reflected by the edge of that mirror.". This
answer would inform us of the fact B which conditions
- in this case 'causally' - the occurrence and nature
of A. Thus an understanding would take place: A would
be understood as caused by B.

A different, non-causal, form of conditioning we
have in cases of 'formal understanding'. Someone reads
"$(a+b)^2$"(B1)"=$a^2+2ab+b^2$"(A), or "No S is P"(B1) and
"M is not P"(A), and fails to see the connection between
B1 and A, i.e. he does not understand why A is what it
is ("how it follows"). Then an intermediate expression

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5) The term "quale" may here be introduced to signify a
   quality which is not attached to any particular ob-
   ject in the physical world, being attached either to
   no object at all, or to objects of a non-physical
   kind. It will be found convenient, later, to be able
   to make this terminological distinction between "qua-
   lity" and "quale", though, of course, the latter only
   expresses specifically one of the meanings connoted
   by the first term.

is inserted: "(a+b)(a+b)"(B2) or "M is S"(B2), respectively. Hereupon an understanding takes place; a connection is established which enables us to understand A _as_ following from (being equivalent to, being implied by, etc.) B. Here two sets of (formal) "facts" are related to each other after the most intelligible manner. The conditioning is a total one and, accordingly, it affords us a complete (formal) understanding of the relations in point.

Again, a different form of dependency between A and B holds in cases of hermeneutical understanding. Asking (being puzzled about, desiring to understand) why person X suddenly refuses to come to a picnic party, I may be informed by Y (who knows X well) that X refuses to come because Z will also be at that party and X hates Z. This answer enables me to understand X's behaviour (A) _as_ being an adequate consequence (expression) of his hatred against Z (B). Similarly, when someone encounters a peculiar instrument (A), obviously designed by a human being, which he cannot understand (i.e. the function or purpose of which he does not know), full understanding will be provided as soon as he becomes acquainted with this function (B). In both these cases the relations of conditioning differ distinctly from the 'causal' as well as from the 'formal' understanding. They are teleological or motivative relations, and as such they are only found in connection with human beings qua conscious agents. Yet the formal characteristic which was predicated of all understanding also holds in these cases: a fact (or set of facts) B conditions a fact (or set of facts) A such that the knowledge of B renders A (partially or totally) intelligible.

Having thus sweepingly characterised the general
structure to be found in all these experiences of under-
standing, let us now examine the respects in which the
three forms so far sketched differ from each other.
I begin by contrasting the 'causal' and the 'hermeneu-
tical' understanding. It has been shown that in both
cases a given fact A is made intelligible by the dis-
covery of another fact B which is somehow related to A.
In the case of causal understanding we called this rela-
tion a 'causal' one. Thus in the case of a colour quale
appearing on a ceiling (fact A) the explanation was
found in the reflection of sun-rays in a.mirror (fact B).
In which way does the knowledge of B here render A in-
telligible? What we usually experience in cases like
this is a certain satisfaction: our question is answered;
our puzzle solved; for now we know why the quale is there.
Most people who are satisfied by the answer "Because
rays of sun are reflected etc." do not know nearly
enough physics and physiology to know all the processes
involved in the occurrence of that colour quale. And
even if they did have such knowledge it would necessari-
ly remain incomplete, and there would always be gaps
which are not bridged by insight and which would inter-
rupt the chain of understanding "why". But when people
ask "How is it that there is a red colour quale there?"
they do not really want any thotough knowledge of the
processes involved. What they desire is to be able to
place the present fact into a framework of familiar
occurrences, and thus eventually to understand it as
a familiar occurrence itself. Suppose the colour quale
oscillates rapidly on the ceiling of the room. Then
people in that room will be at pains to detect the

"cause" of this phenomenon, and that is: to recognise
it as one of the things which do usually happen and
with which everybody is familiar (such as the reflec-
tion of light). They will not cease to be very puzzled
and restless until they have traced a bowl of water re-
flecting the sun, or something else of this kind, to
which (by a short experiment) the phenomenon can be
ascribed. What is desired in such 'causal' why-ques-
tions is, to put it generally, the recognition of a
fact A as a case of a known fact B. And fact B in these
cases has the nature of a law, as, for instance, is ex-
pressed in statements like "A ray of light on striking
a plain reflecting surface is reflected at an angle
equal to the angle of incidence". No-one is ever sur-
prised that a stone falls to the ground when thrown in-
to the air, for this is a well known occurrence. But
is it in any way intelligible? Do we understand why the
stone does behave in this way? It might be suggested
that such understanding could be obtained from physi-
cists; but this is not so. What they do is to trace
the fact that stones (and other things) fall, to other
(law-)facts, for instance to the fact that masses
attract each other. However far this process may be
driven, it is always bound to arrive at some last fact
(law) which is then supposed to be basic, but which is
a factual occurrence like all the others, and as such
altogether unintelligible.

My conclusion is, then, that the causal understanding
which scientists provide us with is a very peculiar form
of understanding. The relations established by their
explanations are relations between an (hitherto) unknown
or unexperienced case (A) and an already known and con-

firmed law (B), such that A is "explained" when it is
recognised as an instance of B (or set of B's). When
this happens people (including the scientists themselves)
are apt to feel that A is made intelligible and that now
they understand it. But actually no intelligibility has
been procured from B for A, for B itself is not intelli-
gible, nor are any of the possible further laws that may
be employed in the explanation. To reduce something
hitherto unknown to something already known, is not to
render it intelligible. The understanding provided by
scientific explanation is not understanding in the sense
of discovering something as intelligible or self-evident.
And while it is 'understanding' in the sense so far
used, it will not be 'understanding' if we restrict the
meaning of this word, as I now suggest we do, to cases
where something is rendered intelligible by an explana-
tion. 'Causal understanding' would then turn out to be
a pseudo-understanding. For although, in fact, causal
explanation only relates the unknown and unintelligible
to the known (but also unintelligible), we are often
inclined to feel that intelligibility is secured by this
explanation. This is, of course, an observation imma-
terial to our present examination of forms of understand-
ing. It would, however, be interesting for the psycho-
logist to investigate, once the various forms of under-
standing have been clearly distinguished, the ways in
which people tend to confuse some of these forms.

Turning now to cases of hermeneutical understanding
it will be seen at once that they are very different.
The unintelligible behaviour (A) of a certain person is
explained when we become acquainted with his motive (B).
Through this explanation A becomes thoroughly intelligi-

ble. And this time it is genuine intelligibility which
is answered by genuine understanding. The relation
which provides this understanding is one between 'motive'
(B) and 'action'(A). The particular character of this
relation has often been noticed, although, more often,
it has been mistaken for a form of a causal relation.
It has been supposed that a motive (and 'motive' may be
called every feeling, desire, thought, image, or any
combination of these, as soon as it becomes the reason
for a certain activity, or attempt at an activity, of
an agent) is the cause of the resulting behaviour. But
it has often been shown that this is plainly wrong in
that it carelessly imposes a pattern, taken from a cer-
tain type of phenomenon, upon another type the nature
of which is thus distorted. It is probably possible to
discuss whether a system of causal relations underlies,
or determines (whatever that may mean), all our activi-
ties. But such a discussion does not belong to this
context, and its results would have no bearing on the
present examination. For we are concerned to find out
in which way the experience of understanding something
'causally' differs from (or resembles) the experience
of understanding something 'hermeneutically'. And here
it is evident that into hermeneutical understanding no
causal concepts enter. This may be seen from the follow-
ing consideration.

I defined 'motive' as being certain contents of
consciousness as soon as they become the ground (reason)
of a certain action, or of the attempt to act in a cer-
tain way. It is the presence of such a ground ('αἴτιον')
in an action which makes us call it 'rational'. I pro-
pose to use the term 'rational' in so wide a sense that

it applies to every action with regard to which the
agent is able to state why he did it. Thus I do not
limit the concept of 'rationality' to teleological
activity only, but allow it to cover the ground of
what we will call 'adequate reaction' as well. Taken
in this sense it is 'rational' for someone to be sad
because a person to whom he was much attached has died;
or to be glad about the arrival of a friend; or to be
annoyed at the inefficiency of a servant. Being in one
of these states of mind and asked why he is in it (e.g.
"Why do you despise him?", or "Why are you distressed?"),
he is able to answer and to give the reason for it (e.g.
"Because he does such and such things.", or "Because
one of my manuscripts was burnt by mistake."). Although
the word "motive" is usually reserved for those states
of mind which become the grounds of spontaneous (teleo-
logical) <u>action</u>, it seems legitimate to call these rela-
tions of adequate <u>reaction</u> relations of 'motivation' too.
The behaviour of another person 'motivates' my feeling
of contempt for him; or an accident motivates my re-
action of being angry, in that the relation between
those happenings and my responding attitude is 'in-
telligible' in a similar way in which the relation
between motive and teleological action is intelligible.
I shall, therefore, for present purposes, use the con-
cept of motivation to cover both these relations.

The objection that, if 'rational' is defined as
above, insane people may be said to act 'rationally' too,
need not disturb us. If someone who is not Napoleon
acts as if he were, his acting can be completely ratio-
nal, and all his actions throughout a period of time
may be completely consistent when seen under this "hypo-

thesis". In such cases madness lies not in the absence of rationality, but in the kind of contents of a person's consciousness which are made the grounds of his actions.

As another rider I may add that I use 'motive' in a sense which excludes the possibility of speaking about "unconscious motivation", for I have made it the precondition for something becoming a motive that it is a content of awareness. This does not mean that there is no such thing as "unconscious motivation", but only that in the present connection the facts and problems which are indicated by this title will remain irrelevant.

When compared with the understanding of causal relations hermeneutical understanding distinguishes itself in two respects: a) There is no series of intermediate and (partly) obscure processes in between the motive and the action; the connection is a direct and perfectly lucid one. b) While with a causal relation we only know that a certain fact (B) has a certain effect (A), in the relation of motivation we also know why B has the effect A. The motive B makes A intelligible not because we discover that it has always been related to A, but by furnishing the reason for the occurrence of A. And 'reason' here stands for the inexplicable element in our rational deliberations which we mean when saying "The reason I went was ...", or "The reason I expect him to do that is ...". The 'reason' motivates (justifies, makes intelligible) the ensuing action, whereas it would not make sense to say of a 'cause' that it motivates (justifies, makes intelligible) its effect.

The particular lucidity and intelligibility of all motivative relations have their roots in everybody's personal experience of his own motivated behaviour,

i.e. in our knowledge of how we would behave if certain conditions arose. From the rationality of these experiences derives our capacity to understand (rationally) why other people behave in certain ways when they encounter certain situations. Causal connections, on the other hand, have no such element of rationality. They are not rational connections. And compared with the lucidity with which other person's actions can be completely understandable to us, they must be said to remain finally strange and unintelligible.

When compared with 'formal' understanding hermeneutical understanding proves to be different in that it is not concerned with formal connections between certain significant signs, but with connections between temporal and material occurrences. Therefore, though these connections are always generalised to some degree, they always contain details of the particular conditions we live in, and they receive from them the character of a certain inexhaustability and ineffability. In contradistinction to that, algebraic signs, for instance, are absolutely exhaustible. Accordingly their comprehension is a complete one, and there is nothing left behind as unintelligible because it is part of some particular situation. Herein lies the difference between formal and hermeneutical understanding. The former is concerned with the interrelations of purely abstract signs which are nothing else but what they signify, and which are not affixed to any material substratum which might prove an impediment to their complete absorption in the process of understanding them. The latter is concerned with connections between experiences and actions, both individual and factual occurran-

ces, which are intelligible only on the ground that
they are established by a rational agent. And causal
understanding might here be stated as that form which
has as its object connections between various, merely
factual, occurrences, into which no light is cast by
any rational agent establishing them.

Doubtless the distinctions between these different
types of understanding could be brought out much more
clearly, if a more detailed enquiry were made into them.
But in the present discussion they have only the pre-
paratory function of providing us with a frame of re-
ference into which the types of knowledge aimed at in
this paper can be placed. For these types of knowledge,
which will also be subsumed under the concept of 'under-
standing', are not identical with any of the three so
far discussed.

There is a sense of "understand" - and this is, in-
deed, the most usual sense in which this word is used -
in which we say that we understand words, sentences, re-
ports, talks, descriptions, etc. . This understanding,
too, is concerned with an A - B relation, A being the
word or sentence heard or read, and B being the object
referred to by these words or sentences. Now, the term
'understanding' thus used with regard to what we may call
"linguistic facts", can be taken in at least two diffe-
rent meanings: 1) We say we understand a language which
someone uses, although we may not at all understand
what he is talking about. 2) We also speak of under-
standing when we follow his meaning, when we grasp what
he is talking about; thus we speak of understanding a
book or a lecture. It is only 'understanding' in this
latter sense with which I am here concerned. In this

sense we may say that, for instance, a description of
the way in which Kant's categories manage to produce
the world of things and properties in which we live, is
unintelligible. By that we would mean we cannot recog-
nise or discern in any object all those features which
the description ascribes to it, or even that we fail to
discover the whole object of the description altogether.
We then do not know "what someone is talking about".
On the other hand, if all the features described can be
detected in some given object, we call the description
intelligible, though it may still be either "banal" (if
we know all the features already), or "interesting" (if
we are led to see features that we did not notice before).
I propose to call this understanding 'descriptive under-
standing'. It may be considered to be established when-
ever a field of objects with their qualities and inter-
relations is clearly related to a corresponding system
of interrelated terms in such a way that each difference
or variation in the object-field is represented by a
difference or variation in the terms. The system of
interrelated terms we call the 'description'. And this
description is intelligible (i.e. it can be understood)
when that full correspondence to an object-field is given
and perceived by the person reading or hearing it.

Descriptive understanding is thus of a very elemen-
tary nature. It amounts to obtaining and maintaining
a clear survey over a certain object-field by differen-
tiating and by securing the discovered differences through
the attribution of accordingly differentiated terms.
Yet the import of this elementary clearing of the grounds
can hardly be underestimated. A large part of the
following paper will be concerned with the attempt to

establish understanding of this kind for some phenomena
relevant to current ethical discussion.

Surveying the kinds of understanding so far examined,
it will be noticed that the type mentioned last takes
a different position from the other three. Being con-
cerned with the relation between an object-field (B)
and its (linguistic) formulation (A), it holds a posi-
tion vertical, as it were, to all those kinds of under-
standing which concern relations wholly situated within
this field of objects. Holding this position it will,
therefore, involve somehow these kinds of understanding.
In order to determine clearly which kinds of understand-
ing it would thus involve it is necessary to specify
what sort of material can become the object-field of
descriptive understanding.

Now, of all the three types of understanding so far
reviewed only the object-field of hermeneutical under-
standing could also become the object-field of descrip-
tive understanding. For the objects of formal under-
standing are themselves a system of (well defined) terms
and so would not reasonably allow an attempt to describe
them. And, though it is definitely possible to describe
the individual occurrences on which are based all the
inferential conclusions which lead to causal understand-
ing, the objects of this understanding are not accessible
to purely descriptive formulation, because the 'laws'
which constitute this understanding of necessity contain
amounts of theoretical calculations which are not them-
selves 'facts' and would not, therefore, fall within
the limits of possible description. As the conditions
of the possibility of description will be examined later,
it may suffice at this point to define the sort of ob-

ject-field which would allow of descriptive formulation in this way: The object-field of possible description must be a directly given, relatively constant, material which, though it may contain inexplicable elements (such as colour or value quales, or the quales which accompany or constitute certain feelings), is possessed of an explicable structure (as is, for instance, expressed by the "categories" of unity, identity and otherness, substance and attribute, resemblance, position, relation, etc.) within which the simple (and inexplicable) elements have their definite position. All individual, spatio-temporal, occurrences of our everyday world as well as the concrete processes and events observed and investigated by scientists, furnish examples of such material. Also the occurrences of a person's "mental life"("Seelenleben") satisfy these conditions; and it is in the field of these occurrences that a descriptive understanding would involve, or, at least, provide sufficient grounds for, hermeneutical understanding of connections within the described material 6).

But hermeneutical understanding is not the only form of understanding which can be obtained by a merely descriptive account of a given material, and it is, indeed, not the form of knowledge that we shall be predominantly concerned with. There is another, quite different, class of intelligible connections still, which also is wholly present within a descriptively accessible material. When now proceeding to examine this other sort of objects we are approaching that form of understanding which it will be the aim of this paper

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6) Hence Dilthey's attempt to obtain this understanding by a "Beschreibende und zergliedernde Psychologie" (in "Werke", V,1).

to establish for certain phenomena within the domain of ethics.

When reviewing the facts which go to constitute the familiar world of everyday life, we can find that some of them are 'contingent' while others are 'necessary'. Thus it is a contingent fact that the match-box on the table in front of me should lie, say, next to a pencil and on its left side. It is also a contingent fact that its distance from me is 25 inches. For it might be further away, or nearer, and it might be on the right side of the pencil, or behind the inkstand, etc.. "Might" here expresses some of the infinitely many alternative possibilities of the position of the match-box. But, granted that the match-box is to be there at all, it is not in the same way a contingent fact that it lies in some definite distance from me, or that it holds definite distances to all the other things displayed on my writing table. And while the given colour, shape, and condition of the match-box are entirely contingent, it is not likewise contingent that it should be of some shape, have some colour, and be in some condition. For, while we can easily think of this match-box as being different in colour, shape, and condition, we cannot think of it as having no definite colour, shape, and condition at all. Nor can we think of anything that forms part of our spatial situation as not being in some definite way related to the centre of that situation (i.e. myself). If anything is to be part of this situation it is necessary for it to be thus related. Necessities of this kind can be found in every realm of facts. The relation between colour and shape, between sound and time, between question and answer,

possession and theft, courage and danger, or the rela-
tion between myself and an other person, between pre-
senting and accepting, are only some examples.

We shall enquire into the nature of these necessi-
ties later. All that is required at present is to per-
ceive the difference between the kind of knowledge which
we have of these necessities, and the kind of knowledge
which we have of those contingencies. Our knowledge of
the necessities has a character of definiteness and cer-
tainty about it which has much in common with the cer-
tainty with which we know, for instance, that a dia-
meter will devide a circle into two equal parts, and
that a triangle drawn within one of the semicircles
with the diameter as its hypotenuse, and with the oppo-
site angle drawn to the circumference, will invariably
be rightangled. It is impossible for us to conceive of
any triangle under these conditions that would not be
rightangled. And it is likewise impossible for us to
conceive of any colour which is not in some way extended,
or of a promise that is not given to someone. Our know-
ledge of contingencies, on the other hand, has no such
certainty about it. It is plain, factual knowledge,
which has nothing to support or confirm it apart from
the actual perception of the object concerned. With the
disappearance of that perception it will itself diappear,
or, at least, it will continue only in the indirect way
of "remembering that ...". Not so the knowledge of those
necessities. In a way which I will try later to illu-
minate, this knowledge is not based on actual perception
but only, as we may say, occasioned by it. I need not
perceive any particular objects in order to know that
every spatial object that I can possibly encounter will
be related to me in some definite way; and, what is more,

the individual perception of spatial objects would
never provide me with that knowledge which, indeed,
they only instance.

It may be noted that I am not here concerned with
the origin or genesis of these different forms of our
knowledge. If I were, I should have to enquire whether
the character of certainty of the knowledge under dis-
cussion derives from a "habit-forming" series of indi-
vidual experiences, or whether it is part of the struc-
ture of the "human mind" and thus exists before any
experience becomes possible, and so on. However, my
present concern is only to differentiate and to charac-
terise the different forms of knowledge (understanding)
which can be found, and here it can hardly be denied
that the knowledge of these necessities differs in na-
ture from that of contingencies. It resembles in some
respects the type of understanding that we called 'for-
mal', as it is a comprehending of a static connection
between two (sets of) items. But it is different from
formal understanding in that the items are not formal, but,
as we shall say to stress the distinction, 'material'.
They are such entities as "space" or "spatiality",
"colour", "obligation", "person", "communication", etc.,
and the connections between them which can be known
(or understood) as necessary, are material connections.
Like the connections of a geometrical figure they re-
quire the presence of the whole structure in order to
be recognised and understood. They cannot, like alge-
braic signs, be developed from each other, transformed,
etc., by theoretical activity only. The material in
which they obtain must be totally given, only then it
is possible to discover them in it. For this reason

I shall call this form of understanding 'material understanding'. 'Hermeneutical understanding', though also 'material', is clearly distinguished from the present type by the fact that it only occurs in a person's 'mental life', namely between items of this 'life' qua such items, while 'material understanding' is concerned with (material) structures which are not given as part of any person's 'mental life', and in which a kind of intelligibility quite different from that of a person's purposive or reactive behaviour is found to inhere. In spite of this difference the term 'understanding' applies to the way in which we are aware of these self-supporting intelligible structures as well; for, again, we are concerned with relations between A's and B's, the dependency between which may be mutual or onesided. Thus in the case of a colour (A) it is evident (in the sense of perfect intelligibility) that it requires space (B) in order to appear, and so here we understand a dependency of A on B. In this case B does not require A at all in order to appear, and thus this relation of dependency is not a mutual one.

That the form of knowledge here called 'material understanding' really is an understanding appears from the examples given and will, I hope, appear more clearly from the more detailed analyses which are to follow. Facts such as the necessity that each spatial thing should be in some way related to the observer, or the necessity that a promise should have two persons concerned in it (one promising and one accepting the promise), - these facts are lucid and and thoroughly intelligible, and thus clearly distinguished from any concrete factual occurrences and our knowledge about them.

Although the interpretations of the nature of these intelligible states of affairs differ largely, their existence is recognised by most. The view that our knowledge about them attains to a high degree of lucidity has recently received strong support from the camp of logical positivists, who attribute to insights of this kind (as, for instance, in the example of the promise) the extreme intelligibility of a tautology. They maintain that the use of the word "promise" implies that there are two partners between which it takes place, and that to state explicitly "A promise is only possible if there are two persons etc." is merely to unfold analytically the contents of that concept, which it has acquired by definition, or by the way in which it is commonly used.

While I shall be at pains to show later that such a linguistic interpretation of this type of intelligible connection is altogether erroneous, I think, at the same time, that it is correct to attend to those phenomena and to attempt a systematic interpretation of them. The fact that even modern positivists keep doing so may be taken as strong evidence for their existence. This evidence is in no way weakened if the interpretations which are actually achieved should prove to be inadequate.

The foregoing digression on various kinds of understanding has rendered clear the particular type of knowledge aimed at in this paper: it will attempt to obtain descriptive understanding of a certain field within ethically relevant fact material - the field roughly indicated by the titles 'approval' and 'moral action' - and proceed to understand materially some of

the intelligible structures contained in that material. Thus the expectation of any formal or deductive certainty, or of any inductive scientific knowledge gained by empirical observation and inferential theorising, is to be dismissed at the outset. It may be noticed that this eliminates the use of psychological knowledge also, inasmuch as it is scientific knowledge.

The reason for this precise restriction of the present research to one special type of understanding, is the writer's view that nothing has done more harm to ethical research, in recent years especially, than the thoughtless confusion of different kinds of research with one another. Nothing illustrates more strikingly this deplorable decay in ethical philosophy than the concoctions of anthropology, (experimental) psychology, sociology, etc., which are offered, with increasing frequency, as books on ethics - often even with the claim that they, after long centuries of vain attempt, have established ethics as a "science".

This confusion can only be remedied if writers in this field will remember what was recognised as soon as ethics was first established as a special branch of philosophy: τὸ γὰρ ἀκριβὲσ οὐχ ὁμοίως ἐν ἅπασι τοῖς λόγοις ἐπιζητητέον 7). Scientific investigation of any kind seems no more able than any methods of pure reasoning to establish the sort of evidence and argument which we desire as a criterion for judging our own and other people's behaviour. Whether these can be furnished more successfully on different grounds the considerations of the following paper may help to decide.

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7) Aristotle, Eth.Nic., 1094b,12-13.

3) <u>Anticipation of Possible Objections to the
following Analysis.</u>

The proposal to undertake descriptive research in
the field of ethics as outlined in the preceding section,
is by no means original, although it will here be
followed in a somewhat special manner. The recourse to
"everybody's moral experience" and its use as evidence
for, or against, certain (normative) statements in
ethical theory, are familiar moves to the student of
the subject. Accordingly, a set of no less familiar
arguments is at hand, objecting to the various ways in
which these moves may be made. No sooner has someone
announced that he wishes to start out from his personal
moral experiences as those best available to him, than
he is informed that this procedure will never allow him
to obtain any knowledge transcending the small realm
of his own experience. Someone else suggests that there
are "intuitions" of "moral values" such as kindness,
loyalty, justice, which we know to be good in themselves
and of which we, therefore, approve, when we see them
instanced by individual cases of behaviour; but the
objection to this is that one cannot possibly wish to
reintroduce any "universals" (such as "values"), the
very concept of which philosophers have been forced to
abandon through the recent discoveries about the nature
of language. And the intention itself of describing
a certain experience is immediately met by the argument
that the correspondence between language and experience,
which underlies such an intention, is a mistaken concept
and does not, in fact, exist. And so on.

Thus some standard objections seem to be provided
for each of those attempts, and they are regularly

conjured up wherever words like "intuition", "moral experience", "essence", "universal structure", "description of facts", etc., are heard. I do not want to suggest that any of these objections are unjustified, or that they are always misapplied. But the danger of this, as one might almost say, hostile attitude towards those trends of ethical philosophy is that it spoils any sense of distinction between the issues. For example, once "introspection" has been denounced as disreputable, the interest and attention formerly paid to new introspective investigations flags. Many no longer make any effort to discern what sort of "introspection" is employed and what validity may be claimed for the results. It need not be pointed out that this way of disposing of whole types of philosophical research only because they bear certain resemblances to theories or methods that have been, very often, rightly discarded in the past, is not justifiable philosophically. It must be said, however, that writers often occasion such a summary dismissal of their views by not making sufficiently clear the respects in which their theories differ from those theories or methods a resemblance with which could mislead their adversaries.

As in the following treatise methods reminiscent of "introspection" will be employed and, moreover, as description of a certain "given material" will be attempted, and words like "intelligible structure" or "essential" will be used, some further digression into fields of philosophy in general must be prefixed to the intended examination, in order that the misunderstandings be prevented which many modern students of ethics are so eager to impose on any view alien to their own.

Roughly, the following analysis will consist - and I deliberately use the traditional jargon - of a special sort of introspective description of a given material (viz. moral experiences) and the demonstration of those essential structures that can be found to inhere in those experiences. Accordingly, it will be necessary right at the outset to guard against some, at least, of the current objections that are liable to be made:

á) The objection produced against introspective methods and the validity of their results.

ₐ) The objections produced against theories dealing with "essences", "structures", etc., which are reminiscent of "universals".

ƌ) The objections produced against all research into "facts of moral life", as being the claim that these facts are inextricably tied up with - or, indeed, are nothing else but - the language which we use to describe them, or to utter our moral experiences and sentiments.

Subsequent to these considerations I will attempt to show how, in spite of these objections, description of "moral experiences" is thought to be possible. This will take the form of an outline of the philosophical method used here.

a) "Introspection".

The objections made against introspective research and its results usually are of two kinds. The first is directed against the possibility of introspection as such. It is argued that the conception of an "inner"

and an "outer" world, the first of which is "private"
and the latter "public" is wholly erroneous; that there
is no inner "theatre" to which everybody has his own
privileged access while nobody else can ever know what
is going on there; and that, therefore, the process of
concentration on one's "inner life", called "introspec-
tion", is spurious.

The second type of objection, while it allows of
the possibility of some kind of introspection, denies
that the results obtained by this process can ever be
more than knowledge about the particular state of mind
in the individual concerned. Every generalisation, it
is argued, which is derived from this introspection
will always rest on the unwarrantable assumption that
other people's minds are like my one's own. No reliable
knowledge may, therefore, be gained in this way.

Let us begin with discussing the first of these
objections. Although it is the more basic one, it is
easier to deal with than it might seem at first sight.
For the conception of introspection against which it is
directed - and for which it is, indeed, a fatal objec-
tion - can here be dismissed without damage to the
method I shall try to establish.

For this introspection (i.e. the one attacked by the
first objection) to become conceivable it is necessary
to presuppose a certain conception of the human mind,
which has been developed especially by Cartesian phi-
losophers, though it can be traced from the beginnings
of occidental philosophy. The characteristic feature
of this conception, which has, of course, assumed a
great variety of different shapes, is the conception

of the mind as something apart from and opposed to the
world which it perceives. On this view mind is a sort
of receptacle which is, according to some, equipped with
a set of a priori ideas and instruments for building a
world of objects from the impressions received; accord-
ing to others it is devoid of such apriori instruments.
But, however differently the relation between mind
("subject") and world ("object") has been conceived,
it has always remained some relation between two enti-
ties the one of which has to perceive (know, apprehend,
construct, etc.) the other. It is this relation and
the functioning of the mind (the one relatum) with re-
gard to the world (the other relatum) which has provi-
ded the central problem, indeed, the whole subject-
matter, of post-Cartesian philosophy qua epistemology.
The subject, being the apprehending mind, is thought
to be a complex structure in itself and it can, by
changing from the perception of objects other than it-
self ('intentio recta') to the perception of its own
activities ('intentio obliqua'), become the object of
its own cognitions. It is supposed that a certain,
self-identical, centre (the ego) can divert its atten-
tion from the objects to which it is usually attached,
and investigate the contents of its own mind. Now, the
possibility of such a reflection as is here recognised,
does certainly in some way exist. But the interpreta-
tion it has been given has proved fallacious. For the
alleged activities which the ego was supposed to detect
when scrutinizing its own mind, do not appear to be
really there. Many philosophers have begun to complain,
in recent times, that they cannot find any of those acts
of cognition, cogitations, ideas, categories, etc., that

have been supposed to constitute the interior of our
minds, and so they have proceeded to expose this con-
cept of mind as the "Cartesian Myth" 8). Together with
this Cartesian concept of mind reflection as a philoso-
phical attitude has fallen into disrepute. For to what,
it is asked, can this reflection be directed, if the
domain of a (private) mind, as opposed to a (public)
world, has been abandoned? Yet, the rejection of a
mind qua "inner theatre" does not entail that there can
be no object whatever for any reflective activity; and
much less does it imply any conclusions as to the philo-
sophical relevance of such reflection.

It is neither possible nor necessary at this point
to enter into a critical discussion of certain philoso-
pher's views on this matter. So I shall confine myself
to a short outline of that "concept of mind" which will
be presupposed in the type of introspective description
which I propose to employ. This outline will not be
a representation of any theory, but simply a demonstra-
tion of certain facts which are given together with the
fact of human existence itself and which are, therefore,
accessible by merely turning our attention towards them.

I wish here to throw into relief some, very general,
features of what I shall call 'the human situation'. By
that I mean the whole array of real and possible things,
occurrences, and states of affairs, which are usually
included in the name "world", as they are experienced
by the human being - and not, for instance, as they might
be in themselves - including the occurrence of these
experiences themselves. This term may appear to be as

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8) cf. G.Ryle, "The Concept of Mind" (1949).

general and comprehensive, and it may seem to carry as
little meaning, as terms like "the world", "the universe
of all things", etc.; but it is different from these in
that it expresses explicitly the relation of any item
of this world to a person to whose situation it belongs.
While the terms "universe" or "world" may well cover
entities which can never be experienced in any form by
a human being, the term 'situation' denotes only such
items as are somehow - potentially, at any rate - con-
tents of human experience. Let us, however, introduce
a further specification:

The particular situation in which I am at the mo-
ment, being surrounded by a particular array of furniture,
having such and such relations to other spatial objects,
other persons, etc., is a 'human situation', but not the
'human situation'. For there are countless other human
situations. But this multitude of particular situations
can be reduced to a set of typical situations, and
these, again, can be reduced to 'the human situation' as
such which, as a "nuclear" structure, is contained in
any of the more specific situations. It is only this
most general structure which I propose to speak of as
'the human situation', while the rest will be referred
to as types or forms of human situations, - or, dropping
the 'human', just as types and forms of situations.

The basic feature of the human situation is that it
is 'ego-centric'. It is I who sees, knows, hears,
thinks, walks, etc., and it is my body which, in the
constant spatial mode of 'here', forms the physical
centre of every possible (physical) situation. The
situation is furthermore characterised as 'my situation'.
That is to say, it is not myself who is the situation,

but the situation is that in which I am. One may
formulate: human existence takes the form of 'being in
situations'. The situation, formally speaking, is to
be characterised as being a - partly necessarily co-
herent, partly contingent - set of things, states of
affairs, etc., which is given as <u>something other than</u>
<u>myself</u>. Their 'otherness' constitutes my identical
continuity, in as much as I am the self-identical, con-
tinuing middle in the flux of ever changing situations
through which I go. The basic 'ego-centricity' of the
situation, therefore, contains as its basic ingredient
'that which is not myself' but to which I am related, -
just as for something to be a centre it is required that
it be the centre of something which, on its part, is
not centre. This relation between ego ('myself-ness')
and non-ego ('other-than-myself-ness'), being the
basic structure of the human situation, is not con-
stituted by an accidental coincidence of two facts
(viz. 'myself-ness' and 'otherness'), but is a ne-
cessary correspondence, such as holds between the centre
of a circle and its circumference. Yet, neither of
these necessities can be formally deduced from any pre-
misses. They can only be grasped when the conditions
described are present in actual awareness. Thus the
necessary interrelation between myself and that which
'surrounds me' (in a spatial as well as in any other
sense) can only be understood (materially) through an
act of presenting our own situation to ourselves.

The general structure of the human situation, then,
so far determined, is: an ego-centre ('myself'), spatial-
ly manifested in 'my body', plus the whole array of that
of which I am the centre. We may, for the following

discussion, term this 'whole array' (qua that which is
not 'myself') the 'world'. Now, it is obviously very
different things which constitute this 'world', and,
while the vast variety of individualities escapes every
attempt at a systematic account, certain typical diffe-
rences strike the eye at once. Thus there are entities
which have the distinguishing characteristic of 'being
like myself', namely what we know to be "other people".
Other entities, essentially different from these, we
refer to as "nature", or parts of nature, such as trees,
stars, rivers, and the like. Again, essentially diffe-
rent from both these types is the class of things that
have been produced by persons, i.e. all utensils, houses,
bridges, etc..

Another dimension of differences we encounter when
we become aware of the fact that one lot of things bears
the characteristic of being (potentially) given to
other persons as well, in the same way as it is given
to me myself. These things constitute what some philo-
sophers have, quite fittingly, called "the public world".
Other items of my world do not bear this characteristc,
but the other one of being given to myself only. Into
this group belong thoughts, images, feelings, pains,
pleasures, etc.; also moods, though these cannot so
easily be classed, as they may be (and have been) de-
scribed as 'modes of being' of the ego itself 9). They
need not, however, concern us here, as this sweeping

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9) cf. the description of the ego and its relations
    to feelings, desires, etc., given by Alexander Pfän-
    der in "Psychologie der Gesinnungen" (contained in
    E.Husserl's "Jahrbuch für Philosophie und phänomeno-
    logische Forschung", vols I and III).

sketch of the composition of the world (in the sense indicated) is only intended to provide a wider setting in which now to discover that element in the human situation which may become the object of possible reflection.

Let us denote any possible contents that an ego could be aware of by "O". If this O is to be specified as some more special object (say, as a chair), this will be indicated by an expression following in brackets after that O. Thus a chair would be represented: "O(ß)", if "ß" is to stand for "chair". Let us further denote the ego which is aware of any such contents by "E". Then the basic structure of the situation can be given as "E - O", or, more specific: "E - O(ß)". Further qualifications will be introduced as required. For example, if the chair is only given in imagination this may be indicated by "(ßi)", whereas if it is perceived as real, we may write "(ßr)", and so on.

Now it must be noticed that in the situation as far as it has been sketched, the objects of awareness (the O's) which form the usual scene of our everyday lives, are wholly constituted by contents characterised as 'other-than-myself' or 'not-myself'. That is to say: we are totally absorbed by whatever is the content of our awareness, and in that we are quite oblivious of ourselves, i.e. of the fact that it is we (the ego-centre) who experience all these contents. We live in what may suitably be called,by a scholastic term, the 'intentio recta'. We are, for instance, watching a film-show, talking to a friend, having a bath, etc., and we do not usually in these everyday scenes know that it is we ("I") who are (am) thus concerned with

a certain object-occurrence. But, although, as a rule, we are in this way oblivious of ourselves, it is possible, at any moment, to abandon this state of self-oblivion. It is at any moment possible for anybody to become aware of the fact that it is he ("I") who watches a play, that it is he ("I") who stands <u>here</u>, in such and such spatial relations to other persons, things, etc..

Throughout the account of the human situation just given, we have thus left the state of 'intentio recta' and assumed a new attitude of attention which is characterised by the essential feature that the ego-centre (of which we had been thereunto oblivious) moves also into the field of awareness. Thus, while before this field was filled entirely by (non-ego-)contents of the kind "(β)", it is now filled with - or, at any rate, contains - a content of the kind "$E - O(\beta)$". Adopting the scholastic term corresponding to 'intentio recta', we shall call this new attitude, which is characterised by the presence of E in the field of awareness, the 'intentio obliqua'; and in this 'intentio' we have what is commonly known as "reflection".

The type of object which corresponds to this new attitude of reflection may be represented, in the notation suggested above, by "$(E - O(...))$". If we take the contents of my direct awareness (i.e. of my awareness in the 'intentio recta') to be an imagined chair (= "(βi)"), the object of my reflection upon this awareness will be "$(E - O(\beta i))$"; then the whole of the situation which takes place when I thus reflect upon my being directly aware of an imagined chair would have to be represented in this way: "$E_2 - O_2(E_1 - O_1(\beta i))$". It will be noticed that "E" occurs twice. For, as has

been often observed, in no reflection are the ego reflecting and the ego reflected upon wholly identical. The fact alone that reflection always merely embraces a past stage of the life of the ego excludes such identity, thoughtthis is by no means the only distinction. It appears, furthermore, from the above symbolic representation of the matter, that there are degrees of reflection. For there is no reason why it should not be possible - and, as everybody knows, it is in fact possible - to repeat the act of reflection after the attitude depicted above has been assumed. In this attitude, while E_1 is within the field of attention, E_2 is not. Again I am oblivious of myself inasmuch as I am E_2. Our mere ability to state and understand this fact proves, however, that by a new act of reflection E_2 also can be brought into the light of awareness. The contents of our awareness would then be "$(E_2-O_2(E_1-O_1(\beta i)))$"; and the whole situation would have to be put as follows: "$E_3 - O_3(E_2 - O_2(E_1 - O_1(\beta i)))$". It can easily be seen that reflection is, theoretically, possible in infinite degrees of complication. Practically, however, the limits of our capacity of simultaneous attention to different contents soon puts an end to this process. Nor would the degrees of a complication higher than the second (i.e. the one represented last) be of any philosophical import. For it is the first degree which is of pre-eminent importance for all philosophical research in that it enables us to obtain a full view of the human situation, which, as we saw, includes the ego-centre plus the objects of its awareness. And it is by reflection of the second degree that we are able to make (and to test) this statement about the first degree reflection.

It may be mentioned explicitly, though it is implied
by the above symbolic representations, that the possi-
bility of reflection is itself an essential part of the
structure of the human situation. In other words: Our
own situation can always (partly) be objectified, i.e.
the 'intentiones rectae' through which we live (oblivi-
ous of ourselves), can become part of the field of
objects on which we can freely direct our attention.

Philosophical enquiry carried out in the 'intentio
obliqua' is reflective enquiry, and it is this type of
reflective enquiry which I intend to undertake in the
following chapters. After the considerations which
have just been made, the name "introspection" may appear
to be out of place in this connection. For the "inte-
rior" of a person into which one might "introspect" has
been discarded. But the relations through which I my-
self am related to the world in which I live - and in
this paper my relations to other persons especially -
remain the subject-matter of the investigation. The
name given to this kind of enquiry is hardly of any
importance. That its subject-matter exists, or, in
other words, that the outlined type of reflection is
possible, seems to me to be beyond reasonable doubt.
The 'intentio obliqua', occasionally assumed in the
course of everybody's life, renders vast fields of ma-
terial open for description and analysis, when systema-
tically employed. It is true, we have not so far
established the nature of the philosophical, and in par-
ticular the ethical, relevance which must be attributed
to this method of investigation. Having elucidated the
nature of the intended reflective research, and having
thus proven the irrelevance of the first objection against
"introspection" - it will, therefore, now be necessary

to proceed with the discussion of the second, and more
substantial, objection.

b) "Universals".

The second objection I have described at the be-
ginning of last chapter as the doubt, whether any know-
ledge gained through reflective research can ever be
more than knowledge about my personal and individual
states of mind, and whether there is any legitimate
way of drawing general conclusions from this material.
The essence of the argument is this: Every experience
which can become the object of my reflection is my
personal and individual experience (having the struc-
ture "E - O(...)"). Any more general statement derived
from such experiences (for instance: "Every spatial ob-
ject is experienced as being capable of assuming an in-
finite number of different aspects.") rests on the pre-
supposition not only that the structure of my own ex-
periences will always remain the same, but also that
(all) other people's experiences are of the same struc-
ture too. These presuppositions, it has often been
argued, are unwarranted. We can, therefore, never be
sure that what has been obtained as a result of re-
flective analysis is of any more interest than an auto-
biographical report.

I hope to show in this chapter that there are good
reasons for believing that some of the structures dis-
closed in the reflective attitude are identically the
same when reflected upon by other people, and that de-
scriptive statements made about them are of a strictly

universal application. The attempt to show this will
lead us into a discussion of some of the age old con-
troversial issues connected with the concept of "uni-
versals". Yet, within the frame of this introductory
chapter we cannot do justice to any one of these issues,
and their treatment must remain exceedingly superficial.
My only aim will be to establish a (non-metaphorical)
sense of 'universal' according to which it will be possi-
ble to say that (certain) statements about certain struc-
tures of 'my private experiences' have a 'universal
application'. I begin with some preparatory explanations.

When reporting on a content of the kind "(ßr)" (e.g.
a chair which I see before me), we may say that this con-
tent is possessed of a more 'objective' character than
a content of the type "(ßi)" (a chair which I imagine
just now), which is merely 'subjective'. But this use
of 'subjective' and 'objective' might be misleading.
I think it will be conducive to clarity if these terms
are never applied to contents which are given to us,
but only to opinions or theories which we may have, or
judgements which we may make about them. Thus we speak
of an "objective judgement", meaning that the object
(about which it is) has (largely) determined its cha-
racter; and we speak of a "subjective judgement", mean-
ing that the judgement is (largely) determined by the
subject which makes it. When so used 'subjective' and
'objective' mean the same as the terms 'inadequate' and
'adequate', but in addition to the meaning of these terms
they express the reason for the adequacy or inadequacy
of a judgement, namely that it is inadequate as determined
by the subject making it, or adequate as determined by
the object about which it is made. In the present paper

the terms 'subjective' and 'objective' will be used in this sense only.

We have then to find another pair of terms for the difference between those given contents which I perceive to be accessible to everybody, and those which I perceive to be objects of my own awareness only. This difference I propose to designate by the terms 'public' and 'private', which will be applied to given objects only and never to opinions which I have or judgements which I make about them.

Trying to subsume experiences of the type "E - O(ßr)" under either 'public' or 'private' contents of awareness, it seems, as if no clear subsumtion can be made. The experience which may be expressed as "I now see a chair in such and such a position in front of me" contains a certain mixture of public and private elements. It is my seeing something, an element which I know to be perfectly private, as it cannot be given to anybody else; and it is also.seeing a chair there in the room, an element which I experience to be public in that what is given to me here is given as (potentially) accessible to everybody else, and quite unaffected by my seeing it or not seeing it. Closer inspection reveals, however, that the fact that I experience something as 'publicly accessible', does not make the experience in which I perceive the 'public object' any less 'private', and that the public element only enters into it in form of an 'index' or 'quality' attached to the object (e.g. "(ßr)") experienced. Thus, in a sense, 'my seeing this public chair' is no less a private experience than 'my remembering how I felt sick last night'. It must, therefore, be agreed, that every experience, even though

it be an experience of a public object, is given, in the reflective attitude, as a private content of awareness.

From the classification of all contents of awareness as either private or public, it seems to follow that no description of private contents can ever attain to public validity. For we know that the criterion of empirical verifiability is only applicable to objects which are experienced as public (as parts of the "sensible external world"), and on this ground we can advance (and test) the validity of general statements about them. Private contents, on the other hand, are not of this nature, and statements about them cannot be verified in this way. Therefore, however strongly we may claim general validity for what we discover about our own experiences, such claims will never be warranted.

However, these conclusions which destroy all claims to the general validity of any reflective investigation, only follow if we are assuming that the only grounds for knowledge which can claim general validity are 'public objects' in the sense of 'sensible external objects'. But this is, clearly, not the only type of public objects we know of: there are certain contents of awareness which we experience as public in a sense quite different from the 'publicity' of some external object, namely such contents as triangles and squares. When I say that in a square the two diagonals bisect each other I know that the contents of my awareness, which I am talking about (e.g. the geometric structure 'square') is open to everybody else's inspection as well. The content 'square' is in some respects strictly ana-

logous to the content 'chair in front of me'; both are
given to me as (potentially) given to everybody, and it
is the presence of this feature in a content of aware-
ness which warrants our calling it 'public'. Yet in
other important respects the content 'square' differs
from the content 'chair': while the only grounds which
warrant my statements about the chair are my actual -
and other people's potential - seeing, touching, in
short <u>sensing</u> it, the ground which warrants my state-
ments about the structure of the square is my <u>under-
standing</u> it. The content 'square' is - what the con-
tent 'chair' is not - <u>intelligible</u>.

Here we have a new class of public objects, which
are very different indeed from the sensible objects
forming the 'external world'; but which share with them
the characteristic of 'publicity'. This new type of
public contents óf awareness is highly relevant to
our present consideration. For, while it is impossible
that any private contents of awareness should ever par-
take of the publicity peculiar to sensible objects, it
is not likewise impossible that they should contain
structures, which are public in the sense in which the
structure of a geometric figure is public. And while
the test of empirical verifiability cannot be used to
warrant the general validity of any statement of mine
about my own experiences, we might easily break through
the limits of mere "introspective autobiography", im-
posed by the 'privacy of experience', if we were to
detect intelligible structures in them. For a state-
ment about such a structure of my experience would
attain to the gnoseological dignity and validity of
statements about the relations which hold within geo-
metric figures.

I shall now proceed to argue that such structures
are, in fact, contained in the object material of the
'intentio obliqua'. This argument will have to establish,
in the first place, that there are intelligible struc-
tures as a special type of public contents of awareness,
and it will have to elucidate the nature of these con-
tents; secondly I will attempt to point out that in-
telligibility of a structure necessarily includes its
generality. (These two elements will be discussed with
the aid of examples taken from the realm of geometric
figures, as they are given in the 'intentio recta').
Thirdly, it will have to be shown that intelligible
structures of this kind are to be found not only in
the peculiar realm of geometric figures, but also in
the domain disclosed to us by assuming the 'intentio
obliqua', i.e. the domain of my own experiences of the
world. If I should succeed in establishing these three
points, the second objection against introspective re-
search will have been removed. In concluding this
chapter I shall then touch upon some of the traditional
arguments against universals, and I shall endeavour to
make clear that these arguments either rest on mis-
understandings, or do not affect the (purely descrip-
tive) concept of 'universals' which is presupposed in
the subsequent analysis. It should be noted here that
an enquiry like the present one, which merely aims at
the descriptive assessment of certain structures, is
not in the least concerned with the problems which may
be connected with the genesis of these structures. If
we should be able to detect acts of consciousness in
which we are aware of universal structures, this result
will be in no way affected by the difficulties involved

in the quite different question of how such acts and
structures come about, whether they are "innate", or
whether they have developed in the human brain through-
out long periods of its history, or whether they have
been inculcated upon our minds by certain linguistic
usages, etc. .

When reading a statement such as "The diagonals of
a square bisect each other" we may be in very different
states of mind. We may read it and accept it as true
on authority, as we do when reading the results of some
highly complicated statistical research; or we may read
it and accept it because we remember that we once had
it proved to us; or, finally, we may call to our minds
the structure about which the assertion is made, and
then experience a full understanding not only of the
statement itself, but of the state of affairs which is
asserted in it as one which is of necessity so. A
single case of understanding a simple geometric rela-
tion, such as that between the diagonals of a square,
provides sufficient grounds for the assertion that
here we are presented with a special type of cognitive
experience, which is as different from perceiving an
individual object of the external world, as it is diffe-
rent from perceiving reflectively one of my own expe-
riences. It shares, however, with these other forms
of cognitive experiences the characteristic of being
immediately in contact with the object of cognition,
and of being (at the same time) quite independent of
this object. The necessary relations which govern a
geometric figure are given to me as being independent
of my noticing or attending to them, just as a chair
in front of me is given as existing independent of my

seeing it; and my powers of imagination can change the
nature of those figures as little as they can change
the shape of a chair in front of my nose.

On the other hand it must be recognised that the
understanding of the structure of a square must be
classed as a genuine cognitive experience, i.e. as an act as
an act in which we are directly aware of some mate-
rially qualified object (such as any "Gestaltqualität",
colours and other sense contents, feelings upon which
we may reflect, etc.). As such it must be clearly
distinguished from any process of gaining, or dealing
with, 'theoretical knowledge' (such as dealing with
numbers, symbols in general and their interrelations,
all activities of thinking, concluding, inferring, com-
paring, etc.), a process which is characterised by the
absence of materially qualified contents which are the
sole object of a purely receptive act of cognition.
In the present context these distinctions must remain
rough and vague. They will suffice, however, to show
that understanding the relation between, for example,
the diagonals of a square (viz. that they bisect each
other) is a unitary cognitive experience, in which we
are directly aware of a unitary material structure, and
not a theoretical activity which, by comparing and in-
ferring, finally arrives at the result that the rela-
tions between the diagonals of a square is such and such.
The results of such activities, however stringent and
conclusive the process of reasoning may have been, are
characterised by their being results of such processes,
whereas the intelligible relation between the diagonals
is not characterised as the result of anything. It is
directly apprehended without any intermediate processes

of thought, and is quite independent of anything we may think about it. This character of our recognising intelligible material structures by an immediate cognitive contact with them, has been called 'intuitive', and I will adopt the term 'intuition' for this type of cognitive experiences, excluding all other possible meanings of this word.

It is thus possible - and could be done at much greater length - to point out descriptively that there is an intuitive understanding of material strcutures, though hitherto examples have only been taken from the field of geometry. However, before considering cases taken from a different field, these examples may serve us a little longer while we now proceed to examine the relation between intelligibility and universality (generality) in such a content of material intuition. This relation will be seen to be in itself necessary and intelligible, as soon as we view the experience of material intuition through the 'intentio obliqua': It is impossible that the characteristic of intelligibility should attach to some individual content which exists in the mode of 'hic et nunc'. For the distinguishing mark of an <u>intelligible</u> material object, as opposed to other material objects of awareness, is precisely this: with ordinary contents (such as 'this chair') we apprehend (perceive) that some set of qualities and relations <u>is</u> such and such (though it might well be different), whereas with intelligible contents we apprehend (intuit) that some set of qualities and relations <u>must be</u> such and such (and could not possibly be different). With an ordinary object we are unable to see why certain relations or qualities are there and not

others, or why not none at all $\overset{\text{2ve}}{\text{there}}$. With intelligible
contents, however, we understand all items belonging to
them as being necessarily interrelated in such a way
that absence of one of them would render the whole
structure impossible (e.g. absence of one diagonal in
a square would render the whole structure 'square' im-
possible, i.e. there could not be such a square.).

It is this element of 'must be so', 'could not be
otherwise', characterising all intelligible objects,
which includes the element of universality peculiar
to these structures. For when intuiting that for the
square, of which I am aware, such and such elements
are necessary, i.e. that the constituents require each
other in such a way that the absence of any one of them
would render the whole figure impossible, I know at once
with absolute certainty that everything I predicate of
these essential interrelations will be true of all pos-
sible squares; I know that there could not be a square
in which any of these conditions were modified 10). To
intuit an intelligible structure, then, is to intuit
something strictly universal, or, to put it more con-
troversially, intuiting intelligible structures is in-
tuiting "universals". I hope to show presently that
by 'universal' no metaphysical entity is meant, but
a describable feature of a cognitive experience. No-
one can deny that this characteristic of intelligibility,

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10) It has been suggested that to state this is merely
to explicate our use of the word "square". But I am
here concerned in pointing out an essential relation
between structural qualities, and for this purpose it
is quite irrelevant what names we use for such quali-
ties or whether we give them any names at all. For a
more thorough investigation of this view see part c
of this chapter.

which we doubtless do experience at times, never at-
taches to anything which could be called 'individual'
or 'concrete', and which has a location in space, in time,
or in both. It is true that we often come to recognise
such structures when contemplating individual examples,
that is, cases in which it has 'manifested itself'. But
we can at any time convince ourselves that it is not
this case which is intelligible, by omitting or varying
everything which goes to constitute the case: we may
draw a square or imagine it, design it as big or small,
paint it in ink or water-colour - such changes do not
affect the structure which is seen only 'through' the
case, as instanced by it.

If it is thus possible to trace genuine cognitive
experiences in which universal structures are directly
given, it follows that any purely descriptive statement
which adequately expresses features of such a structure,
will be of an equally universal validity. For what is
true of the universal structure must necessarily be true
of every possible (individual) instance of it. If,
therefore, the descriptive account which I have given
of those cognitive experiences is correct, it is then
clear that there can be descriptive statements, involv-
ing no abstractions, inferences, inductions, calculations,
etc., which are of a strictly universal validity.

It must still be shown that what has been demon-
strated with regard to geometric structures is equally
valid of - at least some of - our own experiences. In
this introduction I shall confine myself to establishing
this by discussing one, somewhat detailed, example,
namely the intelligible structure inherent in our ex-
perience of temporal processes. For, if one such case

of an intelligible structure of an experience has been
pointed out, it will at least be reasonable to suppose
that there are more of them. And for the moment we may
leave it at that; the more so as the following text will
to a large extent consist of material analyses furnish-
ing further examples to substantiate this point.

The material first rendered open to inspection by
assuming the 'intentio obliqua' is, of course, private
and individual fact material. For example: I find my-
self listening, hic et nunc, to the series of tick-tock
sounds produced by my watch lying in front of me.
Asking "How are these sounds given to me?", or "How
do I experience these sounds?", I arrive at some such
(rough) account as this:-

Two sound qualities - here signified by "tick" and
"tock" - none of which has a noticeable extension in
time, follow each other regularly with a short period
of time elapsing between every two sounds. Suppose
I call the tick-sound I hear now 'A', and the tock-
sound which I hear in a following moment 'B'. Then,
after A has made its appearance in the mode of "now"
it vanishes and, after a while, B appears as "the sound
which I hear now". 'A', however, although no longer
actually there, is still given in my experience as
"the sound which has just died away", and keeping it
thus in what we may call a 'retention', I experience
B (when it is heard in the mode of "now") as following
A and having a different sound quality from it (namely
"tock"). This is an experience which, clearly, I could
not have, were I not holding A in retention. Then B
passes by and I keep it equally present by a retention
which, however, is qualified as "fresher" or "less past"

than the retention in which I still have A. Then another A, namely A_1, follows, and it is characterised as "another A"; etc. I also observe that besides having a series of the type $A, B, A_1, B_1, A_2, B_2, \ldots$ etc., in gradually fading retentions which vanish altogether at a certain point, I also experience some A_x, which is heard "now", <u>as preceding B_x</u>. This is only possible because <u>in the same moment</u> when I experience A_x as sounding "now", B_x also is already present in my experience in the mode of "not yet there" — I have it in what we may call a 'protention'. If we speak of the experience of any A or B as actually sounding now in terms of having A (or B) in 'intention', we may then describe the formal structure of the whole of this experience of a temporal process as: 'protentions' passing through the stage of being an 'intention' into gradually fading 'retentions'. The structure of this experience is, thus, a central 'intention' perceiving a sound as "being now", embedded in 'protentional' and 'retentional' horizons out of which sounds emerge and into which they fade away 11).

Here we have a reflective description of the individual experience of my listening to the ticking of a w̶ watch. So far it seems to describe nothing more but a small piece of my "personal history". My experience of the sound series, it is true, when given in the reflective attitude, is given as quite independent of, and uninfluenced by, this attitude. My reflection is a pure act of acquaintance with the experience reflected upon, which neither adds anything to its object, nor

11) cf. Edmund Husserl's analysis in "Vorlesungen zur Phänomenologie des inneren Zeitbewußtseins", ed. by Martin Heidegger (1928); § 8.

distorts it in any way. Yet the object-matter described, though given as independent of my observing it, is wholly private in character, being 'my experience of ...'. The difficulty, outlined before, is how this sphere of only privately valid reports on experiences could ever come to possess a definite public validity. I have suggested that this difficulty might be overcome, or, indeed, that it might no longer exist, if intelligible structures could be found contained in the private material. Let us, then, see in which way our present example contains some such intelligible structures.

The feature which distinguishes this experience of a temporal occurrence from, say, an individual object of the "external world", such as a group of trees in the garden, is that we perceive its elements to be related to each other in an intelligible, and not merely in a contingent fashion. With regard to the structure of the experience of time (temporal occurrences) we experience the same necessity, as we did when viewing the relations between the diagonals of a square. We may easily change the particular features of the present case, as we could easily change the individual drawing without changing the relations represented by it. Thus we may replace the tick-tock of the watch by any other regular sequence of sounds. But we cannot change the temporal structure which is contained in all possible cases, this structure being the complicated composition of 'protentions', 'intentions', and 'retentions'. As in the case of the square, we also find that the absence of any one of its elements renders the whole structure impossible. There seems to me to be no possible doubt

that the experience in which we apprehend this structure, is a case of material understanding. And admitting this, it will be difficult to deny that there is a general structure contained in it, - if the above account of material understanding is even substantially correct.

Here, then, we have an instance of a case, not taken from the realms of geometry, where a certain general structure - the object of material understanding - is manifested in an individual experience. It is important to notice that this "being manifested in an individual experience" means "being itself present in this experience (though not identical with it) and being thus directly given". The proposed term 'intuition' finds its application here: the structure of experiences of temporal occurrences is given in intuition. And a description of this structure which could now be furnished in general terms, can claim to be an adequate description of something directly given to the investigator; and although containing general terms and statements, it cannot be said to contain, or to result from, any "abstractions" or "generalisations".

It remains for us to deal with some of the most customary arguments and difficulties which may prove an impediment to an understanding of the preceding considerations.

We often hear it argued that we are never immediately aware - have 'genuine cognitive experiences' of - anything else but individual sense contents and their compositions (e.g. a sequence of sound data), and that notions such as 'temporal sequence' are "abstract concepts", arrived at by abstraction from many cases of

individual sound sequences. This is a typical argument against "universals", and therefore deserves some attention.

To begin with, I, for my part, am unable to understand how one can derive something, say 'T', from a serious of cases, say 'a,b,c', none of which contains 'T'. Indeed, I am unable to see how one could even get hold of any series of cases, if there were nothing which they have "in common", i.e. which occurs in each of them as the same quality. Thus, to get back to our example, I find it hard to imagine how anyone could perceive an individual group of sound data as a 'sequence', if the quality of 'sequenciality' (i.e. the temporal structure of 'protention', 'intention' and 'retention') were not perceived at the same time. Now, it will be said: it is true that a sequence is perceived (and not just data), but this is an entirely individual sequence, hic et nunc occurring, and it is only from a number of such individual sequences that we derive the notion of sequence in general, by abstracting from what is different in each of the cases, and by collecting under a certain name what is similar.

Here, in the first place, I do not think that entities like 'sequences', which are not themselves made of sense data, could ever partake of the individuality that we ascribe to sense data, as little as the general structure of a promise is identical with, or could partake of, the individual matter which forms the contents of that promise. But even if there were individual sequences - and not, as I would prefer to maintain, individual sets of sound data occurring in the form of a sequence - it would still be impossible to understand

how they could be made the basis for an abstraction,
if the result of that operation of abstraction were not
already presupposed: the general quality 'sequence'.
For it is only with respect to something which is in-
stanced in various individual cases that we can recog-
nise these cases as instances of that something (e.g.
'sequence'). The guiding feature which ~~alone~~ alone
allows us to collect a number of cases qua cases (of
sequence) must needs be general, for the very notion
of cases or instances implies a general something of
which these are cases and instances. The empiricist
who arrives at a general concept by abstracting from a
collection of instances, forgets that he could not even
begin to collect instnaces had he not long before per-
ceived a general quality in certain individual sense
data collocations, without which these could never be-
come cases or instnaces 12).

So far I have tried to give reasons why it seems to
me that a closer inspection of the available facts (such
as 'collecting cases') forces us to agree that there is
some kind of direct experience of general structures
or qualities. And thuugh we must certainly agree that
there is a sense in which we never perceive general

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12) This is not asserting, of course, that the empiri-
cal scientist must know the results of his investiga-
tions before he starts. A botanist may collect a num-
ber of plants under the guidance of the general no-
tion "labiatae", and in investigating the examples
so collected he may find generic differences within
this group and discover general properties more, and
more refined, than those he set out with. All I wished
to draw attention to is the fact that all activities
such as comparing, differentiating, collecting, and
colligating, through which scientists arrive at cer-
tain specific results, require some (however vague
at the outset) general notion to become possible.

structures, we must, I think, also agree that there is
another sense in which we do. I do not see why either
of these senses should exclude the other. In experien-
ces such as the experience of a temporal sequence of
sounds, two entirely different types of cognitive ex-
periences are fused, one being the perception of the in-
dividual, sensible, sound data, and the other being con-
cerned with the general structure in which these data
occur. And, although it may be difficult to distinguish
between the two when merely concentrating on the contents
as given through their combination, we are compelled to
draw the distinction when we discover the certainty and
lucidity which is present in that cognitive experience
which is attached to the general structure, and which
would never be obtained from a mere cognition of an
individual set of individual data.

The fact that there are such experiences of general
objects is, furthermore, indicated by the ways in which
we talk about such objects. We say, for instance, "the
centre of a sphere is not extended", or "the diagonal
of a square is a straight line", referring to general
objects (e.g. "centre", "diagonal") in the same manner
as we refer to individual objects when saying "the third
page of this book". This is not to say that our expe-
rience of individual objects (e.g. "this page") are of
the same kind as our experiences of general objects.
There is, indeed, a generic difference between the two,
but the characteristic they have in common is that they
are both experiences of an object which is a genuine,
self-identical unity, and which is itself the immediate
content of a unitary experience of it. The attempts
which have been frequently undertaken in recent years,

of translating statements like "the hypotenuse of a
triangle (in a Euclidean plane) is a straight line" into
statements about "every hypotenuse" or "all hypotenuses",
fail to do justice to the particular state of affairs
which is expressed by "the hypotenuse", and which may
be described as our experiencing a specific general ob-
ject. For the meaning of both these statements is ob-
viously not the same, nor are they "logically equiva-
lent" to the first statement. For this is about an
entity in the singular ("the hypotenuse"), whereas both
the others are about a multitude of entities. And so
far from having the same meaning, the first statement
can be said to entail the other two, whereas these do
not entail the first: it is 'because' the hypotenuse
is a straight line that every hypotenuse which we may
encounter or draw (under the respective conditions)
will be a straight line. And while the first statement
is gbuat something which is given in a special kind of
experience, and adequately reports the contents of this
experience, the second statement is about an infinite
multitude of contents which no-one could possibly ex-
perience; and for this reason it is not, like the first,
wholly warranted and confirmed by an actual experience.

Such translations have their uses in certain con-
nections. But they do not solve, as they often purport
to do, the "mysterious" general referent of the ex-
pression "the hypotenuse" into a multitude of indivi-
dual hypotenuses; for the general referent of "the hypo-
tenuse" is given to us in a clear and distinct type of
cognitive experience which is not in any way changed
or accounted for by the logical translations of the
ways of talking in which we express this experience. It

should be noted here, that I do not use a certain
linguistic fact (viz. that we speak of "the hypotenuse"
instead of "all hypotenuses") as an argument for con-
vincing anyone that there are general objects of which
we are directly aware, but only suggest that this
linguistic usage may be/taken as another indication of
these experiential facts. 13)

One of the main obstacles to a clear recognition of
these experiences, in which we are related to universal
structures, is a confusion which has obsessed the dis-
cussion of this subject ever since Locke propounded
the generality of his famous triangle. It is the con-
fusion of 'universal contents of our awareness' with
'images of our imagination'. It has been thought that
if there were to be "general ideas" at all, these would
have to be somehow of the nature of "individual ideas",
viz. some sort of images (="ideas"). And as one could
hardly fail to recognise that there are no general
images, Hume invented his theory that "a particular idea
becomes general by being annex'd to a general term;
that is, to a term, which from a customary conjunction
has a relation to many other particular ideas, and

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13) In the very limited scope of this chapter it is im-
possible even to mention all the main theories on
"universals", let alone to do justice to any one of
them. Thus, among other things, we must forgo dis-
cussing the opinion that statements about 'universal
structures' can be understood as statements about
a class of individual cases all of which are pos-
sessed of this structure. I believe that classifi-
cation theories of any kind can never serve to
account for the occurrence of universal structures,
as every classification itself presupposes some kind
of universal quality or structure in the objects
classified; cf. note 12), p.56.

readily recøalls them in the <u>imagination</u>" 14). Theories
of this type have lastingly prevailed in large parts of
the philosophical world. But they are fallacious inas-
much as the problem itself, which they are trying to
answer, rests on a misconseption:-

It seems to have been tacitly assumed that the only
way in which a person can ever apprehend a 'universal
object' is that of imagination. There is, however, no
reason why this should be so. It is possible - and,
indeed, it happens throughout most of our conscious
lives - to understand and to conceive of certain things
without ever having any concrete images of them. When
we understand an argument, for instance, the images
which <u>may accompany</u> this understanding <u>do not establish</u>
it. For they could just as well be absent, without
our understanding sufferäng the slightest modification.
Or they may not be at all "to the point". Thus Husserl,
when discussing the irrelevance of imagery to under-
standing, once described himself reading and under-
standing "jede algebraische Gleichung ungeraden Grades
hat mindestens eine reelle Wurzel", while the images
in his mind were the sign "√", a certain type of print,
and a certain writer's book on arithmetic 15). And it
is plainly obvious that anyone who understands the news
that "Parliament has discussed the raising of income-
tax" receives no assistance in his understanding of the
meaning of this sentence from certain mental images of,
say, the House of Commons or of M.P.'s debating, etc.,
which may accompany the hearing of this sentence.

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14) D.Hume, "Treatise" (ed.Selby-Bigge);pp.20-22.My italics
15) E.Husserl, "Logische Untersuchungen"; vol.II,1, §17:
    "Die illustrierenden Phantasiebilder als vermeint-
    liche Bedeutungen".

From this it is clear that we can have insights and understandings of various kinds quite independent of any images accompanying them. In discussing whether we can cognise general objects it is, therefore, a mistake from the very beginning to embark on an investigation of our faculty of imagination, and then to be disconcerted (or satisfied, as the case may be) by the fact that we can find no images which are 'general'. 16)

Having exposed as fallacious the (psychological) attempt to conceive of general objects as 'general images', we must now ward off the metaphysical conception which tends to conceive of general objects as having some existence in some realm 'extra mentem'. Throughout the preceding discussion we have not committed ourselves to any statement as to the 'mode of existence' in which these objects are; not is such a commitment required for the full understanding of our contention that 'there are' general objects. All we mean by this is that those objects are objects of possible predication (such as: "The centre of a square is such and such etc."). When performing such a predication we are aware of the subject of it as an identical unity (Einheit), just as we are aware of "this box" as a self-identical unity when predicating of it that it is heavy or red. Yet the act through which we are aware of the general object is generically different from the one through which we perceive the individual one. This

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16) One of the latest and most thorough critical examinations of Hume's (and other's) theory on abstraction seems to me to be contained in E.Husserl's "Logische Untersuchungen" (1900/01), vol.II,2, "Die ideale Einheit der Spezies und die neueren Abstraktionstheorien".

difference is of a basic nature and, as such, incapable
of explication in terms other then these: one act/as
awareness of a (self-present) individual object, and the
other is awareness of a (self-present) non-individual
object. Both, however, are acts od awareness of a genuine
object, i.e. a unity which cannot be reduced to anything
other than itself. Both allow of perfectly clear and
intelligible predications, i.e. they have attributes,
are in relation to other objects, and so on.

There is no reason whatsoever for postulating any
existence or mode of existence for general objects other
than that of being objects of intelligible predications.
For, while individual objects which are given to us as
'hic et nunc' existing, may well be conceived of as
existing in this mode of spatio-temporal reality, general
objects which are characterised by the very absence of
such 'hic et nunc'-ness, are not capable of any location
in this reality. Whether or not it is possible to deter-
mine their ontological status in any way, is a question
which need not concern us here. The following conside-
rations will employ the notion of general objects only
in so far as it has been here described. Thus when
talking, for instance, of the 'experience of moral appro-
val', this expression will refer to a general object of
possible general predications, as given in an act of
awareness of non-individual contents.

Before conluding this chapter it may not be amiss
to point out that, although this chapter was concentrat-
ing on intelligible general structures, it must not be
inferred that all structures which may be discovered in
the'intentio obliqua' will be thus intelligible. All I
intended to do here was to clear the way for an apprecia-

tion of these structures wherever they can be found.
This does not mean, however, that the following investi-
gation will exclusively be dealing with structures of
this kind. To be sure, there will be a framework of
general and intelligible structures which will form the
central concern of the enquiry - and at this point the
term 'essence' may be introduced to stand for the 'in-
telligible structures' here in question. For it is they
which are the 'essential' nuclei around which the world
of our individual lives crystallises with increasing
specification. But the more we descend into these more
specific layers, the greater the possibility that in-
tuitive understanding may fade, and mere descriptive
understanding may take its place. That is, the descrip-
tive statements advanced will be understood when he who
reads them discovers the reported facts in his own ex-
perience, but no intelligibility of the intuitive kind
will be attahhed to them. To illustrate this by an
example:-

The connection between a colour quale and spatial
extension will be an object of intuitive material un-
derstanding to everybody who contemplates it. The fact,
however, that there are seven main colours is not of the
same intelligibility. The evidence for it is not - as
one might say - 'intellectual' but 'factual'. Communicat-
ing this fact to another person I trust that I will be
understood (descriptively), but this confidence of mine
is only confirmed when the understanding has actually
taken place; whereas intuitive understanding does not
require, and is not capable of, any such confirmation
by others. Finally, a report on the fact (which I may
experience) that a certain shade of blue has a quality

of pleasantness about it while a certain shade of pink
is repulsive, may not be confirmed by anybody else's ex-
perience, though people may be able to understand what
I mean as they may be familiar with the elements (blue,
pleasantness) of which this experience is composed.
There can, however, be cases in which not even this is
possible. Thus a schizophrenic may report on some of
his experiences to which nothing analogous can be traced
in 'normal' people's experiences. In such a case these
reports will remain completely unintelligible.

The following discussion will move on both the levels
of intuitive, and merely descriptive, understanding. It
is hoped, however, that the enquiry, though it will not
always dwell on "essential truths", will at no point
descend below the level of, at least, descriptive intel-
ligibility.

c) "Language".

Having so far dealt with issues comprised under the
titles "introspection" and "universals", we are left
with one more complex of problems which, it seems to me,
are the most difficult ones of all: the problems of
language. Everybody who nowadays proposes to undertake
'descriptive research' in philosophy, will be called upon
to explain what he means by this and how he thinks it
possible. For there is a wide-spread opinion among
philosophers that such research is not possible, as there
is no subject-matter in philosophy which is wholly inde-
pendent of the language in which it may be described.
This recent development of philosophical views on language,
which we connect with the names of Wittgenstein, Carnap,
Reichenbach, Neurath, Russell, Ayer, Ryle, and others,

has cast doubt on the old conviction that language, i.e. words and sentences composed of them, means something which is not itself words and sentences but some sort of non-verbal fact, - a conviction on which the notion of description is wholly based. On this view it appears as if many (or all) " discoveries" which philosophers have believed they were making about certain facts (e.g. the nature of human experience), are conditioned in an essential way by the language they were using when making the discoveries, and that what they did amounts to (though, in their opinion, it rarely was) exploring, or recommending, or inferring from, certain linguistic usages.

It is impossible in the present context to report upon the historical origins of this modern trend of thought, nor can we discuss the many different forms that this view has taken. The task of this preparatory chapter can only be to concentrate upon the special relevance which this doctrine has for the kind of philosophical research here undertaken, and which can be said to lie in the fact that if this doctrine is valid, the method of the following investigation, and the results rendered by this method, are invalid. This may be seen from a first example which will, at the same time, serve to illustrate the type of linguistic analysis upon which I propose to concentrate.
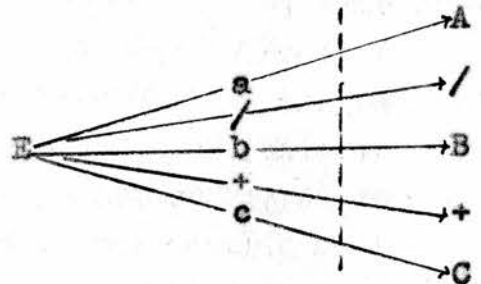
A discussion (say) of the relation between thinking and language might have contained, in a pre-linguistic period, the following statements: "The process of somebody's thinking is in no necessary way connected with his talking to others or to himself, or even with his attempting such talk. Furthermore, it is quite possible that

someone has succeeded in thinking something out, even
though he may be not at all able to formulate in words
the result of his thinking. Etc.". Nowadays, in the
age of "linguistic analysis", we can find the same sub-
ject discussed in a somewhat different fashion: (I
quote from Gilbert Ryle's essay on "Thinking and Language"
17)) "First, to say that someone has been thinking does
not entail that he has been saying or trying to say any-
thing aloud or to himself. Next, to say that he has
succeeded in thinking something out does not entail,
that he is ready or even able to tell in words what he
has thought out. Etc.".

Comparing these two pieces of analysis we find that,
in one respect, they do not seem to have anything in
common at all, the one being about certain ('mental')
occurrences, and the other being about certain state-
ments and their implications. In another respect, how-
ever, they seem to be practically equivalent. This
strange mixture of resemblance and difference may be
understood in the following way.

Let us call the occurrences (facts) in question
"A,B,C", and let us signify the dependency (or indepen-
dency) of one upon the other by "/". Then the fact that
A (=thinking) can occur without B (=speaking) or C
(=trying to speak), may be represented as "A/B+C". Let
us also, for the moment, assume that there are statements
which are statements about facts and let us designate
a statement which states (the fact) "A" by "a", one
which states "B" by "b", and so on. Then, according to
the conception that those statements (a,b,c) are state-
ments about something, we may say, that we 'mean' through
each of them the corresponding object-fact; and then the

connection between the statements "mirrors" a corresponding connection between the facts. If we represent the person who makes the statements (i.e. 'means' the facts) by "E", the annexed graph may be used to illustrate the situation. From this graph the respects in which the two types of analysis differ, and those, in which they are similar, become quite clear: while they are very similar as regards the subject-matter analysed, they are very different as regards the plane on which the analysis is carried out. It appears that the first anglysis investigates (describes) "A/B+C" itself, having as its result statements of the kind "a/b+c"; it is these statements that form the resulting descriptive text. The second ("linguistic") analysis is related to "A/B+C" much less directly. For it is not concerned with A/B+C but with the statements a/b+c which (according to the first theory) "mirror" A/B+C. The object of this second analysis being a/b+c, and these being statements (language-facts), the result of this analysis will have to be expressed in statements which are about statements, and that is, in a language which is about a langauge. Such a language has come to be called a "secondary" or "meta-language", while the one which deals directly with facts such as A/B+C may be called a "primary" language. Now, we can observe that in the primary language as well as

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17) In "Freedom, Language, and Reality"; Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, Supplementary Volume XXV (1951), p.73.

in the secondary language the facts A,B,C are described
in exactly the same way (**viz.** as "someone's thinking",
"his speaking", "his trying to speak"). But we notice
that <u>the relations between them</u> (viz. "/" and "+") under-
go a change according as they are expressed in the pri-
mary or in the secondary language. In the primary
language "/" is described as the fact that a certain
state of affairs (A) can occur independently of a cer-
tain other state of affairs (B+C). In the secondary
language "/" appears as relating two statements and it
is, accordingly, described as the fact that making a
certain statement (a) does not entail making a certain
other statement (b+c). As the result of this comparison
we may then say: the first type of analysis investigates
what other facts are involved by the fact that someone
thinks. The second type of analysis investigates what
other statements are entailed (or not entailed) by the
statement "someone thinks".

The analysis of the structure of facts and their
interrelations is here replaced by an analysis of the
"logical behaviour of concepts", or the "logical grammar
of certain words" 18). And what once appeared to be in-
compatible with the nature of certain facts and was re-
jected for this reason, is now rejected because it is
a "breach of logical rules" 19). Thus a traditional
school (if I may be allowed this vague term for re-
ferring to philosophers who favour the first type of
analysis) might, for example, assert - as the result
of an analysis of certain facts (experiences) - that
the fact that a certain object (say a piece of music)

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18) G.Ryle, "The Concept of Mind"; pp.138,244.
19) Ibid. p.8.

is experienced as pleasant, presupposes (involves, re-
quires as its precondition) the fact that we are related
to this object through acts of attention to it. In
other words: the experience of enjoying something is
necessarily based on an experience of paying attention
to it 20). A modern linguistic analyst, however,
describes this state of affairs in the following way:
"There would be a contradiction in saying that the
music pleased him though he was paying no attention to
what he heard". This contradiction, we are invited to
believe, arises because expressions like "to enjoy some-
thing" entail "paying heed to it". It arises, that is
to say, from the logical behaviour (or grammar) of
words like "to enjoy" 21).

Now, I do not think anyone would wish to deny that
there is a certain plain contradiction contained in this
statement, or that the word "to enjoy" somehow 'entails'
the words "to pay heed to" or similar expressions. But
I suggest that this logical behaviour of "to enjoy" only
mirrors the behaviour of experiences of enjoying some-
thing; and that the word "to enjoy" entails concepts

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20) As an example of such a 'traditional' (continental)
school, I am going to quote a piece from one of the
phenomenological analyses of Dietrich v. Hildebrand:
"Es ist nicht eine Beobachtung, daß in den meisten
Fällen, in denen wir begeistert sind, auch ein Be-
wußtsein von dem Gegenstand bzw. seiner Wertqualität
vorliegt, von dem wir begeistert sind, sondern der
Blick auf ein einziges Beispiel genügt, um zu sehen,
daß es wesenhaft so ist und sein muß, und zwar wo
auch immer Begeisterung vorkommt, gleich ob bei Men-
schen oder anderen Wesen." (From: "Die Idee der
sittlichen Handlung", 1916; in Husserl's "Jahrbuch",
III, p.140/41.

21) "The Concept of Mind", p.132.

such as "to pay heed to", only because the experience
of enjoying something presupposes the experience of
paying heed to it; in short: that the "logical grammar"
of "to enjoy" is what it is only because a certain status
of interrelation between our experiences is what it is.
I should find it exceedingly difficult to discover any
other reason why the logical behaviour of certain words
is what it is, and why we are not at liberty to change it.

But before we decide to examine these doubts we must
pause and resume our initial question: to what extent
we need concern ourselves with this issue in order to
safeguard the understanding (and the validity of the
results) of the following analysis? It might be thought
that the question whether we analyse statements or facts
could as well remain unsettled. It might be suggested
that, no matter whether we call our analysis an "enquiry
into the logical behaviour of the concept 'approval'",
or an "enquiry into the structure of experiences of
approval", the results will be substantially the same.
Indeed, the view might be advanced that the two diffe-
rent titles only represent two different ways of talking,
employed to paraphrase what is, at bottom, one and the
same thing. But such suggestions come to grief on the
following consideration.

It is true that it would be possible to express the
whole of the subsequent descriptive analysis in terms
of a linguistic analysis. For example, instead of saying
(as I shall do) something like this: "The experience of
recognising a certain thing as belonging to someone else
contains the experience of a certain claim not to use
it without his permission", I might say: "The statement
that something belongs to someone else entails the

statement that I ought not to use it unpermitted".
This linguistic way of putting the matter may be satis-
factory in some epistemological or ontological connec-
tions. In an ethical connection the difference between
the two ways of putting things is of eminent consequence:
If a certain experience, A, which many people may have,
contains (as is made explicit by analysis) a certain
experience of a (moral) claim, B, then people who have
the experience A can be said to be under the moral claim
B, and from this certain normative statements as well
as moral judgements may be validly derived 22). But if
a certain statement A entails a certain statement B,
nothing of this kind can be derived at all. For all we
have ascertained by the linguistic analysis is certain
relations of entailment in a certain language, and from
that all we can derive is that people who do not use
these statements (or expressions) in this way commit
a breach of the logical rules of (their) language.
(Note that not even non-hypothetical statements to the
effect that people should conform with these rules can
be derived from this analysis). It is perfectly clear
that statements of this kind do not provide any gound
for deriving certain normative statements about how
people ought to behave, or any value judgements about
how they do behave or have behaved.

This consideration must not be mistaken for a
pragmatical one. All I wished to point out was the
ethical relevance of the difference between the two
kinds of philosophical analysis. But I do not consider
the fact that the one allows us to account for value

22) cf. the discussion in III,3 of this paper.

judgements and normative statements and the other does
not, as any reason at all for preferring the one to the
other, let alone as a reason for calling the one "ade-
quate" and the other "inadequate". Conclusions of this
kind can only be arrived at by a consideration of the
nature of the two different methods. It follows, then,
that such a consideration will have to be undertaken,
at least to a certain extent, in preparation of the
following enquiry.

It may be mentioned at the beginning that my concern
here is mainly with that type of linguistic analysis
which I have already indicated by some examples 23).
I shall attempt to deal with the tenet of those linguists
only who hold that certain problems or issues which some
philosophers have thought to be questions of fact are
really only questions of words, i.e. that certain philo-
sophical issues are not factual but linguistic in nature.
And with this theory I shall have to quarrel especially
with regard to its claim that the intelligibility and

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23) With certain other theories of language I shall not
concern myself at all, as they have no direct bearing
on the present subject. Thus the book of Ogden and
Richards "The Meaning of Meaning" attempts "to out-
line an account of thinking in purely causal terms
without any introduction of unique relations invented
ad hoc" (p.50). This attempt seems to me wrong in
the very formulation of its problem. For, to phrase
it linguistically, the logical behaviour of the con-
cept 'thinking' is such that we cannot attach meaning
to the proposition "to investigate thinking causally".
We can, however, attach meaning to the proposition
"to investigate brain-processes, nerve stimuli, etc.,
causally". The problem of the book, therefore, is
vitiated by the fallacious (though fashionable) iden-
tification of concepts such as "thinking" and "talk-
ing" with concepts such as "physical and physiologi-
cal processes in brain and body".

generality which we may believe to discover in a certain material are, in fact, the intelligibility and universality of certain logical implications, based on their purely analytical nature. The discussion will take the form of an examination of a passage from A.J.Ayer's book "The Foundations of Empirical Knowledge" which, I think, is a good example of the type of linguistic analysis here in point.

In this book, in a section on "The Privacy of Personal Experience" 24), Ayer remarks about an analysis of Professor Stace 25), who pointed out that all experiences are characterised as 'my experiences', that this, and some similar remarks, are trivial. "For what is it, after all,", Ayer asks, "that prevents one person from having the experiences of another? Why is it impossible for me to have someone else's pains, or to feel his emotions ... ?" And his answer is: "The barriers that prevent us from enjoying one another's experiences are not natural but logical ... It is not inconceivable that there should be people who were capable of having one another's pains, or feeling one another's emotions. And the reason why this is inconceivable is simply that we attach no meaning to such expressions as 'I am experiencing your headache', 'she is feeling his remorse'" etc. 26). And, again, a little later on: "It is impossible that the same experience should be part of the history of two separate selves. But the reason why this is impossible is simply that there is no usage of such expressions as 'being numerically the same' that is

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24) A.J.Ayer, "The Foundations of Empirical Knowledge"; p.136.
25) Stace, "Theory of Knowledge"; p.68.
26) "Foundations"; pp.138,139.

applicable to the experiences of two different people."
And Ayer concludes that he has "thus traced the privacy
of experience to the acceptance of a verbal convention"
27). He, however, rightly anticipates that now he "may
be faced with the question whether this convention is
arbitrary". To this he replies after the following
fashion: "The answer is that every verbal convention
is arbitrary in the trivial sense that, however we may
use words, it is always conceivable that we should have
used them otherwise; but at the same time we use words
to describe matters of fact, and while it is never true
of any set of facts that there is one and only one pos-
sible way of describing them, it may depend to some ex-
tent upon the nature of the facts that we find it con-
venient to describe them in one way rather than another.
In the present case, we do not find it convenient to use
expressions that would imply that different people could
have numerically identical experiences; but it is not
difficult to imagine circumstances in which we should
be inclined to give such expressions a meaning." 28).

I have quoted these passages from Ayer's book at some
length, as I think they show particularly lucidly the
nature of this linguistic analysis as well as the dif-
ficulties involved in it. We may divide the piece of
reasoning as it is contained in these quotations into
two parts: a) The tracing of a matter of fact (or, more
exactly, of what appears to be a matter of fact) to the
acceptance of a verbal convention; and b) Defence of this
convention against the objection that it is arbitrary.
I shall at first attempt to criticise the first part of
the argument.

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27) "Foundations"; p.139,140.
28) Ibid. p.140.

Ayer asserts that the impossibility in question
(viz. of experiencing another person's pain) is "not
natural but logical". He says "it is not conceivable
that there should be people who were capable of having
one another's pains ... and the reason why this is in-
conceivable is simply that we attach no meaning to such
expressions as 'I am experiencing your headache'," etc. .
Here, at first, one feels tempted to suggest that this
piece of reasoning would be much more intelligible if
it were turned exactly the other way round, so as to
run: "We do not attach any meaning to the statement
'I am experiencing his headache'; and the reason for
this is simply that it is inconceivable that there
should be people who feel one another's pains". But
this is the very opposite of what Ayer wishes to assert,
and the fact that it appears to be more intelligible
to some people might be put down to their misguided
philosophical habits. We must, therefore, be more
accurate in establishing our point.

The fact that one can completely reverse the reason
and the consequence of the argument without being imme-
diately certain as to which way of arguing makes more
sense and which less - or which does make sense and which
does-not - does, at any rate, indicate the point I wish
to make: that which, in Ayer's argument, purports to be
a reason for a certain fact is, in fact, nothing but a
restatement of that very same fact in a different manner.
"It is not conceivable that there should be people who
experience one another's pains" and "We do not attach
any meaning to such statements as 'I am experiencing his
headache'", are two ways of stating the same fact (viz.
that all experiences are private). They differ, however,

in that they are related to each other after the manner
in which a general rule (or the statement of it) is re-
lated to a particular instance of that rule (or the
statement of it). The first statement states in general
that a certain state of affairs is inconceivable; and
the second asserts that we do not attach any meaning to
the formulation of special instances of that state of
affairs. This second statement is inaccurate, at that.
For we do attach enough meaning to statements about
such instances (e.g. "I am experiencing his headache")
to recognise them as stating instances of that (general-
ly) inconceivable state of affairs. There is all the
difference in the world between understanding a state-
ment (e.g. "I am experiencing his headache") and re-
cognising it as being about a state of affairs which is
impossible (inconceivable), and "attaching no meaning to
a statement" (as, e.g., to the statement "Quadruplicity
drinks procrastination" 29) we do attach no meaning).
What the second statement of Ayer's really asserts is,
therefore, that we recognise statements like "I am ex-
periencing his headache" as stating an inconceivability.
And this fact, then, that we recognise certain state-
ments as stating instances of a generally inconceivable
state of affairs, <u>we are offered as the reason why that
state of affairs is generally inconceivable.</u> This is much
like saying: the fact that we recognise statements like
"Caesar died" as stating an instance of the general mor-
tality of man, constitutes the reason why all men are
mortal. I think, therefore, that the relation between
the above two statements which purports to be one of
reason and consequence, is simply nothing of this kind,

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29) The example is B. Russell's.

and the argument completely fails to establish what it
sets out to prove.

The fact, then, that we do not attach any meaning
to certain statements about certain states of affairs
cannot be accepted as the reason why these states of
affairs are inconceivable. This, I think, exposes
Ayer's argument in that passage as fallacious. But we
are still left with his interesting, though not validly
justified, assertion that the discussed inconceivability
is of a purely logical nature. And "logical", as appears
from his later statements, here means that talk which is
in this way logically inconceivable commits breaches of
certain rules of usage that we have come to adopt. As
to this interpretation, which, as everybody knows, is
by no means confined to Ayer's theory of language, the
following may be said:-

The whole issue here in question can (or could) only
arise because certain persons (e.g. "all normally in-
telligent English speaking adults") do experience such
talk as inconceivable. For if they did not, the issue
which Ayer, and others, are concerned with, would not
exist; or, to put it linguistically, the logical rule
to use the expression "inconceivable" in the respective
verbal contexts would not have come into being. But if
there is such an experience of inconceivability whenever
such talk is heard or read - and, I think, many linguists
will admit that there is - then we may ask whether the
interpretation of this inconceivablility as "logical"
(in the sense explained) is warranted by those experien-
ces. I think, the answer to this must be that it is not.

When we say "It is inconceivable that some people

should be capable of feeling other people's pain", we think of people's, and especially of our own, possibilities, and we recognise that nobody can feel someone else's pain. This will come out more clearly when demonstrated with the positive counterpart of this example: We may say, or think, "All experiences are essentially characterised as 'my experiences'". This, as a linguist would hasten to point out, is stating a tautology about the word "experience", the rule about it being "that there is no usage of such expressions as 'being numerically the same' that is applicable to the experiences of two different people". To say "All experiences are essentially my experiences" is, therefore, only to say that the word "experience" is being used as it is being used. What appears (to philosophers who are "deceived by grammar" 30)) to be the "essential relation" between an entity ("experience") and its quality ("mine-ness") is, in fact, only a relation of logical (analytical) necessity.

What people actually refer to, however, when making the above statement, is not "rules of usage" or "linguistic" facts. The referents of their utterances are certain (for instance temporal) occurrences and certain qualities belonging to these occurrences. And the relation between the two is experienced as a material relation between things (occurrences) and their properties (attending circumstances), and not as a logical relation between words. Many linguists, again, would agree that this is how we experience the referents of our statements. But in experiencing them thus, they say, we are deceived. We have developed this way of expe-

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30) Ayer, "Language, Truth, and Logic"; p.45 (of the edition London 1948).

riencing the world through certain habits, "misled by
a superficial grammatical feature of our language" 31).
The weight of the empirical evidence, however, provided
by the way in which we continue to experience the world,
even though we may believe this way to be deceptive, is
not so easily discarded. I, for my part, find the
linguist's myth about the creative powers of our language-
habits, which finally effect our experiencing a world
composed of things, properties, and relations, no less
obscure than the alleged myth about the "reality" of
things and properties, etc., is supposed to be. What
the famous "elimination of metaphysics" actually amounts
to is the shifting of a set of obscure and unintelligi-
ble issues from out of the domain of "metaphysics" into
the new domain of philosophical analysis of language,
where they are burked, or only allowed to appear in the
metaphysically innocuous-looking disguise of "habits",
"language behaviour", "stimulus and reaction", "asso-
ciation", and the like. I do not think that we have
gained much insight into the nature of anything (e.g.
the privacy of our experience) when we have traced it
to a verbal convention, unless this explanation should
be supplemented by an account of how we have come to
adopt this convention. Therefore, before we can attempt
to reach a final conclusion about the linguistic pro-
cedure, we will have to examine how, within the frame-
work of this procedure, such accounts can be given.

This, then, brings us to the second and greatest
difficulty of the theory of linguistic analysis: the
criteria for the choice of a certain "linguistic con-
vention". Ayer's view, which may, again, be taken as

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31) "Language, Truth, and Logic"; p.42.

exemplary for the view under discussion, we have already
quoted from his book. There he states that "we do use
words to describe matters of fact, and while it is never
true of any set of facts that there is one and only one
possible way of describing them, it may depend to some
extent upon the nature of the facts that we find it con-
venient to describe them in one way rather than in an-
other"." 32). The reason, then, why we agree on a cer-
tain verbal convention (with regard to a certain state
of affairs) seems to be that we "find it convenient".
And which way of describing we find more convenient, we
are told, "may depend to some extent upon the nature of
the facts". At so vital a point of the whole argument
one would have liked to have a more definite statement
as to how, when, and to what extent the "nature of the
facts" determines what we "find convenient". But, un-
fortunately, here the author's usual clarity breaks down.

The crucial point is "the nature of the facts". It
appears from the above statement as well as from many
other passages (some of which I shall refer to later),
that Ayer admits of some nature of the facts which is
independent of the language in which we choose to talk
about it. Here, then, the question becomes extremely
interesting how far the "facts" are what they are be-
cause of their "nature", and to what extent they are
what they are because we talk about them in a certain
way. For example: we may say "There was a dazzling
white flash of lightning, followed by loud thunder".
Ayer would allow that this is one legitimate way of
talking about a certain event X, namely the way of every-
day language. The same (!) event X, however, may also

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32) My italics.

be described as "a white colour datum occupying such
and such a position in my field of vision, followed by
a sound datum". Or it may be described as "an electrical
discharge between two clouds". And adopting yet another
way one might describe it as "certain perceptual occur-
rences in the human organism"; and so on. Ayer, very
rightly, points out that those philosophers are mistaken
who are puzzled by the incompatibility of these descrip-
tive statements (about the same X), or who quarrel as
to which one primary importance should be given. These
philosophers would argue, for instance, that a flash of
lightning cannot, at the same time, be a colour datum,
for while it can set houses on fire and kill people, a
colour datum or a perceptual occurrence can effect no
such things. And while an electrical discharge can effect
such happenings, it is, again, not an electrical dis-
charge that we see when seeing a flash of lightning, etc..

Ayer's way out of this difficulty is to suggest that
the differences between these statements are linguistic,
i.e. they are differences of verbal convention and not
differences of fact. There is not a "flash of lightning"
and a "colour datum" and an "electrical discharge", but
these are different ways of talking about the same set
of facts, which we can change or replace by each other
according to any rule that we may stipulate, without
learning anything new about any matter of fact. Let us
try to understand this point of Ayer's with the aid of
some further examples.

In another chapter of "The Foundations of Empirical
Knowledge", for instance, we read that "there is no
accepted meaning of the expression 'direct awareness'".
Ayer thinks, however, that "we should ordinarily say

that we were directly aware of any object our belief in
the existence of which was based upon sense experience
and did not involve any conscious form of inference".
"But if", he continues, "the expression 'direct aware-
ness' is used in this sense, then it will be true to
say that we are directly aware of material things, such
as chairs and tables and pens" (for our belief in the
existence of these things often does not involve any
processes of conscious inference) 33). Ayer seems here
to imply that _if_ we define the expression "direct aware-
ness" differently - and as "there is no accepted meaning"
of it we are at liberty to do so - other statements will
be true. How, then, if we stipulate that this expression
should be used where (and only where) conscious processes
of reasoning and inference _do_ precede our belief in the
existence of certain facts? Will it then be "true" that
we are directly aware of sense data, molecular structures,
atomic movements, and the like? I do not see how on the
grounds of the above stipulation - and nothing else but
rules of verbal usage are supposed to be here concerned -
the conclusion that this statement is true could be es-
caped. Yet we hesitate to believe it. Such hesitation
indicates the fact that "direct awareness" _has_ an accep-
ted meaning: it designates (being a descriptive symbol)
a certain, non-verbal, state of affairs, which may also
be described (though not exhaustively) by "absence of
conscious processes of inference". And the position here
is not that a symbol "direct awareness" has been stipu-
lated to be replaceable by a symbol "absence of conscious
inference", but that these two symbols are descriptive
of one and the same state of affairs.

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33) "Foundations"; p.60.

Now it is true that we are at perfect liberty to choose which symbols should designate which states of affairs; and what Ayer calls the "ordinary usage" is the convention in a certain language to use certain symbols for certain states of affairs. This convention is in no way binding, and although it may be confusing to change it (because people find it psychologically difficult to detach certain symbols from the state of affairs - or: the reference to the state of affairs - which they were usually employed to designate), it is perfectly possible to do so. Thus if we should decide to let the symbol "to be angry with" take the place that was (conventionally) held by the symbol "to be directly aware of", and if it is true that we are directly aware of sense data (according to the old convention), we will be making a meaningful and true statement when saying "We are angry with sense data". But the philosopher who has discovered this possibility of language (viz. to make statements true by definition), should not be gulled by that into the belief that the referents of these statements are likewise malleable, and that by replacing a set of symbols (a) by another set of symbols (b) the referent of (a) has also been replaced by the referent of (b). For such a dependency of the facts on the way in which they are formulated cannot be shown. There is, for instance, a certain experience which in the ordinary convention is referred to by the symbols "to be directly aware of material things". This experience, which a certain number of human beings continually have, will continue to be what it is, even though that particular way of referring to it may have been abolished. Thus when we accept Ayer's suggestion that "directly aware of" should only be used in connec-

tion with sense contents, this does not imply that we
cease to have those experiences of material things. It
only implies that we would now be wrong (i.e. we would
no longer be making a true statement) when saying "we
are directly aware of chairs, tables , and pens", be-
cause "directly aware" has been given a new referent
which does not fit into the former contents. And thèse
former contents would, under these new conditions, be
undescribable until another symbol has been appointed
to refer to what was formerly referred to by the symbol
"to be directly aware of".

If this example has succeeded in illustrating the
point I wish to make, it will be clear that, while the
fact that we use certain symbols (= collocations of
letters - sounds - and groups of such collocations) to
designate certain states of affairs is wholly a matter
of convention, these states of affairs themselves (i.e.
the referents of descriptive symbols) are not. And if
this consideration is only substantially correct it will
be clear also that philosophers who state, for instance,
that "it is a matter of convention that any pain that
I feel is numerically different from any pain that is
felt by you", or who believe they have traced "the
privacy of experience to the acceptance of a verbal con-
vention", have fallen into confusion. For, as to the
first statement, all that is a matter of convention is
the fact (rule) that we use the symbol "numerically dif-
ferent" in such a way that it designates a certain ele-
ment in a certain state of affairs, namely, in this case,
that element in a set of experiences of more than one
person which forces us to distinguish between 'my ex-
perience' and that of someone else. We are, indeed, at

liberty to refer to this element - which, according to
the present convention,is the referent of "numerically
different" - by any other collocation of letters or
sounds, or, for that matter, by none at all. In this
last case we would have removed the possibility of
describing this particular element, and of describing
sufficiently any states of affairs of which it is part.
But I do not see how it could possibly follow from this
liberty as to our nomenclature that, if we have not yet
established - or if we have ceased to use - a certain
symbol, certain states of affairs do not yet exist -
or have ceased to be the case. Furthermore, if it is
said, that "any pain that I feel" is an expression which
according to our usage entails "any pain which is not
felt by you", and that then saying "any pain that I feel
is numerically different from any pain that you feel" is
stating a tautology, this is nothing that I would wish
to quarrel with. But this tautology, so far from being
the reason why we believe our experiences to be private,
must be understood as a verbal convention that arose
because we experience certain sets of affairs (such as
the one commonly denoted by "privacy of experience") to
be the case.

If we are at all to attach any meaning to Ayer's
statement that "it may depend to some extent upon the
nature of the facts that we find it convenient to de-
scribe them in one way rather than another", I think
we must construe it to mean that we adapt our verbal
conventions to what we experience to be the case. For
in order to illustrate this statement of his, Ayer de-
scribes a fictitious state of affairs where two persons,
A and B, both experience the same pain in B's leg, and

he says, if this would frequently be the case "we should eventually alter our way of speaking so as to allow ... of there being only a single feeling of pain which was experienced by both A and B 34). From this illustration of his it seems to me clear that what he paraphrases, somewhat misleadingly, as our "finding it convenient" is, in fact, our adapting the rules of usage to whichever state of affairs we desire to express.

Similarly, I find it difficult to understand Ayer when he asserts that he has "traced the privacy of experience to the acceptance of a verbal convention". Does he imply that he has shown that there is no such state of affairs at all and only a certain way of talking (which, then, would be talking about nothing); or does he want to say that he has shown our belief in the privacy of experience to be a consequence of a certain verbal convention (for the acceptance of which, then, there would be no reason at all)? I think he must mean the latter alternative. But that would be in principle the same as saying: the specific gravity of gold is higher than that of mercury, because scientists have accepted the convention of describing the specific gravity of mercury by the symbol "14" and that of gold by the symbol "19". And why should he, as I am sure he would, reject this same way of arguing from language in the scientist's case, and embrace it in that of "ordinary usage"? The reason, I think, is, that he holds the belief that only physical occurrences are "facts" (= independent states of affairs), whereas human experiences are not. And this brings us to the last part of our critical discussion of Ayer's conception of the relation between language and facts.

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34) "Foundations"; p.142.

Ayer does not deny that there is some relation between verbal symbols and facts. In fact, he explicitly asserts that there is such a relation. The fact that any symbolic expression can be replaced by another, he says 35), "does not mean, as some philosophers have supposed, that we are imprisoned in language. In the end we verify the proposition ... by having an experience. We interpret a symbol by another; but it is only because this circle is broken by our actual experiences that any descriptive symbol comes to be understood.". And a little earlier on in the same context he concludes his discussion of the meaning of a statement in this way: "I conclude, then, that to say what a symbol means is not to relate it to an object, but to give it an interpretation in terms of other symbols; and in the case of a purely formal symbol that fact that it bears a certain specifiable relation to other symbols is a sufficient condition of its having a meaning. In the case of a descriptive symbol, on the other hand, this is not sufficient. To understand a descriptive symbol, it is not enough that I should know the formal rules for combining it with other symbols, or for deriving other symbols from it. <u>I must also know what actual situations would be proper occasions for its use</u>. In the case of an empirical proposition, I must know what are the circumstances in which it would be true. Now it may be partly a matter of deriving one sentence from another; <u>but at some point I must come to a proposition which I am prepared to accept or reject in virtue of some actual situation</u>. And then my understanding of the sentence which is said to express this

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35) In his Inaugural Lecture on "Thinking and Meaning" (London 1947); p.28.

proposition is my being disposed to hold the proposi-
tion true when I actually have the relevant experience.
Were this not so, the sentence would not be intelligible
to me; so far as I am concerned it would have no descrip-
tive meaning.".

From these statements it is clear that Ayer holds
that there is a verification of descriptive statements
through non-verbal occurrences; but from his former state-
ments it becomes also clear, that he does not hold state-
ments like "All experiences are private" or "I am direct-
ly aware of material things" to be descriptive in this
sense. We may therefore now formulate our objection
to Ayer's procedure (and that is: to linguistic analysts
of his type) by saying, that he excludes certain forms
of empirical evidence, and, accordingly, of genuinely
descriptive statements, in confining the realm of pos-
sible referents of "basic propositions" to sense expe-
rence. Such a restriction is painfully inadequate.
It banishes a wealth of fact material (i.e. of expe-
riences which human beings have) from the field of
philosophical descritpion and interpretation, either
annihilating it altogether, or handing it over to the
sciences where it suffers inadequate treatment at the
hands of modern (experimental) psychologists. And,
though it is a matter of convention to which kinds of
investigation we give the name "philosophy", it is not
a matter of convention which kinds of analysis are ad-
equate for which kinds of objects.

It will have appeared from the preceding chapters,
and it will be stated more explicitly in the following
part of this paper, that, and why, I wish to extend the
notion of the "empirically given" beyond data which are

sensed with one of our (five) senses, i.e. beyond the
realm of those experiences which we observe to be
accompanied by physical and physiological occurrences
at or in our bodies. I think the realms of the
"empirically given" are such that statements like "I am
directly aware of material things" or "The difference
between a chair and a table is different in type from
the difference between a chair and a person", are basic
descriptive propositions in the sense of Ayer's descrip-
tive symbols which can only be verified by "actual ex-
perience".

To extend the realm of the given in this sense does
not involve us in any of the difficulties mentioned be-
fore, e.g. that it would then be contradictory if some-
one described something (by a basic descriptive propo-
sition) as "seeing a thing", and someone else, apparent-
ly referring to the same referent, described it (by
another basic descriptive proposition) as "seeing a
conglomeration of colour patches". The view that these
äre linguistic differences will only have to be replaced
by the view that they are statements about different ex-
periences which people may have with regard to (say,
physically) the same object. Thus the statements (in
which "this" denotes always - physically- the same re-
ferent) "I experience this to be extended colour patches",
"I experience this to be a chair", " ... to be an arte-
fact", " ... to be a spatial object", " ... to be some
entity which lasts unchanged through a certain period
of time", etc., can all be true in the sense in which
basic descriptive propositions can be true; for they
are about different aspects of an object, or about the
respective experiences of these aspects.

The alleged quarrel whether we see "things" or
"colour patches" is therefore indeed idle. Not, however,
because it is a quarrel about words, but because it
rests on an assumed incompatibility between types of
experience which, in fact, does not exist. We sometimes,
or in certain respects, see colour patches, shapes, or
hear sounds, without their being ordered into some "thing"
or any other order that would make us recognise it as
"something"; and at other times, or in other respects,
we see chairs and tables, or hear the rain, motorcycles,
and tunes. As long as both these experiences occur,
the respective propositions about them will be descrip-
tively true. I am unable to see what is incompatible
about them, let alone why their incompatibility should
drive one to accept Ayer's suggestion that the dif-
ferences are of a merely linguistic nature.

4) The Phenomenological Method.

The history of the attempts to understand and to
define what is "philosophy" or "philosophical activity",
is the history of so many failures. The reason for this
is, I think, that philosophy, being a desire for (and a
practice of) a particularly comprehensive and thorough
way of understanding things, cannot itself be under-
stood, just as the desire to look at something cannot
itself be looked at. No form of asking such questions
as "What is philosophy?", "Why do men philosophise?",
or "Why do we desire to understand things?", can help
being itself an expression of that which it sets out
to determine. We may be able to describe what it is

like to understand something, but we cannot say why
we desire an understanding of things; for desiring to
understand why we desire to understand involves us in
as vicious a regress as, for instance, our attempting
to reflect upon the reflecting ego.

For present purposes we may be content to leave it
at that and to conceive of philosophy simply and vaguely
as a desire for, and practice and expression of, as
comprehensive and thorough an understanding of as wide
a field as is accessible to human beings. Philosophy,
thus conceived, has two stages of enquiry: 1) Recording
what phenomena (experiences, facts, etc.) there are and
determining their character and interrelation; 2) trying
to interpret these phenomena thereby to procure such
understanding of them as cannot be obtained by mere
description. The first stage may be called the "descrip-
tive stage", and the second the "interpretative stage".
In the descriptive stage only descriptive or intuitive
material understanding - and, within certain limits,
hermeneutical understanding - can be obtained. The in-
terpretative stage is characterised by the intention of
the investigator to get beyond these forms of understand-
ing (i.e. beyond those which are yielded by the directly
given material), and to interpret the directly given in
terms of what is not immediately given. Thus it is
hoped that certain forms of more comprehensive (herme-
neutical or other) understanding will be made available[36].

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36) For a special discussion of these two stages of philo-
sophical enquiry and their relation to each other see
my article "Descriptive Interpretation", which is due
to appear in one of the next issues of the Journal
"Philosophy and Phenomenological Research", ed. by
Marvin Farber, Buffalo.

Most philosophical theories we know are of an interpretative nature. They try to explain (= procure understanding for) why some (or all) things are what they are, and how it is that we experience the world in the way we do. There is always the attempt to penetrate through the surface of phenomena and to find their "grounds", "roots", "reasons", "sources", "causes", etc.. Rarely much attention has been given to descriptive accounts of this surface itself, though, of course, no philosopher has done, and could do, quite without them. Historically ("geistesgeschichtlich"), it would be interesting to examine the prevailing of either of these tendencies throughout the ages. There has been much descriptive philosophising in ancient philosophy, so, for example, with the pre-Socratics (notably Parmenides), with Aristotle, and with the Stoa. In the scholastic ages, and especially during the subsequent epistemological period starting with Descartes, interpretative trends predominate. It is only since the beginning of this century that - in continental philosophy, at any rate - descriptive philosophy has again gained ground, and has been practised with unequalled purity and precision. Philosophers begin to be contented with a mere recording and registring of 'what there is' or 'what is given'('das Gegebene'), and they renounce a "deeper" understanding of the given phenomena by theoretical interpretation 37). Noticing some trends in literature and poetry which seem to show a similar tendency towards a mere expressing - and, in places, praising - of what there is 38), one is tempted to wonder whether

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37) This trend has found its main expression in the so-called "Phenomenological School".

38) Notably in the poetry of R.M.Rilke.

fundamental changes in our (i.e. the 20th century European's) relation to the world announce themselves.

However, whether or no a fundamental change in philosophical thinking is about to happen, the present paper will be confined to the descriptive stage only. This stage is, of course, in no way dependent on the interpretative one, though this, in its turn, presupposes it. Thus I only wish here to supplement by a brief outline those remarks on the nature of this philosophical description which have already been passed in the course of this introduction.

For descriptive research to be undertaken in any domain of facts, three formal conditions must be fulfilled. As the main concern of the present enquiry is not with a method of description itself (but this will only be used as an instrument for material analysis), all that is required at this point is a formal characterisation of these conditions:

A) We are aware of certain contents which are characterised as being independent (as regards their existence and nature) of our being aware of them. They are furthermore characterised as possessed of certain material qualities and of certain structures, as interrelated with other contents, and as (relatively) permanent.

B) We are also aware of the fact that we can fix our attention upon any of these contents, and that in doing so we may discover details of a certain content which have escaped our previous acquaintance with it. Thus we may often have seen, and, indeed, we may be quite familiar with, the pattern of the carpet in our room. But should we suddenly decide to pay particular atten-

tion to this pattern, or to parts of it, we are likely
to detect items which had been unnoticed before. Such
newly discovered elements of a content of awareness will
also be given as independent of our attending to them.
They are given as part of the contents which we always
noticed and are connected with them either in the way
of factual (as in the case of the carpet), or of essen-
tial relation. (Thus we may draw someone's - reflective -
attention to the fact that when he enjoys an object, say,
a piece of music, there is also an experience of merely
perceiving this object, which, of necessity, underlies
the act of enjoying it, though it is clearly distinct
from it. Then the person whose attention has been drawn
to this fact may say: "Yes, you are right, I can see
this connection and it's necessary; but I had never
noticed it before.", and in this case we have performed
a piece of descriptive elucidation of an essential re-
lation within some given material. This elucidation,
however, involves a further condition:-)

C) We are also aware of our ability to attach certain
symbols to the contents of our awareness, to their parts
and elements, and to relations obtaining between them.
As these symbols are themselves certain contents of our
awareness (although different in type), to attach a
symbol to a content is to establish a relation between
two contents of our awareness. Such a relation between
a symbol-content and a non-symbolic-content we may call
a relation of reference. Wherever the same relation of
reference is also established between the same contents
of awareness 39) with one or several other persons, we

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39) The talk about "the same contents" does, of course,
not mean 'numerical identity'. It refers to what had
better be called (more or less) complete resemblance.

may call the symbol that forms the one relatum of the
relation of reference an 'intersubjective symbol'. Any
set of such symbols, if they are interrelated in a way
corresponding to the interrelation of the contents re-
ferred to by the symbols, will be called 'descriptive'
(of those contents).

In short, then: Wherever (A) a certain content of
the kind specified above is given, and we are (B) aware
of the possibility of concentrating, or at least of
attempting to concentrate, upon this content in order
to apprehend it in greater detail, and also (C) of the
possibility of fixing the possible results of such a
scrutiny (viz. the detailed structures laid bare) by
certain (constant) symbols, - we can be said to be able
to give a description of the contents in question. If
there are other persons with, at least partly, the same
contents of awareness as mine, and if at least some of
the symbols I use are intersubjective, I can expect to
convey at least some of the results of my descriptive
investigation to other people. I think there is some
evidence that these conditions are, at least to a large
extent, fulfilled. But it would take us too far afield
to attempt to produce this evidence here, even in a
superficial manner.

It will have been noticed that the facts (conditions)
offered here as evidence for the possibility of descrip-
tion, are themselves descriptively evident facts. That
is to say, all evidence that one can hope to adduce for
the existence of these facts is, that (other) people are
aware of them. I believe that the three facts pointed
out are very basic elements in everybody's experience
of the world, and that to point them out borders on

triviality. Yet we cannot know this with perfect cer-
tainty. Perfect certainty, however, can be obtained
for the fact that, wherever the above conditions (A,B,C)
are given, an attempt to describe certain contents can
justifiably be undertaken.

This rough outline of the possibility of description
finishes the introductory methodological discourse, and
it only remains for us to fit together the results estab-
lished by it into the conception of a unified and coherent
method.

It can easily be seen that the three steps of
a) assuming the reflective attitude ('intentio obliqua'),
b) trying to discover coherent and possibly intelligible
    structures in the field of objects there discbosed,and
c) describing the structures thus discovered,
form a single, unified method of investigation. The
method thus formed is not here propounded for the first
time. And although I do not think that any guaranty of
its suitability in the present case can be derived from
its former application in other cases, it may not be
amiss to bear in mind the historical context into which
we place ourselves by taking up this kind of philosophi-
cal research.

The student of German philosophical developments
during this century will have recognised that in the
preceding methodological reflections I have aimed at
establishing that which he knows under the name of
"phenomenology" ("Phänomenologie"). This method, in-
troduced by Edmund Husserl at the turn of the century,
has been a considerable stimulus to continental philo-
sophy, and philosophers of such very different outlooks

as Nicolai Hartmann, Martin Heidegger, Karl Jaspers,
and Jean Paul Sartre have been strongly influenced by
it. It has assumed a variety of rather different forms,
in some cases (as in Husserl's own) giving rise to plain
idealism, in others (as, e.g. in Hartmann's) furnishing
the preparatory method for a realistic ontology. It
has been used as an instrument of simple psychological
description (so by A.Pfänder), and it has also provided
the basis for highly metaphysical speculations (as in
parts of the writings of Max Scheler and Hedwig Conrad-
Martius); it can also be traced in the ancestry of the
so-called "existentialism" which raged on the continent
only a few years ago.

I need not here enlarge upon the complicated forms
which the phenomenological method assumed later in the
development of Husserl's own philosophy (becoming a
"transzendentale Phänomenologie" 40)); nor is our
present form of it directly derived from any other
special manifestation of it. It will be found consider-
ably changed when compared to the method of Husserl, as
the concept of a "transzendentales Bewußtsein" has been
abandoned, and his notion of "acts of consciousness" has
been strongly modified. The present method will be
found "unorthodox" in this and in many other respects.
But being a philosophical method it will either be self-
supporting, and will establish its own rights within the
course of this paper, or, if it does not, the claim that
it is orthodox phenomenology would hardly reconcile us
to the failure. Thus I omit all historical reviews of
phenomenology and proceed to conclude this chapter with

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40) cf. Husserl's article "Phenomenology" in the
Encyclopedia Britannica.

a brief systematical account of the phenomenological
·method as it will actually be employed throughout the
following analysis.

As a starting point for an understanding of the pe-
culiar character of this method we may take the outline
of the reflective attitude as given in 3,a of this part.
There we saw that by assuming this attitude - which we
expressed symbolically by affixing an "E" to a content
of the type"O(...)" - a field of material was revealed
which is not usually noticed during the course of our
daily lives. Yet it is far from being an invented or
imagined material. All that is changed is the stand-
point from which the world of our daily lives is viewed.
By this change of standpoint it acquires a new characte-
ristic: it is now given with the index 'my experience'.
This characteristic I have tried to illustrate by
bracketing the contents of our awareness as they are
given in the 'intentio recta' thus: "E_1- O_1(...)". The
standpoint taken by myself (E_2), when viewing my situa-
tion, may appropriately be described as that of an on-
looker who watches his situation in complete detachment
from it. The peculiar "splitting up" of the ego into
E_1 and E_2, both characterised as 'myself', which takes
place when I thus assume the status of the reflecting
onlooker, must, for the time being, be accepted without
further analysis, as warranted by its actual occurrence.

We must now attend to one feature of this new, re-
flective situation, which has not yet been mentioned:-
When living in the 'intentio recta' we may, for instance,
see a tree in the garden outside our window. This tree
(T) is given with a set of attributes: it is an apple-
tree, has white blossoms, etc.. Such attributes may be

denoted by "l,m,n". The tree also has, in another dimension of attributes, the attribute of "standing out there", as "part of the real world which surrounds me", being what it is independent of my perceiving it now. These characteristics may be denoted by "1,2". Thus the contents of my awareness when looking at the tree outside my window, may symbolically be indicated by "(T;lmn,12)". A description of it, therefore, carried out in the 'intentio recta', would be something like this: "There is a tree there outside my window; it is an apple-tree, just blossoming; etc.". Further (no longer exactly descriptive) statements would be: "The tree has been there for 50 years, and it will be there for many more years, etc.". Such descriptions represent what we may call the "naive experience of the world" or "the experience of the world as the 'common sense person' has it"). Let us now change over into the 'intentio obliqua', while we take the situation (tree in the garden, etc.) to remain exactly the same. Then the contents of our awareness would be thus modified: "$(E_1 - O_1(T;lmn,12))$". And a description of this new content would be of the following nature: "I experience a tree there outside my window; the tree is given to me as an apple-tree, carrying white blossoms, etc.. I experience it as being out there, independent of my looking at it. It is given as having been there before I looked at it, and as continuing to be there etc.". The change demonstrated by this example requires our attention in two respects:-

The bracketing of the expression "(T;lmn,12)" into "$(E_1 - O_2(T;lmn,12))$" has not modified any of the structural and qualitative items contained in it. But it has deprived it of its claim to be - in fact, and by itself -

what it appears to be (namely: coloured in certain ways, having duration, being 'out there', independent of my looking at it, etc.). Or, to put it in another way: while living in the 'intentio recta' I see the tree and my seeing the tree is accompanied by what we may call a 'belief in its reality'. As long as I live in (or though) the 'intentio recta', this belief itself is not given to me, as it forms part of the attitude through which the contents (viz. the blossoming apple-tree out there, etc.) is given. Only the characteristic "being real", which corresponds to the belief that it is real, appears in the contents as one of their elements. For beings who live in the 'intentio recta', therefore, the tree simply is real, as they have no awareness of the fact that the tree is experienced by, or given to, them. This is only revealed when viewing the 'intentio recta' itself by assuming the 'intentio obliqua'.

When now changing into the 'intentio obliqua', the 'belief in the reality (of the tree)' or, at any rate, that part of the experience which corresponds to the tree's "being real", immediately appears itself (and as such) within the object-field of our awareness. We then see, not simply that the tree "is real", but that it has this quality entirely at the mercy of our experiencing it as real; in short, that our experiencing it as real and its being real are inextricably and necessarily connected (though clearly distinguishable). And the same we notice with regard to all other structural and qualitative items of that content.

The process of assuming the position of an onlooker as to one's personal situation (including the beliefs, convictions, knowledge, etc. which go to constitute it),

can now be recognised as a stepping out of all these
convictions in or though which we had viewed the world,
and as a viewing them from the side (as it were), thus
discovering them to be such convictions. Instead of
being convinced that the tree out there is real, we now
merely recognise this conviction as being part of our
experience of that tree in the garden, as we have it in
the 'intentio recta'. But as we have stepped out of
the 'intentio recta' for a moment, we have also stepped
out of this conviction; i.e. we are not at the moment
the ego which is convinced, but that, which notices
its own being convinced. The first remarkable feature
of the 'intentio obliqua' is, then, that through it all
our beliefs and convictions are influenced in a way
which may best be described as their being kept in sus-
pense while we reflect upon them. It is evident that,
while reflecting upon a conviction, I cannot at the
same time be holding it. On the other hand, it is ob-
vious that the conviction itself (e.g. that the tree is
real) does not undergo any change in the sense of be-
coming weaker or being modified in contents, by the
mere fact that I reflect upon it. All that happens is
that, for the time of the reflection, I have detached
myself from it. E_2, that is, does not hold the con-
victions of E_1, and E_1 is put out of function. There
is, so to speak, nobody there in that moment, who could
actually live through (in) it, or hold it. What happens,
then, is a suspension of all convictions and beliefs
concerning the reality of things, concerning their "true
nature" (insofar as it is supposed to be different from
what we actually experience), etc., - or, to put it in
a more formal way: a suspension of all judgements that
one would have made when living in the 'intentio recta'.

This suspension of judgement is a very relevant move'
within the phenomenological method, as I hope to show
presently. It may be called, after a term which the
Greek sceptics used for a suspension of judgement, the
(phenomenological) 'epoché' ($\dot{\epsilon}\pi o\chi\acute{\iota}$).

The second element involved in the change from the
'intentio recta' into the reflective attitude, is only
another side of this 'epoché'. It is what one might
call the Cartesian element in this 'epoché'. For it
secures for investigation a field of material which is
given with that absolute certainty which we can never
have about any given material that we experience through
the 'intentio recta'. Judgements of the kind "This tree
out there exists independently of my looking at it", or
"That desk over there is brown and has eight drawers"
have, as everybody knows, no claim to any certainty as
to their truth (in the "correspondence"-sense). It is
always possible that the tree is not real, and that the
desk proves to be blue and to have ten drawers. Judge-
ments of the type "I experience this tree as existing
independently of my looking at it", or "I experience
this desk as brown, etc.", on the other hand, have the
distinction of absolute certainty as to their being true.
For while we may be mistaken, as Descartes very rightly
argued, about items of the "external world" (i.e. the
world as it is experienced in the 'intentio recta'), it
is impossible that we should be mistaken about our own
"cogitationes" (i.e. the object-field of the 'intentio
obliqua'). Into the various arguments to which this
issue has always given rise we shall not enter here.
It seems to me that there is a sense in which it is
evidently true that we are in absolute certainty about

our personal experiences (of the world), while we never have any such certainty about parts of this world as such. And it is in this evidently true sense in which our remarks here should be taken.

Thus the **reflective attitude**, while throwing into suspense all our "natural" convictions and beliefs in which we experience the world, at the same time affords us a field of objects which lie open to our perfect and direct acquaintance, and as to the existence and nature of which there is no doubt possible. We may here introduce the term 'phenomena' for all material which has undergone this process of reflection and 'epoché'.

The field of phenomena thus provided is, of course, still a field of individual phenomena. The next step of the phenomenological method is, therefore, to direct attention to the general (essential) structures inherent in these individual phenomena. (It will be found convenient to call these general structures 'phenomena' as well). We have discussed the nature of these structures already and need not here elaborate this stage of the phenomenological procedure. The method then terminates in an attempt at an adequate and terminologically clear description of the essential (and other) material structures which have been discovered. The problems involved in such description have also been touched upon before.

I will add here, for the sake of clearness and simplicity, the technical point, that it will often be convenient to adopt what may be called an 'egological' way of talking, or what W.H.Werkmeister has called a "methodological solipsism" 41). That is to say, I shall

41) "The Basis and Structure of Knowledge"; p.81.

often talk as if I were talking only about my personal
experiences. It must then be understood that, when
saying, for instance, "I perceive the other person as
'there', and this 'there' is necessarily related to my
own position, characterised as 'here'", I do not make
an autobiographical statement about my (i.e. the present
writer's) personal experience - although, of course, this
is the initial material of my investigation - , but that
I am, in fact, talking about a material of the type
"E - O(...)", which, as we saw, essentially includes
the characteristic of being related to an ego. In order
to understand this form of egological description it
will be necessary for everybody who reads it to sub-
stitute his own ego for that general and unspecified
- though, in a sense, of course, quite individual - ego,
which is referred to by "I" (or by "myself", "mine",
"me", etc.) in those descriptions.

II. ANALYSIS OF APPROVAL.

1) The Word "Approval". Limitation of Subject.

The leading question of the present paper might be formulated as "What is Approval?" or "What is Moral Action?". But I agree with some recent criticisms of this type of question that, though it can be given a perfectly sound meaning, it is in some respects highly misleading. For in asking this question we seem to take for granted that the noun "approval" stands for a certain entity into whose nature or essence we can enquire. As against this assumption it is often pointed out, that all we can know at the outset of such an enquiry is that some people sometimes utter the word "approval", and that there appear to be certain correspondences between this utterance and certain occurrences within the situation of these people. Thus if somebody (A) with regard to the performance of a certain action of B exclaims "Well done!", "Excellent!", etc., we may find that a third person, C, describes this behaviour of A as "approving" or "making exclamations of approval". We may also find that in other languages other words correspond to the same sort of occurrence. The issue becomes more involved still, as we find the same term applied to rather different kinds of occurrences and situations, such as putting a signature under an official statement ("act of approval"), or permitting someone to eat certain kinds of food (e.g. the doctor's "approving" of a diet).

In the face of this multitude of facts associated
with the word "approval", the simple question "What is
approval?" is certainly unsatisfactory; and the suggestion
that one should rather ask: "In what sort of connections
is the word 'approval' used, what are its equivalents
in other languages, etc.?" is certainly quite reasonable.
But this new question is not just another, more precise,
formulation of the first. It enquires after something
which the first question - whatever its particular
meaning may be - is not concerned with: the word-sign
"approval". It is the sort of question which someone
who composes a detailed dictionary (taking into account
local usages etc.) would have to ask. Such dictionary
work is very helpful for the clear formulation of the
subject of a description as it is here intended, but it
must not be confused with this description itself. To
avoid such confusion, the question "What is approval?"
may be reformulated as "What is that which people refer
to when using the word 'approval'?". This formulation
only presupposes that people refer to something when
using the word "approval". And this condition we decided
to accept in a previous chapter (I,3,c).

However, although clearer than the first, this new
formulation is still not quite satisfactory. For we
have learned that not all people refer to the same thing
when using the word "approval", and even in our personal
usage we may discover that it is used in very different
contexts. We must, therefore, add some limiting, expla-
natory words to exclude those sorts of approval which we
do not intend to subject to examination.

A first limitation may be effected by prefixing the
term 'moral' to the term 'approval'. The term 'moral'

I wish to apply to those types of approval only, which
are concerned with the conduct and actions of a person.
I believe that this qualification coincides with the
most common use of the word "approval". Thus we do not
commonly speak of approval with respect to natural events
in which no human action is involved. For example, it
is not very common to say: "I disapprove of this earth-
quake", or "I approve of her having fair hair", however
much we may dislike these facts or welcome them, respec-
tively. And the reason why we do not say this is be-
cause, when we assume a certain evaluatory attitude to-
wards another person's action (recognising it, say, as
"right" or "wrong"), something is going on which is quite
different in type from our assuming a certain evaluatory
attitude towards natural events and facts (recognising
them as "disastrous" or "pleasant"); and he, for whom
the name "approval" is connected with that first attitude
only, will, naturally, find it incorrect to apply it
to the second. Since, therefore, common usage has
largely made these distinctions, we may appeal to it
in the formulation of our subject.

If even this more specified formulation should give
rise to misunderstandings, this is not of any consequence.
The descriptions which are to follow will soon make clear
what it is that is here under discussion and what not.
So a person who may have misunderstood (or not under-
stood at all) the title of a geologist's lecture about,
say, peneplains, will find out in the course of the
lecture what the title is used to mean. And just as it
is not the task of the geologist to assess what different
people associate with the word "peneplain", so it is not
my present task to assess what may be thought and ex-
pected when I propose to investigate "moral approval":

like the geologist I shall confine myself to the description of certain phenomena. It may be reconsidered at the end of these descriptions, whether "moral approval" was the best possible name for their subject. If not, I dare say the deficiency could be easily remedied.

It may also be remarked at the outset that I do not claim that the experiences to be described here, are present, or have been present, in the mind of every living individual. Many human beings may never have had any of them. They may, so to speak, never have lived in this type of human situation. Whether this is so, and, if it is, to what extent, is of no relevance to the present issue. I shall be making quite often statements of the form "there are such and such experiences"; and by that I shall mean that there are cases of this experience – at least in my personal situation – and that, together with them, there is what these cases have in common, viz. a general structure. But by this I do not then assert that every living being has discovered instances of this structure in his own experience. I shall also make statements of the type "Whenever there is A it is necessary that there is x,y,z" (this would be describing an intelligible general structure). Then the only serious objection to this would be that there are cases of A in which x,y,z are missing; but the fact that some people are unable to detect A within their personal experience is of no importance. This fact would upset the results of an analysis of A as little, as the validity of certain algebraic conclusions is endangered by the fact that some people are not aware of these conclsuions and their premisses and, what is more, that even if they turned their attention towards them, they would not be able to understand them.

These arguments are only mentioned here to guard
against the type of misunderstanding which arises from
certain positions of extreme and simple scepticism.
I have in mind those sceptics who abandon all elements
of validity or generality in our approvals and disappro-
vals, because certain native tribes approve and disappro-
ve of very different things, etc.. It has often been
pointed out, that these allegedly "ethical" disagreements
can be reduced, in a large extent, to mere factual dis-
agreement. But even where this is not possible - and it
is also clear that in many respects it is not - the
ethical disagreement is never a complete one. For, while
it is true that the material contents of the various
"ought's" and "ought-not's", obligations, responsibili-
ties, etc., differ widely with nations, tribes and races,
the formal structure of these "ought's", etc., (with
which alone we will be concerned in this paper) does not
differ in essence but only in the degree of differentia-
tion, to which the awareness of the ethical implications
of the living together of human beings has risen in the
different regions of the earth. Were this not so, we
would not even be able to compare the different attitudes
etc. of different societies with each other. As the
present investigation will be devoted to the formal part
of ethics only, i.e. to the basic structures common to
all morally relevant behaviour, the difficulties attach-
ing to its differentiations in different times and places
need not concern us here.

2) Approval as "Emotion" or "Feeling". Elimination
   of the Psychological Aspect.

Approval - by which word will henceforth be meant
'moral approval' only - has not itself often been sub-

jected to special analysis. There seems to be a dis-
proportion between the important position it holds in
modern ethical discussion, and the small amount of
attention it itself has received.

David Hume, in his moral philosophy, gave the follow-
ing account of approval and disapproval: "The very
essence of virtue is to produce pleasure and that of
vice to give pain ... To approve of a character is to
feel an original delight upon its appearance. To dis-
approve of it is to be sensible of an uneasiness" 42).
This was about two centuries ago. Half a century later,
Kant recognised the "Gefühl der Achtung" as being pos-
sessed of a unique character; he called it the only
"emotion" which wholly arises from reason, and which
is directed to the other person's 'intelligible charac-
ter'(intelligibler Charakter) 43). Especially in the
first half of the present century, however, some "pro-
gress" in ethics can be noticed, if not with regard to
the solution of any of the basic problems, yet definite-
ly with regard to a clearer recognition of what is at
issue in these problems. Approval, which Aristotle had
already recognised as clearly distinguished from feelings
of pleasure or pain about anything 44), was recognised
as a peculiarly ethical activity which was different
from liking and disliking something. In 1903 G.E.Moore
reports that he finds it "comparatively difficult to

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42) David Hume, "Treatise"; loc.cit. p.296.
43) It is interesting to notice that Kant clearly recog-
    nises the intelligible nature of this particular type
    of emotion. He calls "Achtung" "ein positives Gefühl,
    das nicht empirischen Ursprungs ist, und apriori er-
    kannt wird". It is "ein Gefühl welches durch einen
    intellektuellen Grund gewirkt wird, und dessen Notwen-
    digkeit wir einsehen können" (Kritik der praktischen
    Vernunft; loc.cit. p.89-90, - my italics).

distinguish the fact that we approve of a thing from the
fact that we are pleased with it", but he achieves a
distinction by qualifying our approval of something as
"feeling that it has a certain predicate - the predicate
namely, which defines the peculiar sphere of ethics;
whereas in the enjoyment of a thing no such unique ob-
ject or thought is involved" 45). In 1913 Max Scheler
introduced a new type of philosophical ethics (Materia-
le Wertethik) in Germany 46), followed by Nicolai Hart-
mann's "Ethik" 47) in 1926. In both these works ethical
phenomena are given careful attention in the phenomeno-
logical attitude. They come to the conclusion that
there are "cognitive acts" in which moral values are
(a priori) recognised; approval and disapproval of
morally 'valuable' or 'dis-valuable' actions, according-
ly, appear in a new light 48). In his book "The Founda-

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44) See note 73) on p. 178 of this paper.
45) G.E.Moore, "Principia Ethica"; p.60.
46) Max Scheler, "Der Formalismus in der Ethik und die
    Materiale Wertethik", 1913 and 1916 (in vol.s I
    and II of Husserl's "Jahrbuch", published by Max
    Niemeyer, Halle s.S.).
47) Nicolai Hartmann, "Ethik", 1926. Translation by
    Stanton Coit, London 1932.
48) The relevant chapters in Hartmann's ethics are in
    part III, chapters XII and XIII. On p.143 (of the
    translation) Hartmann mentiones approval and disap-
    proval as involving a recognition of a moral prin-
    ciple and its acceptance by the person approving or
    disapproving. He, however, assigns no relevance to
    these phenomena as, on his view, they do not provide
    evidence for the points he wishes to establish (viz.
    "moral freedom" and the objective validity of a realm
    of "material moral values"). Also in other German
    writings on ethics the recognition of these phenomena
    is confined to more or less casual remarks on them
    in other ethical connections. As far as I know,
    no special investigation of them has ever been
    undertaken.

tions of Ethics" Sir David Ross calls approval an
"intellectual emotion", as it "presupposes the thought
that the action (approved of) is right" 49). Here,
again, the feature of "intellectuality", and of its some-
how being connected with thought, is recognised in the
phenomenon of approval, though, I think, not in a per-
fectly satisfactory fashion.

It may appear from this rough mentioning of a few
stages of research into these phenomena, that a steady
progress towards the recognition of certain features
was made. But this progress, if progress it be, has not
affected the rather stagnant continuation of Hume's
account of the phenomena of approval and disapproval.
Thus C.L.Stevenson's much discussed book "Ethics and
Language", which represents one of the latest publi-
cations relevant to the discussion of moral approval
and disapproval, represents by no means the latest
stage of philosophical insight into these. If it is
surprising that Hume should have failed so completely
to recognise the distinction between approval and
pleasure, it is more surprising that this book, which
rests wholly on these notions, offers the following
remark about the phenomenon of approval: If a man
"morally approves of something he may feel a _particu-
larly hightened sense of security_ when it prospers;
whereas if he merely likes it he may feel _only an or-
dinary sort of pleasure_" 50). And this is about all
Stevenson has to say by way of elucidating what he means
By "approval". The distinction offered here, vague and
obscure though it is, is clearly a distinction between

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49) "Foundations of Ethics"; pp. 23 and 26.
50) C.L.Stevenson, "Ethics and Language" (1944); p.90
    (my italics).

two sorts of pleasure and thus subsumes approval under pleasure, to begin with. The formulation of the "particularly hightened sense of security", as different from the "ordinary pleasure", affords us little insight into the matter. It is too vague a formulation to merit any attempts at an interpretation of it; but I surmise one would not go far wrong in placing it in a biological or psychological connection, where it may have emerged from theories about the drive of the human being to "survive", and about the ensuing desire for a stable and well ordered society. One wonders how the author of this otherwise clear and well written book could feel content with this account of so imprtant a point in his theory. I suppose it is the tendency to solve the problems of human existence in terms of scientific (biological, psychological, etc.) theories, prevailing so much in our age, which has here also prevailed upon Professor Stevenson. And considering that psychological notions, such as "emotion" or "feeling", frequently enter into the discussion of moral approval and disapproval, even with those who attempt to do justice to its very special character, I beg leave to enlarge upon this point.

When considering cases of approval or disapproval, the terms "feeling" or "emotion" readily suggest themselves as names of classes under which these cases could conveniently be subsumed. For approval and disapproval are not just thoughts or formulated judgements, though they may often be accompanied by these. It is a fact that we often approve of some action without having a formulation ready by which to express this approval. We may feel a strong "emotion" of disapproval of some-

body's action, but we may not find words to formulate it, as all words that we have available prove to be "too weak" (i.e. inadequate). The occurrence of such cases is common knowledge, and it provides evidence enough for establishing the difference between formulated statements, expressing approval or disapproval, and this approval or disapproval itself.

Having eliminated the possibility that approval is a formulated statement (either uttered aloud or just present in the mind), it may still be supposed to be one of those unformulated "thoughts", which precede formulation, and which, if they are not given a verbal shape, remain vague and indistinct and are only of a very transitory nature. But it can easily be seen that the approval here under discussion is not of this kind either. It can be lasting, strong, and distinct, without being given any verbal formulation; and it has the further characteristic, distinguishing it from any thought, of being attached to an object within (what is given as) the "real world". This characteristic, which will soon be discussed at length, we also find with certain feelings, such as hatred, love, annoyance, desire, etc., and I think it is this common feature which gives rise to the customary subsumption of approval under "feelings" or "emotions". Like these it contains a certain particular and quite ineffable quale, occupying our awareness with a certain degree of intensity, and being attached to some object-content of this awareness.

As far as this feature is concerned, then, the above subsumption is quite justified. But the number of different phenomena which are called "feelings" is legion, and thus little is gained by giving this name

to something. Some emotions are directed and attached
to an object (hatred, love, etc.), others are diffuse,
i.e. without an object (moods, depressions, anguish,
boredom); some establish a connection with things other
than my body, others are connected with this, my, body
only. Of these, again, some are located (certain pains
and pleasures), others are not (lassitude, fatigue); and
so on. Even specifying approval as a member of the
group of 'directed feelings' would not take us very far.
For, though it stresses a feature which approval has
in common with some other feelings, such a classifica-
tion tends to obscure all those characteristics which
mark it off from them. Apart from that the term "feeling"
(or the term "emotion") are apt even to obscure theim-
portant structural quality which all 'directed feelings'
have in common, namely the fact that they are composed
of two distinctive components, which we may term as the
'cognitive' and the 'responding' components. What I
mean is simply this: in every 'directed feeling', when
viewed phenomenologically, two things happen: a) we are
aware of an object being qualified as (say) 'likable',
'hateful', 'valuable', etc.; and b) we respond ('react')
to this quality by an act of appreciation of it.

Directed feelings are thus clearly composed of an
act of awareness in which we apprehend a quality of an
object, and a second act in which we assume an attitude
towards this quality and which may be called an 'ade-
quate response'. Only by overlooking this characteristic
of our feelings of love, hatred, approval, desire, etc.,
theories can come to be held which assert that the va-
rious value-qualities which tinge the world in which we
live, are nothing but "results" or "consequences" of our
having certain feelings (desires, aversions, etc.). The

very opposite is the case: our having any such feelings
presupposes our having "perceived" such value-qualities,
to which we then correspond by having a certain attitude
towards them. People fail to discover this characteris-
tic of 'directed feelings', which is of great relevance
to the analysis of approval, when just classing the
whole phenomenon as "feeling", thinking of the 'reactive'
part of the structure only, and not recognising the cor-
responding "perceptive" one.

A further disadvantage, connected with the previous
one, of conceiving of approval and disapproval as "feel-
ings", is the fact that this marks them out as subjects
of an (inappropriate) psychological investigation. The
common classification of the subjects of the present pa-
per as "feelings" also suggests the classification of
their investigation as "psychology", because it is known
that the consideration of "feelings" etc. belongs to
the domain of this science. In this way phenomenology
has often been mistaken for psychology - a mistake
which would prove a fatal impediment to any understand-
ing of our further procedure. We must, therefore, try
to eliminate it from the start.

When phenomenology is classified as psychology it
is taken to be part of the general research into human
"mind", "personality", "behaviour", etc., which in these
days runs under the many names of "experimental psy-
chology", "social psychology", "psychology of persona-
lity", "typology", "child-psychology", "animal psycho-
logy", and which borders in multifarious ways on such
subjects as "sociology", "anthropology", "psychiatry",
"physiology", etc., etc.. It is hardly possible to
find a unifying feature in this multitude of special

subjects and forms of research which go to make up "modern psychology". But it may be said about all of them that they are, or intend to be, empirical sciences, employing the means of observation, experiment and statistics, and aiming at what we have called before a 'causal understanding'. Since in the present connection I am only concerned to point out a generic difference, I may be granted the somewhat sweeping procedure of representing "modern psychology" by just one example from a modern text book. This example stands, however, as students of the field will know, for many others.

To illustrate my case I quote from G.W.Allport's book "Personality: A Psychological Interpretation", his definition of personality 51): "Personality is the dynamic organisation within the individual of those psychophysical systems that determine his unique adjustment to his environment". In the following qualifications of the terms used in this definition we hear, that the term "psychophysical" "reminds us that personality is neither exclusively mental nor exclusively neural", and that "the operation of both body and mind" is "inextricably fused into a personal unity". Furthermore we learn that the "psychophysical systems" "are in every sense determining tendencies" which "when aroused by suitable stimuli provoke those adjustive and expressive acts by which the personality comes to be known.". Another sentence, explanatory to the definition, runs: "Personality is a mode of survival" (!). That this account of personality is, or contains, a biophysical

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51) G.W.Allport, "Personality: A Psychological Interpretation" (New York 1947); all quotations from pp. 48 and 49.

view, is clearly stated by the author himself. 52)

These short quotations are sufficient to illustrate the point I wish to make. It is obvious that the terms used in this definition, representing the central issues of that psychological study, are not descriptive but highly theoretical. Allport, rightly enough, calls his book "a psychological interpretation". He tries to understand the phenomena of human existence under some guiding hypothesis (involving a guiding conceptual scheme), such as that of "adaptation to an environment". The descriptively accessible phenomena of personality-life (such as intentions, desires, apprehensions, speech, communication, expression, gestures, etc.) are here understood in terms of something which is not itself descriptively accessible (e.g. "psychophysical systems", "provoking stimuli", "survival"). The latter are hypothetical concepts, which have been theoretically devised for the purpose of accounting for facts that have been empirically observed.

This short outline may suffice to show in what respect psychology (aiming at scientific understanding), and phenomenology (aiming at material understanding and being wholly descriptive) are essentially different. It follows that the use of terms which have a scientific connotation, and which are generally taken to qualify

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52) Another standard work on the subject defines "personality" as "the entire sequence of organised governmental processes in the brain from birth to death", and we are reminded in the preface, that "the student of personality must be aware of the structure and time sequences of the whole body, of the basic phenomena of nerve conduction, ionic exchange, oxidation, and electrical and hormonic potentials across the membranes" ("Personality" by C.Kluckhohn and H.A.Murray, New York 1949; pp.9/10).

something as belonging to the subject-matter of psychological research, is inadvisable for a phenomenological enquiry. And therefore, though there is really nothing wrong with classifying "approval" as "a very special kind of directed feeling", I shall abandon the use of both the term "feeling" and the term "emotion" in connection with approval or disapproval in order to forestall those misleading connotations.

3) 'Act' and 'Attitude' of Approval.

Having abandoned the psychological terminology, it will be necessary to introduce one which is more conducive to a phenomenological understanding. For the components of the human situation, as they are given in the reflective attitude, the term 'experience' has already been used; and for experiences, when objects of phenomenological investigation (i.e. when viewed under explicit 'epoché'), I proposed the term 'phenomenon'. Both these terms cover a wide field and they may include structures which are typically different from the one found in approval. Thus to be in a certain mood (say, anguish) is a 'phenomenon', capable of reflective description. But it does not have the structure of my awareness being directed upon a certain object as it is present, for instance, in the experience of 'my looking at that ink-stand there', or 'my listening to another person's talk'. This structure marks a special type of experience which, indeed, seems to provide the basic structure of consciousness (i.e. of our awareness of being in the world). It has been called the 'act-structure of consciousness' (die Aktstruktur des Bewußtseins), and it has been maintained that <u>all</u> consciousness (as

viewed in the phenomenological attitude) has the form
of such 'acts' 53). This tenet has been formulated as
"All consciousness is consciousness of something" (Alles
Bewußtsein ist Bewußtsein von etwas). The suggestion
has been made, however, that there are forms of con-
sciousness which do not have the character of 'acts'
(e.g. moods, "Befindlichkeiten"). Without entering into
this discussion, I shall adopt the term 'act' for all
cases where our awareness is concerned with a certain
object in such a form, that the way in which we are
aware of the object can be recognised as different from
the object that we are aware of itself, although both
these elements are essentially correlated. Thus we can
always distinguish our looking at an ink-stand from the
'looked at' ink-stand itself; or our hearing a certain
sound-sequence from the heard sound-sequence itself; or
our approving of somebody's tact from this 'approved of'
tact itself; etc.. Although this is only putting the
stress on two different aspects of one and the same
experience, that fact that we can thus vary our atten-
tion proves that there are these two different aspects

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53) It will be easy to exclude the meanings which the
term 'act' may have in other connections, after the
present usage has been explained. Thus the present
'act' will hardly be mistaken for "act" in the
sense of "deed", or "process of doing", or "decree
passed by a legislative body", etc.. The philoso-
phical sense of 'act', in which the term is used in
this paper, is not here newly introduced into Eng-
lish philosophical usage, although it originated
with the German phenomenological movement, going
back to Brentano in the end of last century. Accord-
ingly it makes its appearance in the English speak-
ing philosophical world mainly in polemical connec-
tions.
The (philosophical) sense of 'act' explained in
the present chapter may be characterised as the
'static' sense of the term. This sense must not

of it. Terminologically I propose to distinguish be-
tween these two aspects as between 'act' (or 'expe-
rience') and 'object' (or 'content of the experience').

The structure here pointed out we may then call the
'act-object structure' of consciousness. Usually we
'live in' these acts, being aware only of their objects.
But the 'intentio obliqua' enables us to recognise
these objects <u>as given in (through) these acts</u>. It
enables us further to recognise that these acts in their
composition correspond completely to the composition of
the object. A description of the 'act of approval'
therefore includes a description of the 'object approved
of', in so far as this object essentially belongs to
the act. What can be said about (intelligible) rela-
tions within the object can also, mutatis mutandis, be
said of relations within the act through which this
object is given.

In determining the subject-matter of the present
investigation as 'the experience of approval' we also
exclude another set of subject-matters which may have
been associated with the term 'approval'. For this
term does not by itself indicate whether it is the
actual occurrence of an experience of approval which we
intend to concentrate upon, or whether it is what may be
called an 'attitude of approval'. We hear it said, for
instance, of a certain person, that he approves of
loyalty. Such a statement does not usually mean that
he now, at this moment, has an experience of such appro-
val. Nor does it mean that he has experienced and/or

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be confused with the 'dynamic' sense of 'act', in
which I shall later speak of 'acts of decision' or
'acts of submission'; here 'act' denotes a special
(though not externally observable) <u>activity</u> of a
person.

uttered such approval often in the past, and that he will continue to do so in the future; or that, whenever he encouters loyalty he does approve of it. These last two possibilities, however, are often supposed to be the only meaning of the statement "He approves of loyalty". The attempt is made to account for the "permanent atti- tude" of approval by identifying it with all the cases of its "actualisation". But then, of course, these cases are no longer instances or "actualisations" of something which ('δυνάμει') is always there, even when not actual, but just so many cases of approving of loyalty. The "attitude" then becomes a hypothetical notion, employed to account for the repeated and con- sistent occurrence of certain acts of approval, much as the "dispositional quality" of vinegar to colour blue litmus-paper red, is not "really" a "permanent quality" of vinegar, but only another (and more convenient) way of expressing that whenever vinegar is poured upon lit- mus-paper, this turns red.

But this way of accounting for our talk about "attitudes" does not quite agree with what we actually mean when saying "he disapproves of X" or "he approves of X". For it is a fact open to everybody's inspection that, when making this assertion, we simply do not assert anything about a number of actual cases of approval which have occurred or are likely to occur. In these state- ments we assert something of A (the person in question) which he 'has' (or 'is') all the time, and which seems to underlie all the individual acts of approval which he may perform - something which may be called the perma- nent "ground" of the various actual expressions of appro- val. This "ground" is given to us as a 'structural

quality' of the person which, when he encounters certain situations, gives rise to his actual approvals (which, then, appear to be "actualisations" of this 'permanent quality'). For our conception of this lasting quality it is essential, that it is given to us as something "more" than - or as something different from - the (indefinite) number of its "actualisations". And it is for this reason that no "dispositional account" can ever account for this notion in a satisfactory way.

It should be noted that, in saying this, I am not asserting that dispositional analysis (i.e. analysis of attitudes in terms of an indefinite number of observable occurrences) as such is unsatisfactory. I only wished to point out why it must remain an unsatisfactory account <u>of our experience of attitudes</u>. This is quite compatible with the view that there are no such attitudes anywhere in the "real world", but only exist in the way of being meant by us when we talk about them. I shall have occasion, towards the end of this paper, to propound some reasons for the view that such attitudes do not only exist in this way, but that what we mean in those statements has a basis in fact. For the moment, however, our concern will be exclusively with actual occurrences of approval, which, by this short consideration, we have set off from all 'attitudes' which the term 'approval' might have connoted.

4) <u>Motivational Connection between Act and Object of Approval.</u>

If someone says "I approve of A's action X, because he did what everyone ought to do in this case", he is not using the 'because' in any causal sense. He uses

it to introduce the 'reason' why he performed an act
of approval. And this reason is, formulated in the ab-
stract, that A's action was possessed of a quality to
which an act of approval was the 'adequate response'.
We have dealt with this type of 'reason' and 'adequate
response' in previous chapters. What was said there
applies to the present case of approval, inasmuch as
acts of approval contain a certain quale "a'" which
corresponds to a quale "a" contained in the object. It
has been mentioned already that in this respect acts of
approval resemble certain other experiences, such as
hatred, love, desire ('directed feelings'). In all of
these we can trace the same type of correspondence be-
tween a quale inherent in the object (e.g. rightness,
hatefulness, likability, desirability), and a quale
modifying the act through which this object is given
(e.g. approving, hating, liking, desiring). We called
this connection a connection of motivation (in the
sense that the object-quale motivates the act-quale);
and we used the term 'motivation' to indicate an intel-
ligible relation of adequate correspondence which (as
regards its form of intelligibility) is similar to con-
nections of teleological motivation.

Using this terminology, for instance, we could say
that the quale of "hatefulness" (a) adhering to a cer-
tain person (A), motivates the quale of hating (a') in
my act of hating A 54). I have heard it objected to
this assertion, that this is putting the cart before

54) It must be understood that the intelligible relation
" a - a' " is not in any sense a temporal relation.
No assertion is here made as to which of the two
quales is prior, let alone which one "causes" the
other.

the horse, for what in fact happens is that I find A hateful because I hate him (for whatever reason). But such an objection can only arise from a confusion of causal connections with motivational ones, the marked distinction between which we have elaborated earlier in this paper. It is quite possible that I hate A because (causally!) he has managed to get a job which I would have liked very much for myself. Here it would be the function of the psychologist to enquire how this event can cause feelings of hatred in me. But this psychological issue, however well it may be mastered by modern psychologists, is of no relevance whatsoever to the descriptive issue which consists of the simple question (put in simple terms): What does a feeling of hatred "look like"? And such a descriptive inspection of my hatred (of which I may know quite well how it has come about) will, nonetheless, render the same results as stated above, namely: the motivational correspondence between A's being given to me as hateful and my hating him 'because' he is so given. Such is the nature of our experiences of hatred - and it is one thing to enquire into the structure of certain experiences, another to ask (and to explain) why, when, and where they occur. The answering of the first (the phenomenological) question is a precondition of the asking of the second. Once this has been understood, the causal misinterpretation of phenomenological assertions will be disposed of for ever.

Another objection which is frequently made, is that the connection between hatefulness and hatred (as between quales in object and act) cannot be intelligible and necessary, because it often happens that what appears hateful to K may be an object of liking to M. With this objection we need not concern ourselves at

any length, as it is based upon a misunderstanding of
the phenomenological attitude explained before. Here
the result of an empirical enquiry (carried out in the
'intentio recta') is used as an argument against that
which has been recognised in the 'intentio obliqua'.
But these two spheres (and what is asserted about them)
do never interfere. The fact, asserted by an 'intentio
recta'-investigator, that a quality Q of a person A
appears as a quale of likeability to K and as a quale
of hatefulness to M, is of no consequence for the vali-
dity of descriptions given of the "internal" scenes of
K (viz. a correspondence between a quale of likeability
and an act of liking) and of M (viz. a correspondence
between a quale of hatefulness and an act of hating),
respectively. Phenomenology does not claim to make any
statements as to what hatefulness "really is", or where
and how often etc. it really occurs. And only if it
did, could the above arguments be launched successfully.
As they stand, however, they must be dismissed as having
failed to recognise the nature of the assertions made.

A third confusion is sometimes exhibited by the
argument that the discussed correspondence cannot be an
essential one, since I often hate and like a person at
the same time. This argument rests wholly on careless-
ness of expression and it can, therefore, be exposed
by expressing things clearly. It is quite possible to
hate and to like one person "at the same time", but it
will then be different qualities that one likes or hates,
respectively. If, however, the same argument is repeated
with explicit reference to one single quality only, it
can only be taken to mean that we sometimes _actually_ hate
that which we _think_ we should not hate but like, or
vice versa. In this case, again, nothing is adduced

to refute the assertion made about the intelligibility
of actual experiences of hatred. For I have not asserted
▾ and it would be absurd enough to do so - that we always
consent in our thoughts to what we actually experience,
but only that, if we experience a certain object-quality,
such and such assertions are necessarily true about the
act through which we experience this quality.

Having disposed of the most common impediments to an
understanding of the above assertion, I may now assume
that it will be understood adequately when I say, that
the act of approval is characterised by a quale (a')
which corresponds to a quale (a) inherent in the object
of this act (viz. a person's conduct of action), and
when I describe the 'motivational connection' between
(a') and (a) as one of intelligible necessity.

So far, then, acts of approval do not appear to be
very different from the group of 'directed feelings'
which also show this correspondence between act-quale
and object-quale. And it is not in this respect that
an essential difference could be found. It is not the
inexplicable 'moral approval quale' (or 'disapproval
quale'), with reference to which an essential difference
between approval and (other) 'directed feelings' can be
asserted. Uniqueness of the quale each of these feelings
can claim for itself, and in that, all of them are essen-
tially different from each other. But it is the stru-
tural frame to which the approval quale belongs, which
is different in type from the structure of directed
feelings. That is to say, the composition of acts which
constitutes the (complex) act of moral approval differs
substantially from that of even the "higher" directed
feelings, such as personal love. For in acts of appro-
val we are aware of a special activity of a person,

and to this activity no directed feeling is ever attached. The attempt to elucidate the particular nature of this activity, and thereby the particular nature of approval, will occupy the following pages. For after we have drawn the necessary distinctions and provided a provisional terminology, we will now present an instance of actual moral approval in order to subject it to an exemplary analysis.

5) An Example.

It is immaterial for the purposes of our analysis whether the example we subject to it is a case of approval that has once "really happened", or whether it is a case which we invent in our imagination. For, if there is at all a 'structure of moral approval' it is bound to be present in any instance of it, be it given in the way of "being now experienced", or of "being remembered", or of "being imagined". It will, therefore, propose the following example for illustration; but as soon as the structure of moral approval has been recognised in it, it may be replaced by any other instance of it which is thought to be a more convenient illustration. For we are much in the same position as the geometrician, to whom it is immaterial which individual triangle he makes the exemplary grounds for his intuitive insights.

Let us then, take the following example of an action which is, I take it, for a considerable number of English speaking people, possessed of a quality to which we respond by an act of approval:⁻ A mother lives in the house of her grown up children and young grandchildren. To be together with these is the only joy of her age.

But she notices (and understands) that with progressing age the increasing amount of care she requires, and the fact of her presence itself, become a heavy burden to her children. Therefore she leaves the family, pretending that she would prefer the quiet life in some distant home.

Upon hearing this little story we may either (a) perform a genuine act of approval of that mother's behaviour; then this approval will be modified as 'being approval of a fictitious case', but in all other respects it will be equal to other acts of approval (attached to "real" actions, now occurring). Or (b) we may only imagine ourselves performing an act of approval of that action if we were in the position of experiencing it. Using the following signs:

ph(...) = Object as given in the phenomenological reflection;

q   = Action of a person containing the quale 'worthy of approval';

q'   = Act of approval of that action, containing 'approval quale';

r(...) = Real;

im(...) = Imagined, -

we may then write this difference between (a) my really approving of an imagined example, and (b) my imagining approval of a real case, in the way of our former notation:

(a) $$E_1 \xrightarrow{r(q')} im(q)$$

(b) $$E_2 - im(E_1 \xrightarrow{r(q')} r(q)).$$

When now adopting the phenomenological attitude towards either of these cases, the situation becomes modified in the following way:

(a) $\qquad E_2 - ph(E_1 \underline{r(q')} im(q))$,

(b) $\qquad E_3 - ph(E_2 - im(E_1 \underline{r(q')} r(q)))$.

It can be seen that in both cases an instance of "r(q')"
(= actual act of approval) is present in the field of
phenomenological inspection, which is all we require.
But it also appears that (a) is the less complicated
form of presenting to ourselves the instance of actual
approval, and it will therefore be the preferable one.

We will begin with an analysis of the object of acts
of approval the results of which, by only small modifi-
cations, will supply us with the analysis of the act as
well. A preliminary rough survey of the subject of this
analysis shows that the following points require atten-
tion:- 1) The object of approval and disapproval is
a person (6); this person must have been aware of a
moral claim (7,8); the person must have subjected him-
self to the claim (9); 4) As to a person's moral be-
haviour two kinds of moral approval are possible (10);
5) All kinds of approval presuppose that the approved
person himself, and not any other force, is the origin
of his behaviour (11,12); 6) In acts of approval of
(deliberate as well as unpremeditated) action a moral
value of this action is apprehended (13,14,15); 7) The
moral claim perceived by the approved of person must be
recognised by me as a moral claim (16,17); 8) Under-
lying all acts of approval there is a basic attitude of
respect (18); 9) As acts of disapproval are not just
a symmetrical translation of what has been said about
approval into the reverse, they will be given a sepa-
rate discussion (19).

We begin, then, by attending to the way in which
the other person is given to me, in so far as given-
ness of another person forms the necessary frame for
all acts of approval.

6) <u>Awareness of Other Persons as Underlying
   Acts of Approval.</u>

To approve of another person's action is one parti-
cular way of being related to this person. There are
many other ways in which we can be thus related, such
as: smiling at, listening to, sitting next to, hating,
asking, etc., a certain person. And all these more spe-
cified ways of being related to another person are mo-
difications of a more general and more basic interrela-
tion, which may be roughly indicated by the term "aware-
ness of another person qua person". Before we enter in-
to the discussion of any of the more differentiated
interpersonal relations (such as approval), it will be
well to give a rough outline of the fundamental set of
experiences which constitutes our 'awareness of another
person qua person' as such and in general, and which is
necessarily contained in all the more specific inter-
personal relations.

To be aware of another person is a different sort
of experience from being aware of a chair, or of a
geometrical figure. Experiences of persons are gene-
rically different from all other experiences of objects;
for they contain a feature which is not to be found any-
where else: their object is characterised as 'something
like myself'. And although this object is given as just
as fundamentally separated from myself as any chair or

triangle, it is, at the same time, given to me as 'the
same sort of being as I am myself'. This is the first
elementary statement that must be made about this par-
ticular kind of experience.

To the various misunderstandings which are due at
this point I have already given prophylactic conside-
ration in the introduction and I shall, therefore, not
consider them at any length. It is clear that I am not
asserting that human beings are a different sort of
living organism from dogs and cats. But the place which
"humans" occupy in a scientific table of species has
nothing to do with the way in which we experience other
persons. Nor can I be expected to deal with the, quite
legitimate, question how such a peculiarly distinct
experience of a certain kind of living organism could
have come about. I believe that of the many theories
about "other minds" those which employ the notion of
analogical inference provide the most acceptable ex-
planation. But as I intend to confine myself to descrip-
tive statements about 'phenomena' only, the theoretical
problems which they may set, and the attempts at solu-
tions that have been made, do not concern us here.

In order to elucidate the statement made that other
persons are given as 'someone like myself' let us con-
sider for a moment the spatial interrelation which is,
of necessity, included in the experience of another per-
son 55). When assuming the reflective attitude, I dis-
cover myself as located in space in the mode of a per-
petual 'being here'. This can be formulated as my

55) Here I elaborate an analysis indicated by E.Husserl
in "Cartesianische Meditationen" (edited by S.Stras-
ser, Haag 1950); p.150.

'being the centre of my situation'. Every part of this situation, being related to its centre (= myself), is then, spatially, characterised as 'being there' (i.e. 'not here'), regardless of its particular nature. But while a tree, or a chair, is just given to us in this way as 'there', a person is given not only as 'there' but as 'being there in the mode of being here'. That is to say, he is given to me as the centre of another (viz. his) situation, every item of which, including myself, is given to him as 'there'. It is the interrelation of two 'ego-centric' situations, only the spatial elements of which have been indicated here, which distinguishes encountering another person from encountering things, if by 'things' we mean all non-personal objects (including animals).

Now, if we say that another person is given to us as another 'here', it will be desirable to recogcile this description with the outer and 'physical' appearance of the other person. He enters our situation as having a body, and it is by his being visible, tangible, audible, etc., that we are aware of him. However, we are aware of _him_, and not of his body or bodily appearance. A person _has_ a body, but he _is_ not his body. Accordingly, I notice someone by, through, or in, his bodily appearance - features, complexion, way of speaking, etc. - but I do not recognise him _as_ any of these or as their composition. The relation between a person and his body presents great difficulties, even for a mere phenomenological description. But enough has been assessed in recent years 56) to warrant the statement, that person

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56) Mainly in continental philosophy. Cf. works of
  Gehlen, Plessner, Conrad-Martius, Husserl, Sartre.

and body are related as complementary elements of one
indivisible experiential unity. A person's hands and
face, for instance, are not 'his hands' or 'his face'
in the way in which 'his gloves' or 'his books' are 'his'.
One does not own one's body as one owns things. We ex-
perience another persons facial expressions, his move-
ments, his gestures, as something which he, not his
body, does. It is he who smiles, talks, approaches us,
not his body. And when, for example, listening to him
while he argues against us, we experience him holding
a position or abandoning it, trying to escape, getting
excited, etc.. Also by a mere looking at one another,
an experience of communication with another person can
be established 57). We may be aware, without any inter-
mediate processes of conscious inference, of his being
embarrassed, of his joy, depression, etc. .

I only quote these familiar instances of experiencing
another person qua person in order to prepare the under-
standing of the following analysis. For it is within
this realm of direct interrelation between persons
(qua rational agents) that the analysis will take place.
For these relations and what I have said about them,
I do not claim any other evidence than their being ex-
perienced. They may not have any other existence than
in the mode of 'being experienced by someone'. Indeed,
I would find it difficult to understand the contention
that they do exist in any other way. To say of these
experiences that they "deceive us", since, "in fact",
there are only optical and tactile stimuli, physiolo-
gical reactions, electrical discharges, and the like,
seems to me to be wrong, or an idle truism. For "in

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57) cf. in general the analyses of Hans Lipps in
    "Die menschliche Natur" (Frankfurt 1941).

fact" can only mean here: viewed under the aspect of
the scientist. So the statement would amount to stat-
ᶍing that, what is given under the aspect of a common-
sense person in the familiar scene of his life, is dif-
ferent from what is given under the aspect of a scien-
tist; and this, though true, is not an interesting
statement, as it would be absurd to expect anything else.
No-one who looks at a fungus through a microscope, would
start lamenting that he had been "deceived" by his ex-
perience when looking at it with the naked eye. I think,
the mystery of our experience of "other minds" might be
considerably reduced, if the fact that under different
aspects different things are given, were given its due
attention, and if the desire were relinquished to appoint
one of them as primary and to account for the rest in
terms of "delusion".

The fact that the other person is experienced as
'someone like myself', apart from its phenomenological
relevance, is also of methodological consequence to this
paper. It will entitle us in passages, where it will
facilitate the analysis to do so, tᴑ shift our attention
from the object-person of the analysed experience to
ourselves. For example: after having stated that the
other person is given as 'being responsible for his
actions', we shall go on to elucidate the descriptive
concept here employed in terms of an (egological)
description of the phenomenon of 'my own respᴑnsibility
for my actions'. This will free us of unnecessary
stylistic complication (e.g. "I have experienced a
claim" instead of "I experience the other person as
having experienced a claim"), while, on the other hand,
it makes no difference to the contents which are
under description.

7) The Structure of Action.

Into our description of moral approval, the other person will enter almost exclusively as what has come to be called the (moral) 'agent'. That is to say, the other person will receive our attention only inasmuch as he is capable of acting and interacting with other people.

All activities which may be performed by a person I shall classify as being either 'actions' or 'reactions'. 'Actions' I shall call all those types of behaviour which proceed from a teleological motive. 'Reactions' I shall call all those which have a non-teleological motivation. Both these types I shall subsume under the title of 'intelligible behaviour'. A third group is constituted by performances which are neither actions nor reactions, such as movements carried out when unconscious, under ether, reflex-movements which happen in response to stimuli without conscious intervention, etc.. These performances are not directed by the person himself; they happen to him. We shall, therefore, wherever we need refer to this type of performances, refer to it as 'non-personal behaviour'.

The sense of the term 'behaviour' in this context is, of course, not a behaviouristic one. Behaviouristic accounts of what happens when a human being 'acts', however valuable they may be for some psychological or sociological enquiries, are not adequate descriptive accounts of a person's actions. The aspects under which these accounts are given are highly artificial and abstract, selecting only some elements out of a genuine unity. No-one doubts that actions of persons

occur in space and time, and are manifest in physical
movements. And it is often possible, and useful, to
achieve an exact scientific assessment of these mani-
festations. But to offer these accounts as accounts
of the whole of personal action is simply mistaken, -
mistaken in a sense which will have become clear in
the preceding chapter on other persons. The term
'behaviour', therefore, should be cleansed of all these
'behaviouristic' connotations in the present context.

The structure of another person's action is given -
as is our own - as teleological or purposive. An end
($\tau \acute{\epsilon} \lambda o \varsigma$) is desired, and a serious of means is chosen
(by virtue of the faculty of reasoning - $\lambda \acute{o} \gamma o \varsigma$ -),
through which the end can be brought about. Formally
speaking action can be defined as that conscious acti-
vity of a person through which a certain (desired) state
of affairs is brought about. To understand the structure
of action fully it is, therefore, necessary to distinguigh
between two situations: one which we desire to change
(in a certain respect) and which I shall call the 'ini-
tial situation'; and one which contains the desired
element - this I shall call the 'resulting situation'.
I have already mentioned the characteristic of indepen-
dent existence (a sort of 'autonomy') which characterises
large parts of the human situation. Wherever a situa-
tion is thus 'autonomous' we cannot alter it, remove it,
or bring it about, as we can alter, remove, or bring
about elements of an imagined scenery of situation 58).
For example, the array of things I see in front of me

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58) For the sake of simplicity I shall disregard in the
following discussion all those parts of a situation
which are experienced as dependent on my creating
them, such as imagery and thoughts.

on my desk remains what it is, independent of what I
would probably prefer it to be. I may, for instance,
wish the type-writer, which stands on the other table,
to be here on my desk. Then this situation, character-
ised by the absence of the type-writer, is the 'initial
situation'. Part of this situation, let us assume, is
my need to type a letter now. Such elements of the
'initial situations', through which a desire for a
change of this situation arises, I shall call 'situa-
tional suggestions'. It is important to bear in mind
that these suggestions are __part of__ the initial situation,
and are characterised as just as 'autonomous' themselves
as the rest of the situation in which they occur. Thus
the need to type arises suddenly. I have not chosen it
to arise, not can I, once it has arisen, remove it by
wishing that it had not arisen. It must be dealt with
as an element of the "real" situation in which I am.
I may deal with it in the way of re-planning my program-
me for the day and postponing the typing to some later
hour. But let us assume that I want to deal with it in
the way of satisfying it. Then the presence of the type-
writer on my desk becomes desirable - i.e. while still
being in the initial situation I anticipate the 'result-
ing situation' 59). I may then proceed to bring about
the 'resulting situation' by employing the appropriate
means (e.g. getting up, walking towards the table, etc.).
Here it is important to understand that this bringing
about of what we had anticipated as the 'resulting
situation', can only be achieved by an __act of inter-__

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59) I follow here the excellent analysis of action given
    by Talcott Parsons in his book "The Structure of
    Social Action" (2nd. edition 1949, pp.43-85). Cf.also
    the analyses of action given by D.v.Hildebrand in
    "Die Idee der Sittlichen Handlung", and those of

ference with the real situation (world) in which we
live. It is this act of interference which we know as
'action'. Action can thus also be characterised as:
a person's interaction with his situation with the (in-
tended) result that a situation not containing X is
replaced by a situation containing X. This whole
teleological pattern is (implicitly) given to me when
experiencing another person's activity as an action of
his; and only if initial and resulting situation of that
action are given to me not merely as empty structural
poles, but as qualified situations, I can (hermeneuti-
cally) understand his action. This (hermeneutical)
understanding of a person's action is a necessary pre-
condition for an act of approval or disapproval about
it to become possible.

So far in our analysis of action and situation, we
have not distinguished between what will be called the
'solitary' and the 'social' situation. This differen-
tiation must now be introduced, for the kind of action
with which we will be exclusively concerned, is 'social
action'. By 'social action' I mean such actions as
affect at least one person other than myself (i.e. the
agent). Or, to put it in the terminology used before:
I call an action social when the element of the initial
situation which will be affected by the action, is, at
the same time, also an element in the situation of at
least one person other than the agent. Thus, if I live
by myself in a house and my typewriter is next door
(initial situation), my carrying it over into my present
room is not a social action. But if I have hired a
room in a house and if the typewriter next door is

Hans Reiner in "Freiheit, Wollen und Aktivität"
(Halle 1927); §§ 18 - 21.

my landlord's typewriter, then my carrying it over into
my own room is a social action. For in doing it I do
not only interfere with my own, but also with my land-
lord's (at least potential) situation. A social action,
then, can only be performed where somebody experiences
parts of his initial situation to be parts of somebody
else's situation as well. And before we proceed to
analyse social action further, this type of experience
requires phenomenological elucidation.

What is meant when saying that part of my initial
situation (say, the presence of a typewriter next door)
is experienced as also being part of somebody else's
situation? Commonly we would say: what is meant is
that the typewriter "belongs to someone else". And
this does, indeed, characterise the way in which the
typewriter is given to me, namely as belonging to some-
body else and not to me. This characteristic exists,
regardless of the other person's actually using his
typewriter or being absent. In the latter case it
would be more correct to speak of the typewriter as
being part of his 'potential situation'. But in either
case it is characterised as 'his', and it is only with
this index that it becomes part of my own situation.

This leads us to the recognition of a new feature
of situations, or, more exactly, of a new dimension of
features: elements of my situation can be characterised
as 'belonging to me' ('being at my disposal'), as 'be-
longing to someone else' ('being at someone else's dis-
posal), or as neither of the two. In other words, the
relations between myself and the elements of my situa-
tion are not only those of perceiving, anticipating,
remembering, etc., but also others of 'rights' and

'claims' I have upon some elements, and the absence
of such rights and claims with regard to others. Thus
there are elements in every social situation which are
characterised as 'not within the domain of my rights'
or as 'to be respected as being within someone else's
domain of rights'. Further, there may be élements cha-
racterised as 'within the domain of interests of an-
other person' (though not within the domain of his
rights). Thus if a tree in front of my house takes
too much light away, and if I know that my neighbour
loves this tree and would be much distressed by its
removal, then, although the tree may not belong to
either of us, or even though it may belong to me, it
will be given to me as 'within the domain of my neigh-
bour's interests', and this characteristic may compli-
cate my decision to take it down 60).

For the present these sketchy remarks must suffice
as an outline of the situational background of 'social
actions' as opposed to 'solitary' ones. In the subse-
quent analysis only a special type of social action
will be discussed: moral action. I do not think that
all social action is moral action, if we define moral
action (i.e. morally relevant action) as action through
which claims concerning the rights or interests of one
or several other persons have been either respected or
disregarded (in the ways to be analysed presently).
For, such claims are not at stake in all social actions.
For example, if two people both enjoy the same sort of
activity (say, playing golf), they are both acting

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60) For a phenomenological elucidation of the origin
   of such 'rights', 'claims', 'interests', etc., as
   experiential qualities of situations, see III,3
   of this paper.

socially when pursuing this activity together, but
there need not be a trace of moral relevance in such
actions. A great deal of social actions is in this
sense morally indifferent. And that involves, among
other things, that the categories of (moral) approval
and disapproval do not apply to them.

The moral relevance of 'solitary action' is easy
to determine, if the above definition is applied. Some
people maintain that, strictly speaking, no action is
completely without consequences to other people, or,
in our terminology: that my situation is always also
(partly) somebody else's situation. But this would only
mean that "de facto" there is no solitary situation
and, accordingly, no solitary action, because some
consequences of it will always affect other people.
I doubt whether even this is so. But whether it be so
or not - it has no bearing whatsoever on the notion of
'solitary action' in the sense of 'action within a
situation (initial + resulting) which is given as
wholly my situation only, and in no respect as anybody
else's'. So defined, all solitary action is morally in-
different. And it is evident that there are such soli-
tary situation (phenomenally, though probably not de
facto). Therefore the conclusion, that there is such
solitary action, cannot be escaped. It includes a num-
ber of interesting consequences which, however, we can-
not take up at present. So, for example, suicide, when
carried out in a situation such as would not affect any-
body else, would have to be recognised as morally indif-
ferent 61). For the following analysis, however, we shall
confine ourselves to cases of clearly social action only.

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61) Those who consider this conclusion overhasty on the

The type of intelligible behaviour whichwwas called
'reaction' will hardly enter the discussion. These are
cases of the aformentioned type of 'adequate reaction'
or 'response' to a certain occurrence, such as death
or arrival of a friend. Some people might hold that
we morally disapprove of someone who jokes and laughs
upon the death of a good friend. In this case there
would be moral disapproval not of an action but of a
reaction. It seems to me, however, that here we are
not presented with a case of genuine moral disapproval
in the sense defined above. In the first place, situa-
tions of this kind are essentially solitary (though they
may become accidentally social). Secondly, it seems to
me that a failure to react properly is not due to con-
scious control (or conscious lack of control) in the
same way in which all actions are. The condition of
'subjecting oneself to a claim', of which I hope to
show that it is an essential condition fo the possibili-
ty of acts of approval, does not appear to be given in
these cases. And as the issues are involved enough
without this complication, I shall, for the time being,
forego its special investigation.

8) The Moral Claim as Part of the Initial Situation.

The first essential feature to be noticed in the
structure of moral action (qua the object of approval)
is, that the person's action must have been carried out

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ground that it cannot be reconciled with the moral
code of Christian ethics, may be reminøded, that
philosophical systematic ethics proceeds quite in-
dependently of Christian ethics; otherwise it could
not claim for its results that validity which is
based on its dealing with observable (though not

in response to a claim which he has received from out
of his situation . I venture to introduce the term
'claim' for one of the central phenomenological data
in the subsequent analysis, in spite of the inadequa-
cies of this term which have sometimes been pointed
out 62). I agree that its connotations take away from
its suitability for certain theoretical connections;
but it is just these connotations which make it very
suitable for the pre-theoretical sphere in which I in-
tend to use it. It describes, I think, very adequately
the experience we have when encountering a situation in
which we are called upon to behave in a certain way. It
is true, of course, that moral claims are not made upon
us by a person, but, as a rule, arise from the imperso-
nal conditions of a situation. Yet, the way in which
we feel ourselves "addressed by them", as though there
were some personal entity addressing us, makes this
connotation of the term, though it may be theoretically
misleading, phenomenologically suitable. I think, there-
fore, that the following description will justify the
choice of this term.

The moral claim, which may give rise to moral action,
belongs to the group of phenomena which I have called
'situational suggestions'. It is something which occurs
in some initial situation. This situation may be long,
lasting, or repeating itself for days, or months, or
years, and the claim would then always recur with it.

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only sensible) facts, and rational reasonings based
upon them. Philosophical ethics is no less indepen-
dent of the various tenets of Christian doctrine,
than are, for instance, chemistry or botany. Whether
the reverse is also true, seems to me less certain.
62) Especially by Ross, cf."The Right and the Good",p.20;
and "The Foundations of Ethics", p.85.

Such was the case in our example of the mother who
lived with her children. But the situation may also be
short and arise suddenly, as, for instance, the situa-
tion of being present at an accident where one is sud-
denly called upon to help. As to the nature of the
claim itself such differences are immaterial, and it
may be studied with either type of situation.

By calling the claim a 'situational suggestion' I
wish to indicate that it is of a similar nature as those
other elements, suggesting action, which were given this
name in the preceding chapter, - viz. all states of
affairs in a situation which call for our behaving in
a certain way, be it by way of frightening us or by
appealing to us, by requesting urgently or suggesting
faintly. Like these situational suggestions, the claim
is part of an initial situation and partakes of its
reality. It is not something which I add to it after
a process of reasoning, or which I imagine, or have
been told I should imagine, or try to feel, in this
situation. But it is given to me through one of those
acts through which we are related to elements of the
'autonomous' world in which we live and which is expe-
rienced as quite independent of our living in it. Thus
when I walk along the street and I suddenly see a person
collapse who walked in front of me, a situation has
arisen which contains as one of its elements a claim
('suggestion') to hurry towards the collapsing person
and to assist him in whichever way may appear to be
indicated. It is of little importance here which termi-
nology we choose to describe the presence of the claim
in this situation. To say that it is "perceived" may
mislead some to expect that it is given in the same way
in which the pavement of the street, or the colour of

the collapsing person's coat are given; and as this is
clearly not the case, they may feel inclined to adopt
the belief that 'moral claims' do not exist. Such mis-
understanding may be prevented by simply saying that
we 'are aware of a claim', in the same manner as we are,
for instance, aware, clearly and distinctly, of 'being
late' when we arrive at the concert hall and the doors
have been closed already, or as we are aware of 'being
alone' when standing on a solitary mountain and sur-
veying the country, or as we are aware of a certain
object's 'belonging to someone else', - though none of
these elements (i.e. contents of our awareness) are
manifested in their respective situations in any sensi-
ble form.

There is, therefore, a sense in which it will be
quite correct to say that these claims are part of the
real (initial) situation. And although it may be quite
appropriate to say that we "feel" these claims, it must
be noticed that this does not mean that the claims are
identical with these "feelings", but that we mean by
"feelings" here, certain acts through which a certain
content is given; and as such acts, in structure, re-
semble acts of perception, the term 'perceive a claim'
is not so inappropriate after all. For, like colours
or sounds, the claims are given as 'out there', with
the collapsing person (as it were), from which they seem
to emerge - if it is at all possible to attempt to
locate situational suggestions spatially.

A further, most relevant, feature of the claim is
its merely suggestive character. It suggests, though
often in very urgent and demanding terms, that I do
so and so. But it under no circumstances makes me do

so and so. All that happens is that I become aware
of this suggestive occurrence - much in the same way
as I become aware of the fact that I have overturned
my inkpot and that the ink spreadinglowly over the table,
approaching its edges. Both these situational occurren-
ces suggest certain types of action to be performed by
me. And, being autonomous occurrences which progress
in time by virtue of their temporal and dynamic nature,
they will lead to resulting situation A, when left alone,
and to resulting situation B, when interfered with. In
a way, therefore, quite regardless of whichever form of
behaviour I may adopt, I cannot help dealing with them.
For, even completely ignoring the suggestions arising
with these occurrences is a way of dealing with them,
inasmuch as by ignoring them we have chosen just one of
the many ways of behaving available to us in the situa-
tion. Thus the only activity which is forced upon us
by a situational suggestion is to arrive at a decision
about it. This we cannot escape, for even if we do
nothing and leave the whole matter in abeyance, we know
that this amounts to (though it is not) deciding in
one way rather than the other.

We have then to distinguish between one thing which
situational suggestions invariably effect, and another,
which they never effect:- (a) They invariably make us
behave in a certain way which always amounts to having
made a decision about them, no matter whether we have
really performed a decision or not. And by a behaviour
"amounting to having made a decision" I mean a behaviour
of refusing to make a decision though knowing that this
very refusal will result in the events in question
taking the form of one of the possible alternatives which
I had to decide about. (b) But situational suggestions

never force us to decide in one way rather than another, let alone cause us to act in a certain way. A situational suggestion never becomes the motive of an action of our's without our placing it into that position.

Having so far considered the moral claim qua situational suggestion, we shall now have to focus our attention upon those particular features of this claim which distinguish it from other situational suggestions and which we indicated by calling it a 'moral' claim.

Situational suggestions in general (excluding moral claims) acquaint us with a certain course of action as with one which promises to be either pleasant in itself, or conducive to the attainment of some (pleasant) aim which we have decided to pursue; or which prevents something which is unpleasant in itself, or is likely to lead to consequences which I desire to avoid; or, finally, which would help to bring about a state of affairs which I believe to be valuable in itself, but which does not concern any other people (such as, in the opinion of some, religious experiences, knowledge, achievemnts of art). With each of these situational suggestions we are able to distinguish between a 'content' (i.e. the materially specified way of behaviour which they suggest) and a 'form' (i.e. the way in which they suggest this). When now comparing a moral claim with these other types of situational suggestions, important differences can be noticed with regard to content as well as with regard to form.

The distinguishing feature of its content is that it is constituted by the fact that there is some other person (or several other persons) who is in need of something (in a very wide meaning of the word) and whose

requirements, to some certain extent, can be met by my adopting a certain way of behaving. The distinguishing feature of its form, on the other hand, is that this way of behaving suggests itself to me as one which I 'ought' to adopt.

When here introducing the concept 'ought' - taken in the narrower of the two senses distinguished by C.D. Broad 63) - I wish to make clear at once that I will be using this term exclusively as a merely descriptive concept. That is to say, I wish to employ it 'pre-theoretically', as a sign which stands for a certain 'simple quality' of which we are aware in certain experiences and which, of all the terms we have, 'ought'is most likely to denöte successfully. It follows that the term 'ought', when so used, is not capable of any definition other than an ostensive one.

It is true that by determining the function of the term 'ought' in this way I commit myself to accepting, at least parts of, certain ethical theories, and to rejecting, at least parts of, others. But in saying that I wished to use the term 'ought' pre-theoretically, I did not mean that the adoption of such usage would remain without consequences as regards the acceptance or rejection of certain theories. All I wished to express was that my adoption of this usage was not determined by any theoretical considerations, but only by my conviction that this usage is prescribed by the nature of the (experiential) facts to which we have access.

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63) C.D.Broad, "Fife Types of Ethical Theory"; p.161. The narrower sense of 'ought' is the one in which the term "applies only to actions which an agent could do if he willed".

The quality denoted by 'ought' in this descriptive sense is familiar from those situations in which we "feel that we ought to do so and so" (namely, bring about certain conditions concerning one or several other persons). And this type of "feeling" which arises on certain occasions is precisely that which I propose to call the 'being aware of a moral claim'. Although these "feelings" occur in a great variety of particular forms, we are here only concerned to point out those generic features without which a 'moral claim' would be impossible, that is, to point out its 'essential structure'.

As two distinctive features of the moral claim we have so far determined a) with regard to its content, that it prescribes a course of action as being (somehow) in the interests of another person; and b) with regard to its form, that we are aware of this course of action as one which we ought to embark upon. Both of these features may be indicated by calling the claim a 'moral' claim.

What a moral claim requires, then, is that we carry out a certain action in order to bring about a certain state of affairs. Now we have already seen that to be aware of a certain action which we can perform includes being aware of an initial and a resulting situation as connected by this action. We have seen, further, that in cases of social action - the only ones under discussion here - the resulting situation is given as being, at the same time, my own and (part of) somone else's situation. When we are aware of a moral claim it is this resulting situation qua someone else's situation which is given to us as one which ought to be brought about. Let us take as an illustration the simple exam-

ple of my seeing a blind man who wishes to cross a
road but traffic does not allow him to do so. This
state of affairs (**viz.** my seeing etc.) is the initial
situation, and it is out of this situation that the
moral claim that I assist the blind person to cross the
road, addresses itself to me. It will help to bring out
the particular nature of the moral claim if we add as
a further feature to the initial situation that I wish
to catch a certain bus and that the smallest delay
would make me miss it. My perceiving a moral claim then
consists of the awareness that I am morally required
in this situation to assist the man in spite of my
clearly missing the bus in concequence of that action.
This, I think, is roughly all that occupies a person's
consciousness in a situation such as this. An analysis
of these contents of awareness shows that the resulting
situation (R), as it is given to me as the result of
my possible action, is formed by the intersection of two
situations, namely mine (M) and that of the other person
(O), and that what happens in R (my helping the
other person) takes different shapes in either M or O.
In M it is, in the present example, my helping at the
expense of missing the bus; in O it is the other person's
receiving help with all the relief of the moment and,
probably, beneficial consequences (such as being in time
for something) which such help involves.

While the feature that R is an intersection of M
and O is an essential characteristic of a moral claim,
this cannot be said of the feature of the mutual exclu-
sion between M and O which was found in our example. To
do what I recognise to be morally required in a situation,
is not necessarily to do something contrary to my own

interest, although the common notion of moral behaviour rests largely upon this conception. However, this point will receive attention at a later stage of the enquiry (II,15); it does not affect the essential structure of the experience of 'being aware of a moral claim', as we can understand (materially) this structure without taking into account the feature that the claim is directed against our inclinations. That this is often the case is, therefore, accidental to its nature.

There are, however, some other elements which are also essentially contained in 'being aware of a moral claim', i.e. without which this whole experience would not be possible. The first of these concerns the re- sulting situation qua the other person's situation. In being aware of a moral claim we experience a certain action as morglly required in a situation, - and action, as we have seen, is interfering with the initial situa- tion so as to bring about a certain state of affairs (= resulting situation). It is obvious, then, that in the experience of an action as morally required, the state of affairs which is to be brought about by the action is somehow given as 'worthy of bringing about'. We would not be able to understand how someone could experience a certain action as being morally required, if he did not experience the state of affairs which he is required to bring about by that action, as 'worth while' or, as I shall simply say, as 'valuable'.

However, a qualification of this characteristic of 'being valuable' is not likewise essentially contained in the awareness of a moral claim; for this experience is often had by a person without his being able to state why, or in what respect, the resulting situation (qua

that of the other person) is given to him as one which
is worthy of being brought about. I think, therefore,
that a descriptive account of the generic and essential
features of the experience of 'being aware of a moral
claim' must needs leave this characteristic rather vague.
Only then can it hope to cover the range of very dif-
ferent particular states of affairs to which this quality
of value is attached. Often this value is found to
attach to 'felicific' states of affairs, i.e. to such
states of affairs as are experienced to assist towards
another person's happiness or to diminish his suffering.
But the value-quality does not attach only to 'felicific'
states of affairs, nor, indeed, is it possible to iden-
tify the felicific state of affairs and the value which
this state of affairs is experienced to have. For there
are moral claims (i.e. other cases of the same intel-
ligible structure) in which this value-quality attaches
to states of affairs which do not assist towards any-
body's happiness or relieve anybody's pain, but which
are simply the fulfilment of an obligation which I have
to somebody.

Here belongs, among other things, that somewhat con-
troversial obligation under which I place myself by
giving a promise to someone. We need not, within the
frame of this paper, try to form an opinion on this
especially difficult question, or to discuss the opinions
of others about it. For the present enquiry takes for
granted the existence of moral claims as experiential
facts, and it is not concerned with their origination
in the history of mankind, or with the variation of
their contents with different nations or tribes, or
with the special case in which they are "created" by

the very person who perceives them, through his giving
a promise to some other person. Once this part of the
problem is omitted, the rest fits easily into the general
pattern of the perception of moral claims as outlined so
far. The only modification to be introduced is that,
instead of being aware of a requirement of the other
person, we are now aware either of a requirement plus
a claim of his upon me to meet that requirement, or, in
some cases, of a claim only which the other person has
upon me, claiming that I do so and so, without any require-
ment of his (or, for that matter, of anybody else) being
met by that action. Even in the latter case the basic
structure of the awareness of a moral claim is present:
I am aware of it being morally requisite that I do so
and so, and in doing so and so I bring about what is
given to me as worth bringing about, namely the fulfil-
ment of a promise. Similarly, the split-up structure
of the resulting situation recurs, for into his situation
my action enters as his receiving what he was promised
to receive, and in my own situation it takes the form
of my providing (having provided) that which I promised
to provide, possibly at the expense of abandoning to
some extent that which I would have liked to do. The
same structure, I think, can even be traced in such ex-
treme cases as that of my promising a dying friend to
think of him at certain times after his death, though
here the modifications may undermine the essential con-
ditions of the occurrence of moral claims to such an
extent that they only continue in a quasi-fashion and,
accordingly, the claim only continues as a quasi-claim.

There are three further conditions of the possibili-
ty of 'being aware of a moral claim', all of them so
obvious that a mere mention will suffice to render them

clear:-

Firstly, awareness of a moral claim is only possible when containing the awareness of my own being able to provide - at however great expense and at however small an extent - that which I am requested to provide by the claim. This condition was implicitly mentioned in the description of what I am required to do as what I 'ought to do'.

Secondly, I must know how to provide the requirement claimed. This is a separate condition, as there are cases possible where I know that I can, say, help a certain person who suffers, but do not know how. In these cases the moral claim to help does not arise as long as I do not know how to achieve the help.

Thirdly, the claim is experienced as directly addressed to me, though, at the same time, I know it to be potentially addressed to everybody in general, and actually addressed to everybody else who happens to share the situation in which it arises (e.g. an accident in the street). This thrid condition will be analysed in more detail at a later stage of this paper (in II, 16 and 17).

For present purposes the analysis need not be driven any fuĕrther. But some remarks by way of commentary may still follow.

It is not necessary, again, to point out that the old question as to whether there "really are" such moral claims, and, if so, "who" issues them, or how they could have developed, and, if not, how it is that so many people think there are and even obey them with great effort, etc. - is irrelevant to this analysis,

and that no answer that it may be given can affect its results. But another, more refined objection may possibly be made:- Could it not be that a person who (say, as a consequence of a study of some modern ethical writings) has come to be convinced that there are no such moral claims, ceases to experience them in his personal life? And if that be so, would it not mean that the above description is only reporting an experience which some people have acquired through certain circumstances and others not? And which we may lose, or which may change, according as we go through certain processes of learning and enlightenment?

This objection may be dispelled by the following considerations. To begin with, the effects of theoretical studies on what one actually experiences are not commonly very noticeable. The most orthodox idealists still admit that they experience things as "real"; and physiologists, who are theoretically familiar with the fact that the stimuli that cause us to see things in a distance from us, are stimuli directly on the retina of our eyes, continue to see things in a distance and do not start to feel little stimuli in their eyes. Why then should an experience which is so familiar and deeply rooted in our daily situations as finding oneself addressed by a moral claim, deteriorate and eventually fade away altogether, only because a person reads or writes books, say, in logical positivism? I think that this change of actual experience which is supposed to ensue from a change or adoption of theoretical views, is highly doubtful and improbable.

Apart from that we have already pointed out that the fact, that a certain number of people do not experience

moral claims, does in no way jeopardize the validity of
the results of our description. For the constitutive
elements of a moral claim, as pointed out by this descrip-
tion, are related to each other in an intelligible way.
They can be understood as being necessary conditions of
the awareness of a moral claim, which itself, if only
one of them was missing, would not be possible. Thus
the description supports itself, and there is no need
for it to be substantiated by gathering information as
to how many people furnish instances of this pehnomenon.
Admittedly, we would be surprised to hear that only a
few people experience moral claims and that, according-
ly, only these few recognise the structure here discus-
sed. But need anyone discredit his own experience on
that account? I think he need not do so any more than
a few persons who see the world coloured, need discredit
their experiences when informed that most people see
things in the black-white fashion only. Nor need they
consider the insights they have gained into the ways
colours are related to each other to be less valid,
only because most people do not have occasion to obtain
this knowledge too.

As a further comment I may add that such 'moral
claims' do by no means all have the same degree of
urgency or peremptoriness. They occupy a whole range
of degrees, including most urgent and elementary claims,
such as were instanced by our examples of the collapsing
person or the blind man, and ranging down to certain
very subtle shades of claims or suggestions, which give
rise to the more refined moral behaviour, such as we
know under the names of "tact" or "considerateness", and
which for many people are imperceptible.

9) The Act of Submission to the Moral Claim.

The moral claim as it was described in the preceding chapter forms only one part of the structure of moral action, - and, as far as acts of approval attached to this action are concerned, this claim is not the central element that we approve of 64). For our approval, as further analysis will show, is concerned with the way in which a person deals with the claim that has arisen in his situation. It is clear that, if this is so, the claim is an essential constituent of the object of approval; for if it were not there, a behaviour of a person towards it would not be possible. But at the same time it is not the claim but his behaviour to which our approval is immediately directed 65). And upon this behaviour towards moral claims we must now concentrate.

The next characteristic of what we have called a 'moral action' 64) is an act of submission to the moral claim which has been perceived. This act may be described as making the situational suggestion (the moral

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64) It should be remembered here that, the discussion of moral disapproval having been postponed, we are at present concerned with act and object of approval only. Thus the term 'moral action', though simply meaning 'morally relevant action' (i.e. the type of action to which acts of either approval or disapproval are appropriate) will in this context always have the meaning of 'morally valuable action' or 'action which is worthy of approval'.

65) This is only true of the type of moral approval discussed at present. There is an essentially different type of approval which is concerned, if not with the moral claim itself, with our perceiving certain claims, - rather than with our behaviour towards them. This type of approval ('approval of standard') will be discussed separately in II,10.

claim) the motive of an action. In other words, it
consists of deciding to make real the situation which
is prescribed by the claim, and which, as we have seen,
involves certain consequences for myself and certain
other consequences for the other person. One may thus
formulate this whole act as: making a decision. But it
must then be noticed that this decision has a character
of obeying the claim of a situation, which distinguishes
it from other decisions that are not made in response
to a moral claim. All decisions have in common that it
is 'I' who makes them, and that none of the alternatives
concerned, nor any other element or power, will force
me to make it in the special way I do. In cases of
moral decisions we have here the complementary phenomenon
to the fact, that the claim itself does not exercise any
influence on the actual making of my decision about it.
It only claims and suggests, but it is absolutely power-
less as to making me obey it. It is therefore 'I', the
agent, who appoints the contents of the claim (i.e. the
resulting situation) to become the motive of my action.

Let us now consider the act of approval as directed
towards this structure. Although we speak of "approving
of a person's action", we do not simply mean by 'action'
the fact that he does something. It is true, when we
observe someone assisting a collapsing person, or when
we hear of that mother having left her children, or when
we are told of an instance of exceedingly tactful be-
haviour, our approval is, first of all, about this action
or behaviour itself, and if we were to formulate it we
would say something like: "He behaved most tactfully", or
"It was a very noble deed", etc.. It seems, at first,
as if our approval were directed at what is actually
going on when a person carries out his moral decision.

But it can easily be shown that it is not the actual
action itself, let alone the beneficial effects it may
(or is intended to) have, which we in fact approve of.
The way to do this is to produce examples in which either
of these elements (the observable action, the beneficial
effects) are ruled out, and in which yet the whole
structure of 'moral action', as it is aimed at by acts
of moral approval, continues unimpaired.

As regards the beneficial effects to others we can
easily imagine an example where these effects are not
brought about and where our approval continues all the
same. Thus when a poor person arragges for a sum of
money to be sent to another person whom he knows to be
in even greater need of it, our approval of this action
does not cease when we hear that the money got lost and
never reached its destination ~~in~~. But even with respect
to the (externally observable) action itself examples can
be found to show that it is not this action which is
approved of. Yet this factor cannot be eliminated quite
as easily as the beneficial effects, as it is mostly the
only manifestation of what a person has really decided
to do, and, what is more, the only evidence that the
decision has actually been made. Since, as I hope to
show presently, it is this decision which we actually
approve of, our approval may be kept inactive by the
fact that we do not know whether the decision has really
been made. But those few cases where we <u>are</u> sure that
a certain decision has been made, although, for reasons
of physical inability or hindering cirsumstances, no
kind of reportable action can follow it, sufficiently
establish the point. For in these cases we approve of
the moral decision,underlying the action,in the same way
as we would approve of the corresponding action, if only

we have enough reason to believe that the decision has definitely been made. And as approval can thus be attached to cases devoid of either observable action or beneficial effects, it follows that the elements that form the essential object of approval cannot be contained in either of them.

Let us confirm this by a glance at an opposite example which shows that, on the other hand, approval will not be possible in cases which, though abounding in beneficial effects and observable action, do not contain the essential personal decision to act in submission to a moral claim. An old story tells us that a sick woman was left behind in a village at a river bank, while all the population was out on the big river skating (for it was winter). The woman, noticing that a storm approached which would break the ice and drown the people before they would be able to escape, could think of no other means of warning the gay crowd than by setting her house on fire. So she did and the people were saved. Acts of approval will be found appropriate for this action. But let us now transform this example thus:[1] The woman's house is highly insured and, noticing that everybody is out of the village, and there is no danger of someone observing her, or providing too hasty assistance, she carries into action her intention of putting the old house on fire in order to obtain the high insurance fee. Again the house goes up in flames and again everybody is saved from drowning. The beneficial effects of the action are in both cases identically the same. But I need hardly point out that approval can only be attached to the first case. Thus, as the observable action and the beneficial effects are

identical, the difference must be in the decision which gave rise to this action or, to put it in terms of traditional ethics, in the motive of the action and not in its consequences.

The upshot, then, of this perusal of some examples is that the act of approval, though apparently attached to the action (wherever there is one observable), 'aims' through the action at the act of submission to a moral claim, of which this action is only the observable manifestation. It is this act, and this act as performed by the person himself, which forms the "nucleus" of 'moral action', and that is of the object-structure of acts of approval.

It has been sometimes suggested that it is a benevolent instinct or desire within us, which makes us submit to those claims; or that we are forced to carry out this act of submission to the claim by some divine guidance ruling all our behaviour; or because of a fundamental decision to be good, made once for all at one stage of our lives. Thus, although people may agree that it is the act of submission which our approval 'means' in the last instance, they may not, at the same time, agree that it is the person himself who is to be approved for having performed this act. Inthink, however, it can be made clear that the fact that it was the person himself from which the act of submission originated, is a constitutive element of moral actions qua objects of moral approval. A last example may help to present this issue clearly:-

Let us imagine a person who is forced (by means of hypnosis, say) to fulsil a certain kind of moral claim which he will encounter in a certain situation. It is

well known that (hypnotic) orders of this kind can be given to certain persons, with the result that they simply have to act in the way prescribed without being able to behave otherwise. Yet, such a person would do that prescribed action from no other motive than from that which the situation suggests and which, in our example, we assume to be a moral claim. When the predicted claim occurs such a person will then answer it instantly. Here the claim is taken as what it is, and no other motives spoil the purely moral character of the action. But the act of submission to that claim has not been carried out by the acting person himself, but it has been performed for him by someone else. The response to the claim is not his personal achievement. And any approval that we may have felt about the person's action will cease as soon as we are informed that he, in answering the moral claim, carried out a post-hypnotic order. It appears from this example that the moral nature of the "motive" must be supplemented by <u>the agent's</u> decision to adopt this motive, for a case of 'moral action' to be constituted. As these conditions imply the having been aware of a moral claim, we may conclude, that the three following factors are necessary constituents of objects of moral approval (i.e. of moral actions):-

(a) The awareness of a moral claim;
(b) The act of submission to this claim;
(c) The act of submission as being performed by the agent himself 67).

When now considering the act of approval as directed towards this structure, we find that no essentially new

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67) For the explication of a fourth condition of moral

elements are contained in it. This is so because of
the complete correspondence between object and act in
general. All we have to do in order to obtain a descrip-
tive picture of the act of approval, is to replace the
statements about the object by the respective statements
about the act. We then see that the act of approval
is evidently composed of:-

(a) The experience that another person is aware of a
    moral claim;
(b) The experience that he is subjecting himself to
    this claim;
(c) The experience that it is this other person himself
    (and not any other force) which effects this sub-
    mission.

10) Distinction between 'Approval of Action' and
    'Approval of Standard'.

Before we proceed further with our analysis of act
and object of approval, we must introduce the distinction
between two rather different types of approval and make
clear with which of these we are concerned at present.
The necessity of this distinction will be seen, if we
recall an observation which was made at the end of the
last chapter but one. There it was said, that there is
a scale of moral claims, ranging from elementary and
basic claims to subtle and refined ones. And it was
remarked, that there are people who do not even as much
as perceive some of the more refined claims. Stated
in different terms, this is to say that people differ

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approval - implicit in (a), being the general vali-
dity of the moral claim - see II,16.

as to their 'susceptibility' to moral claims. Some are
aware of a wide range of differentiated claims, others'
perceptions are confined to the "lower" part of the scale.
Thus of two people who are at a party, the one may notice
that the hostess is tired, and he may be aware of a moral
claim to leave, or, at any rate, to leave earlier than he
would have liked to. The other may not notice the tired-
ness of the hostess (even though he were speaking to her)
and, accordingly, is not aware of a claim to leave, but
stays on happily until very late.

It seems to me clear that, in cases like this, we
do approve of the person who notices the claim and dis-
approve (though, may be, not very strongly) of the one
who does not. Or, put more generally: <u>there is approval
and disapproval which is merely concerned with the fact
that someone has perceived a certain claim, or has not
perceived it, respectively</u>. But this approval is of a
kind very different from approval of moral action which
may result, by virtue of an act of submission, from such
perception of a claim. In order to distinguish it from
this 'approval of action', I propose to call the new
type 'approval of standard'. This approval is essen-
tially and exclusively concerned with the fact that
somebody is aware of a certain moral claim, no matter
whether his behaviour is influenced by it or not. It
is not always easy to distinguish between the two, as
no moral action is possible without a claim having been
perceived, and, accordingly, our 'approval of standard'
and our 'approval of action' always go together. Apart
from that, in the more basic realm of moral claims appro-
val of standard is hardly present. We have no particular
feelings of approval about the fact that a person

notices the claim to help if someone collapses in front
of him. But our approval of standard becomes more dis-
tinct -- and more clearly distinguishable from that of
an ensuing action - as we rise in the scale of moral
claims. In moral actions such as we describe by the
terms "considerate" or "tactful" it can be clearly re-
cognised. Indeed, I think that that which we call
"matters of tact", are largely matters of being aware
of refined moral claims only; and often action enters
into them only as a manifestation of one's having been
aware of the claim. As we shall see later, the amount
of selfdenial contained in an action determines, among
other factors, the intensity of the approval of it.
But it is easy to find examples where hardly any self-
denial is contained in a moral action, and where, ac-
cordingly, the intensity of our approval of it would
be very low or next to nothing. Thus, if person A
knows that a person B would be reminded of a very sad
occurrence if he saw a certain handwriting on a certain
envelope, and if B comes into A's room where this en-
velope is displayed on the table, it would be a consi-
derate action of A to cover the envelope by something
so as to prevent B's noticing it: and of this action
we would approve. Yet it is hardly possible to detect
in it any amount of selfdenial, and the approval we
feel (which may be quite strong) could not be accounted
for in these terms. Closer phenomenological inspection
will confirm that it is only to a very small extent
'approval of action' which is here concerned, and that
we approve of the action mainly as an expression (or
manifestation) of A's having perceived that refined
moral claim which was present in his situation.

These examples may suffice to illustrate the difference between approval of moral action (aiming at the act of submimsion to a claim), and approval of the fact that someone is (or has been) aware of a certain (refined) moral claim. The first is approval of a process (dynamic), the second is approval of a state of affairs (static). The first is directed at the other person in so far as <u>he does something</u>; the second is directed at a person in so far as <u>something happens to him</u>. For we have seen that moral claims are situational occurrences, given as part of my surrounding situation, and not as something which I do, imagine, or think.

The phenomenon of our approving of the moral standard of a person, the occurrence of which can hardly be doubted, presents us with a remarkable difficulty. For it is approval of the fact that a situation for a certain person contains certain (subtle) moral claims, or it is disapproval of the fact that a situation for a certain person is devoid of such claims. And the difficulty is that it is acts of <u>approval</u> that we perform towards these facts (and not acts of admiration, pleasure, etc.), - at least we cannot very well class them as anything else. They seem to be analogous to approval of action in all essential respects: we approve that a certain valuable state of affairs (i.e. in this case the perception of refined moral claims) has been brought about, and we are sure that it is the other person himself (and not some other force or circumstance) who has brought it about, and we are also convinced that there is a general claim to everybody to achieve this status of susceptibility to individual moral claims. Yet these conditions are given as fulfilled in a much more vague way than with acts of approval of action, so much

so that we may even doubt whether they are fulfilled
at all and, accordingly, whether it really is approval
which we feel towards cases of such moral susceptibility,
and not possibly some other kind of response not hither-
to analysed. For we must ask ourselves this: in cases
of approval of standard, is the other person ever given
as having perceived a (general) moral claim to perceive
the individual one in question, and do we ever experience
him to subject himself consciously to such a claim? It
makes sense to say that a person decides to act in a
certain way, but it does not make sense to say that a
person decides to be aware of a certain refined moral
claim. And yet we behave in our acts of approval of
standard as though it did make sense, and as if the fact
that some person perceives refined moral claims were
entirely due to some morally relevant activity on his
part, at which we aim in our approval.

The problem here outlined will be resumed in chapter
12 of this part. But no attempts at a solution will be
made, though the phenomenon and the difficulties which
it raises would merit a more thorough study. As the
focus of the present analysis is on moral action and the
corresponding act of approval, the phenomenon of approval
of standard has been sketched here rather in order to
set it off from the subject-matter of this limited trea-
tise, than in order to consentrate upon it.

11) The Phenomenon of Responsibility as Contained in Moral Action.

We have so far reached the general conclusion that
acts of approval (of action) are directed at the act

of submission to a moral claim which is given to us
as having been carried out by the acting person himself.
We have, however, by no means yet brought to light what
is phenomenologically contained in that structure. The
relation between the person and this act of submission
of his is still in the dark, and so are the ways in which
approval is related to either. Is it finally the person
(agent), that we approve of when approving of moral act-
ion? Or is it the decision made? Or simply the act
by which someone embarks on that course of action which
is likely to bring about the most valuable state of
affairs? The clarifications wanted here require us to
assess in greater detail "what happens" when a person
subjects himself to a moral claim, and to attempt an
account of the person qua the agent who is capable of
performing this act.

It is common knowledge - or, at any rate, a common
saying - that "you can't blame" a person for something
for which he is not responsible, or, as it is more often
but less clearly put, "you can't blame him if it wasn't
his fault" 68). There is no doubt that in common moral
judgements people consider the responsibility of a per-
son the only condition under which they are entitled
to blame or praise him: if someone "couldn't help"
behaving in a certain way, he cannot be blamed for it.

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68) The terms 'blame' and 'praise', wherever they are
    being used in this paper, should be understood in
    the following way: The term 'blame'('praise') will
    be given to those activities (linguistic or otherwise)
    of a person, by which he communicates the fact that
    he disapproves (approves) to the person disapproved
    (approved) of. Blame and praise in this sense of the
    words are based on acts of disapproval and approval
    and cannot occur without them, whereas the occurrence
    of disapproval and approval does in no way require

This common knowledge which, though not very explicitly, recognises the responsibility of a person as the necessary condition for acts of approval or disapproval to be directed towards him, is, I think, based on genuine insight into phenomena, which we will now undertake to explicate.

The result obtained in the preceding chapters may be formulated (in egological language) thus: It is I myself who subject myself to the moral claim, and there is no force or factor which I experience to have "caused" this (my) act of submission. There are, however, 'reasons' for my having performed this act (e.g. "that a person was in need of help"). But there would also have been reasons for my not performing it (e.g. "that I had to catch a train"). Thus there must be a decision between (at least) two possible courses of action, both of which are 'reasonable'. This decision may be made after my recognition of one reason as 'better' than the other. But it need not then be a decision to act according to the better one. I might, for instance, conclude from my reflection on the competing reasons that it would be impossible to justify my hurrying on in spite of the person's need of help. But I might decide to hurry on all the same, though knowing that it is the less justifiable way of behaving. In this case, too, I could answer the question "Why did you do this?", namely by saying: "Because I wanted to catch the train", but compared with the answer that I could have given had I behaved the other way, this would be the weaker, the less satisfactory answer.

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the presence of acts of blaming or praising. (This view about the meaning of the words "blame" and "praise" seems to be shared by A.C.Ewing; cf. "The

This short consideration is only to show that 'reasons' (situational suggestions of various kinds plus whatever thoughts and 'reasonings' we may add to them) cannot possibly be mistaken for forces that make us decide in one way rather than another. For it is perfectly possible to behave in the less reasonable way although one knows that it is the less reasonable one: and then there is not again a reason for adopting this lesser course of action, but this adoption is itself 'unjustifiable'.

Nor do we ever, in solitary or social acting, experience any "desire", "inclination", or "drive", as a force which makes us decide in a certain way. We may feel a very strong desire to drink something, or, when walking along a road, we may feel extremely tired and may want to sit down. But, in both cases a certain act of the ego-centre is required before we can give way to either of these desires. This act may be described, metaphorically, as an act of consent by the ego to whatever is desired. In it, I allow the desire to determine my action.

That there is a marked difference between my allowing a desire to determine my action and my being overwhelmed by this desire (i.e. forced to obey it), can easily be seen from any suitable example. Thus in the case of my being extremely exhausted, I may yet not permit myself to sit down; but after some time my legs may fail me and I shall be forced, in a physical sense, to fall down to the ground. This is very different, indeed, from deciding to sit down and then doing so.

Definition of Good", p.169.

Our talking about the ego giving its 'consent' to something is not altogether metaphorical. It expresses suitably a certain structure of personality, namely the relation between an ego-centre - i.e. that rather ineffable unity 'I' which accepts or discards ideas or plans, decides to walk or sit, resists temptations or gives way to them, etc. - and a 'self' of which it is the centre and which is the arena, as it were, out of which all desires, urges, thoughts, temptations, etc., arise and make their appeal to the ego. This relation between 'ego' and 'self' is the most fundamental structure we discover in our experience of ourselves. I want to smoke, for instance, but ("for some reason") I do not permit myself to do so. If the two I's which occur in this statement were identical, the statement would not be intelligible 69). For if there were only one 'ego' which (now) wants to smoke, it is inconceivable why it does not immediately proceed to do so. And if it should

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69) cf. Plato's "Republic"; 439C. Plato's argument as well as the view of the soul (personality) which it aims at establishing, seems to me to be right in essential respects, though both can hardly be used as they stand. Plato's views have had an interesting revival in some modern theories on personality, notably in those of S.Freud, C.G.Jung, A.Pfänder, (in the work quoted before, see also his book "Die Seele"), E.Rothacker ("Die Schichten der Persönlichkeit", 3rd edition 1947), and Ph.Lersch ("Aufbau der Person", 1951). It is true that distinctions, as introduced by these and other writers, between different "layers" of personality, or between an "ego", a "super-ego", and an "it", or between the "ego-centre" and the "self" are, in many ways, highly unsatisfactory, and often appear to be ill-founded theoretical constructions. However, they are not refuted or shown to be unnecessary by the assertion that personality is an indissoluble or unanalysable "unity". Whether it is a unity, and what sort of unity it is, can only be found out

be argued that the same ego, only at a later moment, denies itself this action, the fact is being overlooked that denial is possible only if the desire to be denied still continues, whereas this cannot possibly be the case in the circumstances assumed. For the ego, by the time it can start to deny, must have ceased to desire. And, clearly, nothing of this kind goes on when I deny myself the fulfilment of a desire. I need not stop desiring in order to begin to disallow this desire. I think it must be agreed, therefore, that in the reflexive expression "I deny myself this pleasure", 'I' and 'myself' do not stand for one and the same thing, but that 'I' stands for something which I tentatively refer to as the 'ego-centre', and myself stands for 'my self', i.e. for a realm of occurrences which are essentially mine (and nobody else's), but from which I am separated by a sort of "gap". Spatially expressed, - here am I, and there are my thoughts, feelings, urges, etc.. So, in a sense, the 'self' forms a special and peculiar domain within the 'surrounding situation' of which the ego is the centre. And this 'gap' can only be bridged by an act of consent of the ego, through which it, as it were, sanctions the desire or thought ('reason') or claim which have arisen, and then behaves accordingly.

When, in a moral situation, I (the ego-centre) have given my consent to the course of action suggested by a moral claim - i.e. when I have performed an act of

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by a careful descriptive investigation of the matter, and for this kind of investigations our means of observation and formulation are still painfully inadequate. Yet the blame for this deficiency should not be on those who, by advancing tentative, largely descriptive, accounts, are at pains to improve on it.

submission to this claim - then there is a sense in which I am the sole and only originator of the ensuing situational changes. For this characteristic which I experience with regard to the origin of my own (and other persons') actions, I propose to use the Latin term 'auctoritas'. This term will be used to denote the experiential fact that, when bringing about a situational change in the way described, I experience myself as the only and final 'cause' of this change (= I experience myself as its 'auctor'). The notion of this 'auctoritas' of the acting person may be explained in the following fashion:[1]

When someone has acted in a certain way, we may ask why he behaved as he did; then an answer may inform us of a perfectly "good" reason for this action (e.g. the agent's having perceived a strong moral claim to act in this way). Such an answer, however, though it provides perfect justification for that action, does not fully explain why it was, in fact, actually performed. For, as we have seen, even the best reason for doing something does not by itself make us do it. An act of consenting to (or 'sanctioning' of) this reason by the ego is required, through which the agent accepts it and sets himself to act accordingly. This act of accepting a reason is never fully accounted for by the reason itself which is accepted in it; otherwise reasons would be forces that determine our behaviour, and this, as we have seen, is clearly not the case.

The missing element, then, in an answer to the question "Why did you do that?" is to be provided by reference to the 'auctoritas' of the acting person. A full answer would, therefore, run: "He did it because

there were such and such reasons (e.g. a moral claim),
and because he decided to make these reasons his motive".
This decision itself is not again motivated by reasons –
which would then have to be accepted by a previous de-
cision, and so on ad infinitum – but is simply an act
of commitment to one of the reasons present in a situa-
tion 70). By this decision, an action is set going,
and a whole series of (externally observable and effec-
tive) events may follow from it. This act of commit-
ment is the functioning of the agent as 'auctor': it
is he, and nothing else, which gives rise to this
course of events by virtue of his 'auctoritas'.

When, after these considerations, we try to deter-
mine more exactly the central elements in moral action,
which are 'meant' in acts of approval of it, it is clear
at once, a) that the actual functioning of the 'aucto-
ritas' forms the centre of the object of moral approval,
but b) that it is not this functioning as such and un-
qualified, which is aimed at by these acts. They aim
at the functioning of the 'auctoritas' only in so far
as it gives rise to the most justifiable course of action.
That is to say, we approve of the 'auctor' but only if,
and in so far as, he brings about that situation which
is experienced as the most valuable one of the various
(resulting) situations in question. Thus we must dis-
tinguish between the 'auctoritas' as such, being the

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70) I am, of course, aware of the grave problems which
    this act of commitment presents for the discussion
    of the notion of "free choice" or "moral freedom" in
    general. But these problems are mainly of a theore-
    tical nature, and do not concern a merely phenomeno-
    logical examination. It is not incumbent upon de-
    scriptive procedures of this type to try and recon-
    cile the inconsistencies which they may encounter,
    or to supply theoretical fillings for those gaps

general precondition for all acts of approval and dis-
approval, and the actual functioning of the 'auctoritas'
which becomes the object of either approval or disappro-
val, according as preference has been given to the more
or to the less morally required course of action.

Now, when talking of "responsibility" I think we
mean only 'auctoritas' as such. We mean that a person
is able to survey the various situations at stake, to
weigh the issues (reasons, situational suggestions) that
arise with these situations, and finally to sanction
one of them. In this sense whoever has 'auctoritas'
is responsible for what he does, however badly he may
use it. The word "responsible" itself here provides a
guide to the phenomenon in point: we ascribe "respon-
sibility" to a person who is able to "respond" (reply)
to the question why he did what he did. In other words:
responsibility is ability to justify (i.e. give reasons
for) one's behaviour. Irresponsibility, on the other
hand, is not, as might be thought, the absence of re-
sponsibility, but a deficient mode of it. Actions which
are carried out irresponsibly are not actions which do
not involve any sanctioning of reasons at all, but
actions in which a flimsy reason has been made the ground
of action, - a reason, that is, which will not stand up
to careful examination. Thus burglars and murderers
mostly act as responsible agents. And it is only on
account of this that we can disapprove of them. For,
what we reprimand them for is not that they failed to
use their 'auctoritas', or that they failed to recognise

which material analysis cannot fill. For a recent
clear statement of the present difficulty see W.G.
Maclagan's paper "The Freedom of the Will" in Pro-
ceedings of the Aristotelian Society, Supplementary
Volume XXI; pp. 194ff.

the most morally required way of behaving in a situation, but that they failed to sanction the reason for that course of action which was given to them as the most justifiable one.

The notion of the 'most justifiable' action requires further comment. It must not be mistaken to mean that the questions of ethics can be solved in terms of "good reasons" only 71). For some basic standard of claims (values, principles, etc.) is presupposed as the ground on which a justification of an action must finally rest; and the described acts of approval and disapproval involve that the same standard is shared by the person approving and the person approved of. With this special implication, however, I shall concern myself in a later chapter 72). At present it may suffice to point out that, once such common standard is given, it is not difficult to understand what is meant by "more justifiable": if I help the person who collapses in front of me, my action is more justifiable than, say, proceeding to the cinema, because it is given to me as the more necessary, the more relevant thing to do. An ethical theory may here be demanded to give reasons why the one is more necessary than the other. In the present context, where we are only concerned with explicating the formal structure of experiences of approval, such reasons need not be unearthed. For the expe-

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71) This seems to be the conception of Toulmin in the book quoted before. Important though it is to ask for the "place of reason in ethics", Toulmin's book provides no answer to this question. It amounts, in effect, to telling us the old story that, if we want to establish a certain state of affairs (e.g. "deepest and most permanent happiness" of all members of a community, cf.p.157) we must employ reason to find the appropriate means.

72) II,17.

riential fact is simply that the one action is given
as aiming at a more valuable state of affairs than the
other, and as a consequence of this we consider it to
be more justifiable 73).

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73) It is interesting to note how little "moral expe-
rience" has changed since Aristotle's analysis of
'moral action', handed down to us in the Ethica
Nicomachea. Nearly all the relevant features have
been recognised by him, and he has formulated them
in terms often far more adequate than the ones we
have at our disposal. Thus our notions of 'aucto-
ritas' and 'act of commitment' are clearly conceived
by Aristotle. Actions rooted in the 'auctoritas' of
an agent are those ὧν δ' ἐν αὐτῷ ἡ ἀρχή (1110a,17);
these actions are morally relevant – they are 'moral
actions' – since ἐν οἷς γὰρ ἐφ' ἡμῖν τὸ πράττειν, καὶ
τὸ μὴ πράττειν, καὶ ἐν οἷς τὸ μή, καὶ τὸ ναί· ὥστ'
εἰ τὸ πράττειν καλὸν ὂν ἐφ' ἡμῖν ἐστί, καὶ τὸ μὴ
πράττειν ἐφ' ἡμῖν ἔσται αἰσχρὸν ὄν, etc.(1115b,7ff).
These moral actions are characterised by containing
an 'act of commitment' (to either the good or the
bad course of action), they are πράξεις κατὰ προ-
αίρεσιν (1113b,4f). The 'act of commitment' (προ-
αίρεσις) itself receives detailed analysis in book
III of the Ethica. Its essential connection with
the 'auctoritas' of a person is recognised: ὅλως
γὰρ, ἔοικεν ἡ προαίρεσις περὶ τὰ ἐφ' ἡμῖν εἶναι, as
τὸ ἐφ' ἡμῖν εἶναι is the consistently used term for
the domain of a person's 'auctoritas', and it can
never be performed with regard to the impossible –
προαίρεσις μὲν γὰρ οὐκ ἔστι τῶν ἀδυνάτων(1111b, 20
and 29); thus, being an act of deciding to do some-
thing, it is clearly distinguished from mere wishing
(βούλησις).

Aristotle mentiones explicitly that approval and
disapproval are possible only with regard to actions
which contain this 'act of commitment' (or 'submis-
sion'): κατὰ μὲν τὰ πάθη οὔτ' ἐπαινούμεθα οὔτε ψεγό-
μεθα (οὐ γὰρ ἐπαινεῖται ὁ φοβούμενος οὐδὲ ὁ ὀργιζό-
μενος, οὐδὲ ψέγεται ὁ ἁπλῶς ὀργιζόμενος ἀλλ' ὁ πῶς),
κατὰ δὲ τὰς ἀρετὰς καὶ τὰς κακίας ἐπαινούμεθα ἢ ψεγό-
μεθα. ἔτι ὀργιζόμεθα μὲν καὶ φοβούμεθα ἀπροαιρέτως,
αἱ δ' ἀρεταὶ προαιρέσεις τινὲς ἢ οὐκ ἄνευ προαιρέσεως.
(1105b,31–06a,4). And in another passage: τῶν δὴ περὶ
τὸ σῶμα κακιῶν αἱ ἐφ' ἡμῖν ἐπιτιμῶνται, αἱ δὲ μὴ ἐφ'
ἡμῖν οὔ. εἰ δ' οὕτω, καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ἄλλων αἱ ἐπιτιμώ
μεναι τῶν κακιῶν ἐφ' ἡμῖν ἂν εἶεν (1114a,28-31).

12) Responsibility and Approval of Standard.

Having thus tried to understand the phenomenon of responsibility in terms of a person's ability to account for his behaviour, we will now attend briefly to a substantial difficulty which is encountered when enquiring into the element of responsibility as it is 'aimed at' in acts of 'approval of standard'. As we have seen, this type of approval is not concerned with any acts of submission and actions of another person, but merely with the fact that he perceived (or does not perceive) certain moral claims; and the result of our analysis was that this fact, too, is ascribed to the other person's 'auctoritas'. We feel that we have a right to blame someone for not having perceived a claim present in his situation (for instance, not to make a noise while a person in the adjoining room was seriously ill). And we would not feel that we have this right, if 'susceptibility to moral claims' were given to us in the same way as susceptibility to colds, or absolute pitch, or the faculty to remember details visually, are given to us. For we do not feel in any way entitled to blame someone for catching a cold ever so often, or for not being able to recognise notes played on the piano, or for being incapable of remembering details visually. As far as our experience goes, there is a clear absence of elements of responsibility in the last three cases, and a clear presence of it in the case of the failure to perceive a moral claim.

This is about all the phenomenon will yield. No descriptive scrutiny seems to be able to detect any indication as to the way in which we relate the fact that moral claims are perceived, to the perceiving person's

responsibility. While it is not difficult to trace back
phenomenologically certain actions I do, to acts of
commitment in which I adopted a motive for doing them,
this seems to be impossible with regard to my perception
of moral claims. For, as we have seen before, these
claims are elements of my surrounding situation (not
something produced or directed by the activity of the
ego-centre). And they have, as far as our experience
of them is concerned, as little relation to my 'auctori-
tas' as has any other element of the real situation, such
as the colours I see and the sounds I hear in it. The
difficulty with acts of approval of standard may, there-
fore, be formulated thus: the correlation between act-
structure and object-structure is partly obscured. Al-
though we clearly recognise in the act (of approval of
standard) that we do hold another person responsible
for his moral standard, we cannot discern in the object-
structure in which way this person is responsible for
it.

It might be suggested as a solution to this puzzle,
that we do, at times, perceive claims which claim that
we ought to attend carefully to whatever individual
claims arise in individual situations; and that in sub-
jecting ourselves to that claim we become responsible
for the perception of later claims, since we have de-
cided to pay particular attention to them. But apart
from the fact that such general claims are of a some-
what obscure nature, this would only shift the problem
away from the individual claims to the occurrence of
these general claims. For the question would then
arise, as to the general claims which claim attention
to the individual ones, whether we are responsible for
the fact that we have perceived them or not. If we are,

the explanation of our responsibility used before would
lead to an infinite regress 74). If not, we would have
the awkward case in which persons who have received
this claim, can be held responsible for their (subse-
quent) perception of individual moral claims (or for the
failure to perceive them), whereas persons who did not
have that opportunity cannot be blamed for having ne-
glected it, or praised for having improved through it.
Thus the whole suggestion does not appear to be very
workable.

In spite of these difficulties, however, into which
this reasoning about "claims to perceive claims" leads,
there seems to be a right sense in which we can say, that
we are responsible for our being aware of certain ele-
ments in a situation, which other people may not be aware
of. Here the example of an entomologist or botanist
may be helpful, who has trained himself (according to
a certain decision to go through this training) to
attend to certain details in his field of vision which
people, who have not undergone this training, would
never notice. Thus a botanist will see certain minute
grasses within a mass of different green plants, and an

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74) A most interesting mention of this vicious regress
    we have in a footnote which Kant affixes to the
    first chapter of "Die Religion innerhalb der Gren-
    zen der reinen Vernunft":-
    "Daß der erste subjective Grund der Annahmung mora-
    lischer Maximen unerforschlich sei, ist daraus schon
    vorläufig zu ersehen: daß, da diese Annehmung frei
    ist, der Grund derselben (warum ich z.B. eine böse
    und nicht vielmehr eine gute Maxime angenommen habe)
    in keiner Triebfeder der Natur, sondern immer wiede-
    rum in einer Maxime gesucht werden muß; und, da auch
    diese eben sowol ihren Grund haben muß, außer der
    Maxime aber kein Bestimmungsgrund der freien Will-
    kühr angeführt werden soll und kann, man in der Rei-
    he der subjectiven Bestimmungsgründe ins Unendliche

entomologist will clearly perceive a difference between
two insects which look exactly alike to the untrained
eye. Yet these persons, once they have had this train-
ing, do not choose to perceive this difference, but they
cannot help doing so. The difference between the two
insects is part of the entomologist's situation, inde-
pendent of any decision of his to notice or not to notice
it. Here we have a case strictly analogous to that of
the moral claims which are either perceived or not per-
ceived and for the perception (or failure to perceive)
of which we are yet held responsible. Is it conceivable
that we are responsible for these elements of our moral
situations in the same way in which the entomologist is
responsible for his? That we once, or at various times,
decide to take an interest in other people's concerns,
and then become aware of an ever increasing multitude
of subtle moral claims contained in our situations?
I think that this is, indeed, quite plausible, - except
for the initial situational suggestions which may lead
a person to make such a decision. For here the vicious
regress starts all over again.

The upshot, then , of this short discussion of acts
of approval of standard is, that I do not find it possi-
ble to give a satisfactory phenomenological account of
this phenomenon. And as it does not form the central
subject of this paper, I must leave it at that. It
should, however, be understood here, that the impossi-
bility of assessing something descriptively does not
in any way indicate that this something is itself im-

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immer weiter zurückgewiesen wird, ohne auf den
ersten Grund kommen zu können." (Kehrbach's edition,
pp. 19-20.)

possible. I think it is perfectly possible <u>that</u> we are
fully responsible for the moral standard to which we
have attained, though I do not see myself (and there-
fore cannot describe) <u>how</u> we are responsible for it.

With regard to approval of moral action, however,
the fact may be considered as phenomenologically esta-
blished, that we approve of the other person in so far
as he is 'auctor' of the most valuable resulting situa-
tion; and that the 'auctoritas', together with an act
of preferring the more justifiable to the less justi-
fiable course of action, is the essential constituent
of the object of acts of moral approval. These are
essentially interrelated elements which we find in
our respective experiences. 75)

13) <u>The Value-Quale in Act and Object of Approval.</u>

The analysis of act and object of approval has not,
so far, taken into account that element in our experien-
ces of approval of action, which usually appears to be
the most conspicuous one, and mostly remains the only
feature recognised. This feature is a certain distinct
quale contained in the act of approval, which has given
rise to the classification of approval or disapproval

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75) The difficulty dealt with in this chapter, too,
has been perceived by Aristotle; cf. Eth.Nic.1114b,
1-8: ... εἰ μὲν οὖν ἕκαστος ἑαυτῷ τῆς ἕξεώς ἐστί
πως αἴτιος, καὶ τῆς γεννεσίας (= 'awareness of moral
claims') ἔσται πως αὐτὸς αἴτιος· εἰ δὲ μή, οὐθεὶς
αὐτῷ αἴτιος τοῦ κακοποιεῖν, ἀλλὰ δι' ἄγνοιαν τοῦ
τέλους ταῦτα πράττει, ... ἡ δὲ τοῦ τέλους ἕξεσις
οὐκ αὐθαίρετος, ἀλλὰ γῦναι δεῖ ὥσπερ ὄψιν ἔχοντα,
ᾗ κρινεῖ καλῶς καὶ τὸ κατ' ἀλήθειαν ἀγαθὸν αἱρήσεται,
καὶ ἔστιν εὐφυὴς ᾧ τοῦτο καλῶς πέφυκεν

as an emotion or feeling, mentioned before. It is true
that this element is a distinctive and constitutive ele-
ment in acts of approval. But is should be recognised
that it is but an element, and not itself the whole of
this act. The relation between this quale and the
structure of the act to which it attaches, is different
in type from the relations which hold between the diffe-
rent elements of this structure itself, and which I have
been at pains to point out. While this structure is a
complex act, composed of various essentially interrelated
sub-acts, through which we are aware of the corresponding
object-structure, the quale itself is not of the nature
of an act, but it has the nature of a modification of
an act. One might - bearing in mind all the precautions
necessary with such comparisons - compare this relation
between quale and act to a phenomenon in the physical
world: a ray of light which is seen in a dark room,
emerging from a source and being directed through a basin
of water on to a screen. This ray me be compared to the
act. It can be described, components of it can be pointed
out, and connections between them can be traced. The
special colour-quale of the light ray may then be compared
to the quale modifying the act of approval.

The point to be established by this comparison is,
that in both cases a certain structure (ray, act) is mo-
dified by a certain quale (colour-quale, approval-quale),
and that in both cases it would amount to an absurdity
to take the modifying quale for the whole, and to omit
the structure which is modified by it. Thus the beha-
viour of the colour-quale is not the behaviour of the
ray which it modifies (say, as green). The ray, for-
instance, is reflected in certain ways, whereas its qua-

lity green is not; and while we can say of the quality
that it has a certain intensity, this cannot be said of
the ray. Similarly, we have to distinguish between the
act of approval and the quale which qualifies it in a
certain way. Yet, though such a distinction between the
act-substratum and its qualifying quale is readily ad-
mitted in the case of the light ray, it is less readily
seen with the acts and their quales that are contained
in our experiences. And while in the case of the light
ray no-one would mistake its quality green for the whole
of the phenomenon, in cases of approval this mistake is
quite commonly made.

One of the most striking instances of this mistake
is contained in the passage about approval in C.L.Ste-
venson's book, quoted above, the central part of it
being his statement that "when we approve of something
we may feel a particularly heightened sense of security".
The "when we approve" in this formulation must not be
taken to mean (as far as I can gather from the context),
that whenever there is an act of approval it will be mo-
dified by a "security-quale", but it functions to dis-
tinguish cases of approval from cases of "ordinary
pleasure". If I may, then, try to improve upon this
formulation so as to bring out Stevenson's meaning more
clearly, I propose to put it in the following manner:
"Whenever we feel a particularly heightened sense of
security in the face of some action we speak of 'appro-
val', whereas" - the passage would have to continue -
"to cases of merely ordinary pleasure we do not attach
this name". It seems to me to be clear from this passage
(which is confirmed by the argument of the whole book)
that approval is here conceived as a particular sense

of security (i.e. a type of "pleasure") which happens
to be felt when we observe certain happenings. It is,
then, further clear that "particularly heightened sense
of security" stands for a diffuse emotional quale, be-
tween which and its object - a term, which itself does
not properly apply here - there may be a causal rela-
tion, but there definitely is not what we have called
an 'intelligible morivational connection' between ob-
ject-quale and act-quale. Stevenson thus completely
fails to recognise the act-character of approval, and
simply identifies it with a certain quale which, at
that, is not even characterised as distinctly different
from pleasure-quales.

It seems as if in some passages of his writings
Ross is guilty of a similar mistake, namely in those
passages where he conceives of approval as an "emotion"
which is felt after something has happened. Thus he
says (in the "Foundations of Ethics") that it seems to
him "clear that a genuine emotion of ethical disappro-
val presupposes a judgement that the act is wrong",
and he, similarly, states that he thinks "that in fact
the emotion of approval presupposes a judgement that
the act is right". The whole process of approving or
diapproving is described thus 76):- "A spectator forms
a certain view of the constitutive character of the act.
In consequence of that he judges it to be wrong. In
consequence of that he feels the emotion of disapproval."

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76) All these quotations are taken from p.61. The last
    one occurs there in a statement which, the author
    supposes, a psychological theory (which he attacks)
    would make - but I only quote so far as it gives the
    author's opinion about approval and not the psycho-
    logistic consequences which he attacks. It should
    be noted that the term "act" in these quotations
    stands for that which, in the present context, is

Here, again, approval is introduced as an emotion which
follows or accompanies certain judgements about other
people's actions. And, again, I think that the formu-
lation of an "emotion of approval" which is "felt"
after a judgement that an action is right has been made,
is highly misleading. For while acts of approval may
well give rise to such judgements, they certainly do
not "presuppose" that they must have been arrived at
before the approval can take place. However, later in
the same book it becomes clear that Ross is holding a
postion very different from Stevenson's and very simi-
lar to the one I wish to suggest. There he states that
"it is impossible to approve of anything without think-
ing it worthy of approval - without thinking that it has
a goodness of its own which makes it fit to be approved"
77). In this statement, I think, only the term "thin-
king" obscures the fact that it is equivalent in meaning
to that which I wish to point out. For "thinking" intro-
duces an element of theoretical consideration which I
cannot find present in the act of approval. But this
may only be a difference of terminology. For Ross goes
on to say: "If things were only approved without being
worthy of approval, the act of approval would simply
become nonsensical"; and this I take as a clear indi-
cation that I find myself in agreement with his view.
For only the denial of an essential and necessary con-
nection can be termed "nonsensical", while the denial
of a factual relation can at best be false. And that
the connection in question is one of essential necessity
must indeed, I think, be maintained.

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denoted by the term "action".
77) "Foundations"; p.261.

It is descriptively evident that the act of approval, which terminates in the other person's act of submission to a moral claim, is modified by a quale which (in the way of intelligible motivation) corresponds to a quale resident in the act of submission. This second quale, in the object, Ross simply calls the "worthiness of approval". He thus formulates the one quale (in the object) in terms of the other (in the act) which it motivates; and as a descriptive definition of this unique and "atomic" quale cannot be attempted, this characterisation may be as good as any. But I prefer to call the quale which modifies the act of submission a 'quale of moral value' or simply a 'moral value quale'. I can then characterise the approval-quale as a 'quale of appreciation of moral value', - and here I add, of moral value as borne by the respective act of submission to a moral claim.

The way in which 'moral value' modifies the act of submission is very similar to the way in which the approval-quale (= 'quale of appreciation of moral value') modifies the act of approval: a general quale (viz. 'moral value' in the first case, and 'appreciation of moral value' in the second) is attached to a certain general act-structure (be it 'dynamic', as in the case of the act of submission, or 'static' as in the case of approval), and thus it occurs in all individual cases which are possessed of that structure. Of both these quales it can be said that a) they only occur with acts of submission to a moral claim and the corresponding act of approval; b) they are given as being identically the same in all instances of these structures that we may observe; and c) they have only one dimension of variation: intensity. With the intensity of the moral

value quale (in the object-structure) the approval quale
(in the act-structure) corresponds in an intelligible
proportion 78).

The way in which the moral value quale is attached
to the object-structure of acts of approval, and, equally,
the way in which the corresponding approval quale is
attached to the act-structure, I find very difficult
to describe. It is given as a relation of necessary
"togetherness" (of quale and structure) and not as one
of accidental coincidence. I think that the question
"why" those quales should attend those structures, while
apparently it cannot be given an answer, cannot be asked
by anyone who has presented to himself the phenomena
under discussion. For we know and understand (materially)
this relation in that particular mode of certainty which
has not yet been given its proper place in the classi-
fication of human knowledge - with the same certainty,
that is, with which we are, for instance, aware of the
possibility of reflection.

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78) The relation between approval and the moral value of
    an action as described here, has been examined at
    some length by A.C.Ewing in "The Definition of Good".
    He tries to understand this relation in terms of
    "fittingness": "If the action as done by me is really
    good, it is fitting that all rational beings who
    know of it should feel approval, and unfitting that
    they should not"(p.181). Calling approval a "pro
    attitude" he even proceeds to define "'good' as what
    ought to be the object of a pro attitude"(p.178).
    I do not think that the concept of "fittingness"
    (which is obviously employed not as a normative but
    as a descriptive concept) expresses adequately the
    relation in question, for it seems to imply that
    some people might fail to do what is "fitting". Yet,
    to fail to feel approval towards an action which one
    recognises as morally valuable is not to behave
    "unfittingly", but it is to do something which can-
    not possibly happen, the relation between moral value

14) Moral Value in Unpremeditated and Habitual Action.

The analysis carried out in the preceding chapters enables us now to distinguish clearly between two different types of 'value' as contained in the approval of an action.

There is, firstly, the value which attaches to some state of affairs (such as helping a blind man in crossing the road, giving someone a present, etc.) as it is given to the agent when he is aware of a moral claim. It should be remembered here, that when speaking óf a moral claim, I use the word 'moral' in the sense explained before, meaning simply: a claim which demands the doing of a morally relevant action. It is the 'telos' of this action - usually some felicific state of affairs - to which this first kind of value is found to attach.

Secondly there is the special kinf od value which, in the preceding chapter, I have termed 'moral value', the sole substratum oŧ which is the action of a person, and not the state of affairs which that action aims at establishing (i.e. its 'telos'). This moral value, wherever we notice it, we appreciate by the act of approval, or, more specifically, through a quale (of appreciation of moral value) tingeing this act.

Bearing in mind this distinction, I may now put the point I wish to make, as follows: The state of awareness which I have called 'perceiving' - or 'being aware of' - 'a moral claim', does essentially contain the

("good") and the approval of it (the "pro attitude") being one of essential necessity. We would not say that it is fitting for a square to have two diagonals of equal length.

awareness of some value of the 'telos' of my action,
but it does <u>not essentially contain</u> any awareness <u>of
the moral value</u> which would inhere to the action by
which I intend to bring about the valuable 'telos'.
Nor does this state of awareness necessarily contain
any other awareness of any other characteristic which
the action by which I aim at bringing about the required
result may, or may not, have. I may have to think of
means, and carefully plan how to bring about the va-
luable situation; but no awareness of my action aiming
at this end, qua an action thus aiming, need ever enter
into these considerations.

In the descriptions of the moral claim given earlier
in this paper 79), this claim was said to demand our
'bringing about a certain state of affairs', 'doing so
and so', 'embarking on such and such a course of action',
etc.; further, it was said that it always prescribes
the 'telos' of the required action as one which 'ought'
to be brought about. It is now important to understand
that these descriptions are in perfect agreement with
what is asserted at present. Such agreement might be
thought, at first sight, to be lacking. It might be ob-
jected, for example, that if 'to be aware of a moral
claim' is to be conscious that I 'ought to do so and so',
the assertion that we can be aware of a moral claim
without being aware of the nature 6f the action pre-
scribed by it, is contradictory. But there is no such
contradiction in what has been said.

It is clear that a claim of the type "you ought to
bring about the state of affairs X" is bound to point to
two things at once: <u>the state of affairs</u> (which ought

79) In II,8.

to be brought about), and <u>the bringing about</u> (which aims
at establishing that state of affairs); or, in other
words, to <u>the result</u> (to be established by an action of
mine), and to <u>my action</u> (leading to that result). Yet,
it is clear also, that it is the result (i.e. the exis-
tence of a valuable state of affairs) for the sake of
which the doing of the action is demanded in the claim, -
and not the other way round (if there is one) 80).

Such an account, I think, gets nearest to the actual
happenings in situations containing moral claims. Per-
ceiving the claim, we may behave in many ways. We may
feel a strong desire counteracting the claim, and may
immediately cease to pay attention to the claim, because
we just cannot bear the thought of having to give up
what we desire to do; or we may hesitate to follow it,
but realising that it would be much more justifiable to
obey the claim, we may finally decide to do so, though
probably reluctantly; etc.. But into none of such con-
siderations need the idea have entered of what my action
will be like if I fulfil the claim, or, alternatively,
if I dismiss it. Nor is such an idea required for carry-
ing out the decision to fulfil the claim. Once such a
decision has been made, we are looking ahead, as it were,
into the situation, concerned to bring about the valuable
state of affairs, and very rarely do we then conceive
of our own activity of 'bringing about', let alone of
the moral value which will attach to it. Indeed, there
is reason for assuming that, in most cases where the
notion of our own action, as one that will be 'right',
or 'morally good', or 'doing my duty', etc., enters into

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80) Cases in which 'result' and 'action' are identical
will be referred to presently.

either the deliberation preceding the action, or into
the execution of it, the moral value, which might other-
wise have belonged to it, is apt to be vitiated 81).

I have been careful throughout this description **not**
to say that awareness of the moral claim **never** contains
an awareness of the moral value of the action which I
am called upon to do. For there are cases where this
does happen in a very conspicuous form. These are cases
where the valuable state of affairs I am called upon to
establish, is itself a **morally** valuable state of affairs,
i.e. a morally valuable action (of mine). These cases
we have particularly clearly in certain promises where
no valuable state of affairs concerning anyone else in
a 'felicific' way is involved. Here the only valuable
state of affairs which I aim at establishing is the ful-

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81) Such behaviour would lie open to the charge of
"pharisaism". In a substantial and systematical way
this charge has been raised against ethical theories
of the Kantian type in general, by Max Scheler in
his "Der Formalismus in der Ethik und die materiale
Wertethik". In this work the distinction, now fami-
liar to any "Wertethik", between the value aimed at
in our actions ("intendierter Wert") and the (moral)
value of this action itself ("Intentionswert") has
been made for the first time. It is one of Scheler's
basic tenets that the moral value of an action can
never be aimed at ("intendiert") by this action:
"Der Wert 'gut'(morally valuable) erscheint, indem
wir den (im Vorziehen gegebenen) höheren positiven
Wert realisieren; er erscheint _an_ dem Willensakte
(act of submission). Eben darum kann er _nie_ die
Materie (the object) dieses Willensaktes sein. Er be-
findet sich gleichsam 'auf dem Rücken' dieses Aktes
und zwar wesensnotwendig; er kann daher nie _in_ diesem
Akte intendiert sein" (p.22). Scheler thinks, there-
fore, that cases in which this value is made the aim
of the act of submission, are morally perverse.
This question will be resumed in the chapter on
disapproval (II,19).

filment of a promise I have given, which I perceive to
be (morally) valuable. In such a case the action esta-
blishing the result, and the result established, are
identical. In other cases there may be no such identity,
but the idea that some action "was promised" or "is a
duty" or an "obligation" (the doing or fulfilling of
which is given to me as a valuable state of affairs, -
and in these cases the value happens to be moral value),
may occur among other, non-moral, values which tinge
my situation and thus may become part of the reason
('motive') why we behave in a certain way.

None of these possible and complicated cases, how-
ever, in which the awareness of the moral value of an
action of mine enters into the awareness of the moral
claim demanding it, can form an objection to the view
I wish to put forward. For I am asserting only, that
no conception of our own action (qua our action) and its
possible qualities, is in any essential way required as
a condition for being aware of a moral claim, and that,
therefore, since awareness of a moral claim plus an act
of submission to it form the sufficient conditions for
an action to be worthy of approval ('morally valuable'),
such worthiness can attach to actions of persons who
have never given a thought to the moral characteristics
which their actions may bear, and who may never have
formed the notion of "duty" or "obligation" in their
minds. This I consider to be a point of much conse-
quence, especially for the understanding of unpremedi-
tated moral action.

Up to this point, the present paper has dealt only
with actions of the fully deliberate type, - with actions,
that is, which are preceded by some contemplation of the

situation in which we are, by weighing the claims and
the various interests concerned, and by the reaching of
a decision as to which of the possible courses of action
should be actually adopted. Doubtless there is this type
of action, and I think a material understanding of it is
of great relevance for the understanding of all other
kinds of moral behaviour. But it is also obvious, that
throughout our daily lives we quite often approve of
behaviour which has not been preceded by any such con-
templation 82). Now, if the act of submission to a moral
claim (which constitutes the object of moral approval)
were of necessity a contemplated act of submission, these
familiar cases of approval could not be accounted for.
We must, therefore, try to determine whether, in accord-
ance with the conditions of approval so far assessed, it
is possible to approve of unpremeditated action.

For the present type of analysis of ethical phenomena
it will not be difficult to show that in cases of unpre-
meditated action, the conditions for acts of approval
can be given, just as well as in cases of fully delibe-
rate action. Here lies one of the advantages which an
'ethics of value' (as I may, for the moment, call the

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82) I must here disagree with Ross, who appears to hold
that a "fully deliberate act" is "the kind of act we
are usually thinking of when we speak either of the
rightness or the moral goodness of acts" ("Founda-
tions"; p.203). I agree, it may be very true that when
people speak "of either the rightness or the moral
goodness of acts" they "are usually thinking" of fully
deliberate actions, for only people who try to form
or to defend certain views in ethics speak of such
things, and to them deliberate acts are usually the
more convenient examples for demonstrating their
points. But if Ross is asserting that people who are
not engaged in ethical discussion usually approve
and disapprove of such acts only, I think he is proved
wrong by the facts of actual moral experience.

view instanced by the present paper) has over ethical
theories which rest on concepts such as "duty" or "ob-
ligation". I refer here to all those theories which
make the moral value of an action depend on one or more
of the following factors:- that the action is done from
a sense of duty, or from the thought that it is right;
that I know it to be my duty before I do it; that I do
it in order to increase the amount of moral value in
the universe; that I do it because it is the fulfilment
of an obligation under which I find myself or have put
myself; that I do it out of respect for a "moral law";etc.
I cannot hope here to outline the different forms in
which such theories as these have been advanced, nor
does our present purpose require such distinctions.
The common distinguishing mark of all these theories
is, that they make the preceding awareness of the agent
that a certain action of his will, when done, be, in
some sense, morally valuable, a condition of its being
morally valuable when it actually has been done. Put
in other words, they make it a condition of an action
having moral value, that some notion of this value has
become part (or the whole) of its motive.

I believe it is fairly clear that such theories have
been held not infrequently (Kant being the great example).
But wherever they have been held, they are bound to come
to grief, among other things, over the question of the
moral value of unpremeditated actions. For these actions
are characterised by the very absence of any awareness
of their nature and qualities, preceding or accompanying
them. No traces of a knowledge about their possible
position in a world of moral values, about their right-
ness or wrongness, enter into the 'motive' of such
actions. They are planned and carried out "on the spur

of the moment", their only 'motive' being to establish
a ('felicifically1 valuable) state of affairs which they
have perceived to be worth establishing. For example,
on my way to visiting a person who has fallen ill, it
suddenly occurs to me - or someone suggests to me - that
I might bring him a little present; and no sooner have
I conceived this idea (i.e. perceived a situational sug-
gestion) than I find myself looking for a shop where I
can buy something appropriate, glad "to have thought of
it", and only concerned to bring about what I have dis-
covered to be a valuable state of affairs for the sick
person.

However rare such behaviour may be with regard to
great moral commitments, in the small scale morality of
everyday life it is very commonly experienced, - far
more often (I venture to think) than fully deliberate
moral behaviour. The phenomenological investigation of
it, however, can detect in it no vestige of a process
of reaching a decision on something, after two or more
alternatives have been visualized. All we can make out
is, rather, that simultaneously with our perceiving a
call to establish a certain valuable state of affairs,
we find that we have decided to bring it about. The
required commitment (act of submission) has happened
before we become aware of it; in other words, the only
form in which we are aware of it is not as a possibility
but as a fact (not in the "conditional" but in the "per-
fect tense"). In these actions, the act of awareness
of something (which does not yet exist) as valuable,
and the act of deciding (plus that of "setting oneself"
83)) to bring it about, coalesce. This does not, how-

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83) The distinction Ross makes ("Foundations";pp.198ff)
     between (a) deciding and (b) setting oneself to bring

ever, deprive the two acts of their distinctly different characters. It simply means that the act of submission to the claim only enters our awareness in the mode of 'having been performed by me'.

Actions of this type are unpremeditated in a strict sense. In them no deliberation has preceded the act of submission, nor has this act the character of being the result of a process of making a choice. Yet it is 'having made a decision'. In unpremeditated action, therefoe, I am aware of having perceived a moral claim and of having subjected myself to it, in as clear a manner as in cases of fully deliberate action, the only difference being the "retrospective" nature of the awareness of the commitment.

If this analysis has established, as I think it has, that there are cases of unpremeditated action in which all the essential conditions of a morally valuable action are fulfilled (viz. that I perceive a moral claim and subject myself to it), it follows that there can be acts of approval of such action, and that these acts are in no essential respect different from acts of approval of fully deliberate action.

Different results will be reached when examining the type of (apparently) moral behaviour which has come to

about some change, though, I think, correct, need not complicate the present analysis. Our 'act of submission'(or 'commitment') would be comparable to Ross' "deciding", which, accordingly, I should be inclined to make the only substratum for moral value. In cases where much time elapses between "deciding" and "setting oneself" to do something, I should think that the "setting oneself" is morally valuable qua being (another) actualisation of the commitment once made, and does not differ from the commitment in any way relevant for the "location" of moral value.

be called "habitual", and which must not be confused with
the unpremeditated behaviour discussed so far; nor should
it be mistaken for moral behaviour which has merely be-
come "less difficult" by frequent performance 84). I
think it is advisable, at any rate, to reserve the term
'habitual behaviour' for a third type of action, name-
ly for actions which have become detached from the
whole realm of conscious decisions and volitions (whe-
ther contemplated or not) and are carried out in a way
comparable to the functioning of "conditioned reflexes".
Such actions are usually of an elementary kind, such as
turning keys or switches, washing one's hands, using
spoons, etc., so we may find them in the more elementa-
ry realms of moral behaviour too. Nurses may acquire
a habitual way of attending to their patients, or a
bus conductor may assist passengers as one carries out
a reflex movement. I think that such cases occur less
often than is often supposed. Where they occur, how-
ever, they are worthy of approval only in the sense
in which they themselves are moral actions. Now, qua
"conditioned reflexes" they certainly contain no moral
value at all. But in observing them, we assume that the
reflex must have grown out of a time when its condi-
tion was genuinely recognised as a moral claim and then
very frequently obeyed. And if this is so we may approve

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84) Of the latter confusion Ross, for instance, seems to
be guilty when saying (in "The Right and the Good";
p.159): "If habitual action could become so auto-
matic that it ceased to be done from the thought that
it is right, there would certainly be less moral
worth in the doing of it. But so long as the act
is still done because it is right, it will have no
less moral worth because it has become easy." The
categories of "easiness" and "difficulty" in moral
decisions or actions will be examined in the follow-
ing chapter.

the person for his bygone moral activity, in an act of approval which is faint and pale because so many thoughts and conclusions lie between it and its object.

If, however, an instance of 'moral behaviour' that we may observe is accompanied for the observer by the (theoretical) evidence that the person performing it has been driven into his habit by long training only, without ever having perceived the conditions of his "reflexes" to be moral claims (say, because he is highly imbecile, or because he underwent the training for morally irrelevant reasons), no approval would be possible, as no traces of moral action are contained in such behaviour.

15) <u>The Relations between Self-Denial, Self-Exertion, and Approval.</u>

Considering the result so far obtained, the following objection may arise:- It is true that we attach our acts of approval to the act of submission to a moral claim which we experience another person to have performed. And it is also true that there is an approval quale in the act of approval which corresponds to a quale of moral value in the object. But this moral value quale in the object is not, as has been suggested, inherent in the act of submission to the claim. It is not this act itself that we approve of, but the fact that it is performed by a person <u>in spite of his more or less strong desire to do something else</u>. In fact, what we really approve of is the act of self-denial which accompanies the act of submission to the claim, and not the act of submission itself.

In order to deal with this claim it is, first of all,
necessary that we elucidate the notion of self-denial.
For by "self-denial", as the word is commonly used, and
as it is employed in the above objection, at least two
distinctly different things are meant: (a) the neglect
of my own interests 85) which is brought about by my
concern for the interests of another person; (b) the
effort made by a person in achieving this neglect of
his own interests for the sake of someone else 86). Now
it seems that in common usage "self-denial" always de-
notes both of these things, and it would be found awk-
ward, or even contradictory, if someone used it in the
first meaning only, saying, for instance, that he had
denied himself a certain pleasure without having made
any effort in doing so. However, regardless of this
common usage - if common usage it be - I wish to dis-
entangle the two meanings of the word and to denote them
by different terms. Let us, therefore, stipulate that
throughout the following discussion the term 'self-denial'
will stand for the first (a) of its meanings only (ex-
pressing no more than the term 'self-neglect' would ex-
press), while the term 'self-exertion' (in the sense of
making some effort) will be chosen to denote the second
(b) of those meanings. Such a separation of the two

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85) The phrase "my own interests" should be understood
to mean "interests concerned with my own person or
any of its activities", so it will exclude the pos-
sible objection that "my concern for another person"
might also be one of "my own interests".

86) There are kinds of self-denial in which I neglect
my own interests not in order to serve those of ano-
ther person, but in order to serve God, or science,
or some aim in the realm of arts. This type of
self-denial will remain excluded from the present
discussion.

meanings is, I think, required by the phenomenological data; for it is not one and the same thing to deny oneself the realisation of a certain, say, pleasant, situation, and to exert oneself in doing so. This distinction will prove most relevant when we now proceed to examine the suggestion that, what we really approve of is the "act of self-denial" which accompanies the act of submission to a moral claim.

We have already seen that the resulting situation, as it is prescribed by the moral claim, does, in fact, involve two situations, and that the moral claim demands the realisation of both of these (i.e. both of them form the valuable 'telos' of my action). The one (a) is the situation which ought to be brought about for the other person; the other (b) is the situation which ought to be brought about for myself, inasmuch as it is the necessary condition of bringing about (a). Now, formally speaking, there is a sense in which the creation of a situation beneficial for someone else always involves a certain amount of self-denial. For, formally speaking, the claim always demands, at least, some kind of "sacrifice" of attention to my own interests, be it only the sacrifice of the time which the claim (implicitly) demands me to spend an another person's interests instead of my own. On the other hand, there is no sense, however formal, in which the claim demands me to exert myself in obeying it. All I am called upon to do in a moral situation is to submit to the claim I have received, but no postulation of an act of effort can be traced in the situational suggestion.

The position of self-exertion in moral action is not that of a special and separate act, but it has the form of a (further) modification of the act of submis-

sion to the claim. The phenomenon may be compared to
the act of turning a key in the hole. This act may be
performed easily and smoothly, or it may have to be per-
formed with much effort and the overcoming of strong re-
sistance (on the part of the lock). Yet it is the same
act in both cases, and nothing in the structure of the
act becomes different when its performance must be forced
against resistance. The only element changing is the
quality of easiness or difficulty which characterises
one and the same act in either case. The same applies
to the performance of a decision to obey a moral claim.
It may be easy or it may be very difficult. But in
either case it is one, and only one, act that we perform;
and not, in the second case, an act of submission plus
an act of self-exertion.

Thus even in cases of striking self-exertion our
approval 'means' the act of submission. Yet, the
question remains, whether it is the qualification of
this act as 'having been difficult' which is qualified
as 'morally valuable' and to which our approval is
attached; and, if so, whether approval is attached to
this qualification exclusively, and not at all to the
act, or whether it aims at both, the act and its quali-
fication; and, if so, whether it does so with equal or
with varying distribution of its weight on either of
these elements.

Now, that it is not the quality of self-exertion as
such that bears the quale of moral value, may be seen
easily from examples where self-exertion is eliminated
from the object of approval and where, nevertheless,
acts of approval towards it continue unimpeded.

There is a large group of cases with which this point

can be demonstrated: those cases in which there is a
coincidence of "duty and inclination", or, in other
words, of what I ought to do and what I would like to
do. These cases have always been the subject of much
controversy. They are distinguished by the complete
lack of self-exertion in them. In these cases, however,
the moral claim is by no means absent, though it ceases
to have the demanding character which it has when inter-
fering with my own plans and desires. This character,
however, as will be remembered, we did not discover to
be one of the essential constituents of that claim.
Here belongs the unavoidable case of the mother who,
neglecting her own health and comfort, attended to her
child while it was ill. In this action a high degree
of self-denial is obviously involved. But the act of
submission to the claim (viz. to look after her suffer-
ing child) she did not have to force upon herself,
struggling against other desires, but the situation moral-
ly required and the situation desired happened to co-
incide. For maternal love made her desire the child's
recovery which also the claim required her to pursue.
That we approve of this action (and of actions of its
type7, too, must be maintained against Kant and other
representatives of "rigoristic" ethical theories. For,
as I see the case, the act of submission to the claim,
which is the essential object of approval, is performed
in all these cases also, the only difference being that
it need not be achieved by the employment of a special
sort of energy ('self-exertion'), but that its achieve-
ment proceeds with that ease which the fact, that we
desire the result, bestows upon the action which brings
it about.

Considering this example in the light of the dis-
tinction introduced at the beginning of this chapter,
we can state that, though it does not exhibit any
amount of self-exertion, there is a distinct amount of
self-denial in it. And, in so far as a certain amount
of attention spent on another person's concerns (and
not on my own) is necessarily involved in every in-
stance of obeying a moral claim, a certain amount of
self-denial is essentially contained in it. In some
cases this amount may be very small. Thus it is some-
times only little time and attention which are withdrawn
from our own interests to spend them on the considera-
tion of someone else's. Accordingly, our approval of
such moral actions would be of a very moderate kind.
This may not be immediately obvious, because we tend to
confuse approval of action with approval of standard.
As our approval of standard in these actions of small
self-denial may be very high, it is not easy to dis-
cern that our approval of action, here, is very small.
However, I think the difference is readily perceived,
once it has been pointed out descriptively. In the
example of the mother, on the other hand, approval of
standard is hardly very strong, whereas the approval of
action will be much stronger than in the former cases.

It appears, then, that, as far as approval of action
is concerned, there is a correspondence between the
amount of self-denial contained in a certain action,
and the intensity of the moral value quale (and the
approval quale, respectively) inherent in that action.
Leaving aside moral approval of standard (for which, as
we have seen, quite different conditions hold), we can
state this correspondence quite generally as a correspond-

ence between the "height" of the claim commanding the
action, and the intensity of the moral value quale of
the action which is constituted by obeying the claim.
By "height of a claim" I wish to indicate the familiar
fact that we distinguish between greater and lesser
moral claims. Everybody clearly knows of such dis-
tinctions of degree within his own scale of claims.
The criterion which marks out a certain claim as "higher"
than another, is the amount of self-denial (not self-
exertion) which is involved in the bringing about of
the resulting situation prescribed by the claim. Ex-
treme claims on either end of such a scale, for instance,
would be such claims as demand the denial (sacrifice) of
a person's life for the sake of one or several other per-
sons, or - at the other end of the scale - small claims,
such as the situational suggestion, when meeting a per-
son who has a bad cold, to express the hope that it
will be better soon, which only involves a minimum of
self-denial.

The correspondence between height of claim (= degree
of self-denial claimed), and intensity of the value quale
qualifying the corresponding action, - and, accordingly,
the intensity of the approval quale in the act of appro-
val directed towards this action, is one of strictly
constant proportions. It may be formulated by saying,
that the intensity of the quales in the moral action and
the approval of it, are functions of the degree of self-
denial claimed by the initial situation. This function-
al correspondence is (as any further perusal of examples
would confirm) essentially governing the relation between
any morally valuable action and the act of approval di-
rected towards it.

Having thus assessed the place of self-denial in the structure of moral action, we are still left with the question as to the part which self-exertion plays in it, and to what extent (if at all) it influences the intensity of the approval quale in corresponding acts of approval. For the opinion is possible (and it has been held) that self-exertion forms a further function, in addition to self-denial, which modifies our approvals in a different, but also a regular, way.

It seems to me that no such regular function can be found with respect to self-exertion. For an act of great self-denial may be carried out with ease or with much effort; and while we do approve much or little according to "how much" or "how little" self-denial is involved in obeying a claim, we do not likewise vary our approval according as the person performing the act has found it very difficult or very easy to do it. In fact, I think, so far from increasing our approval, the fact of the performance of a moral action having been "very difficult" takes away from its intensity, and the fact that such an act has been performed with ease, adds to it. The example of a nurse who volunteers to go into a district whose climatic or other conditions will (as she knows) detract from her health, may serve for illustration. Let us assume that two nurses experience exactly the same moral claim (i.e. claims which request the same definite amount of self-denial), and both of them obey it. One, however, is given as having decided to follow the claim after a night of struggle against her "selfish" desires, in which she finally succeeded, while the other is given as having accepted the claim as soon as it arose, in an attitude of tranquilly re-

nouncing her own interests for many years. I think
(although I do not claim any intuitive evidence for this
fact), that we approve more strongly of the latter case,
and less strongly of the former. For, - as far as a
'reason' can be found in the descriptive material - the
gentle and easy submissionsshows a generally higher level
of 'moral ability' (- a notion which will concern us at
a later stage of this enquiry), i.e. a greater detachment
from "selfish" desires. The struggle, on the other hand,
evinces the extent to which the struggling person is
given to her own inclinations and wishes, and it shows
less capability of the 'auctoritas' to decide for the
'more justifiable' course of action, after this has been
recognised as such. But even if agreement on this point
cannot be reached, and if some should even maintain the
opposite position (viz. that struggle and investment of
effort increase the moral value of the action produced
in these labours) 87), the issue may be left open without
jeopardizing the essential contentions of this paper.
For an essential and intelligible connection seems to me
to exist only between the amount of self-denial included
in an act of submission, and the intensity of the moral
value quale attached to it. For, as we saw before, the

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87) So, for instance, E.F.Carritt (in "Moral and Poli-
tical Thinking"). Carritt remarks that really only
meritorious actions deserve praise, and he continues
to say that "the merit of moral action seems to de-
pend upon its difficulty", and that it is ŝcertainly
in part proportionate to the strength of the tempta-
tion resisted"(p.27). But, although he thus seems to
make the amount of self-exertion (in our terminology)
the criterion of the degree of moral value which is
attached to the accompanying action, he does not dis-
tinguish between self-denial and self-exertion, and
it is, therefore, difficult to determine whether he
really holds a position opposite to the one propound-
ed in this paper.

"amount of self-denial included" is a constituent of
the moral claim itself, and it is this element which
determines the position it occupies in the scale of all
moral claims. It is this proportion which is recognised
in the common knowledge that we approve much of "great
deeds", and less of actions with less moral value.

With respect to self-exertion, then, no definite
descriptive result has been reached, except for the in-
sight that it does not enter in any recognisably regular
way into the essential correlation between degree (in-
tensity) of moral value and degree of self-denial con-
tained in a moral action. I do, however, want to suggest
that, if self-exertion influences the moral value of an
action at all, then it does so in an opposite direction:-
to the extent to which it is required for the performance
of the act of submission, the moral value of this act is
diminished. This, however, must remain open to confir-
mation by future analysis.

16) <u>Approval as a Cognitive Act.</u>

Having determined the place of 'self-denial' within
the structure of object and act of approval, the whole
phenomenon of the experience of approval has been thrown
into relief, although, of course, only in outline and
with the omission of much detail. One feature, however,
which hitherto has only received implicit mention, must
still be brought to the fore: the feature which dis-
tinguishes experiences of approval and disapproval from
all 'directed feelings' or emotions. This feature has
often been noticed. It has caused writers like Sir David
Ross to call approval an "intellectual emotion", and it

must have been what Kant had in mind when introducing
one single, special "feeling" which was not caused by
(and related to) objects in the sensible world, but which
originated solely from the (a priori) apprehension of the
"moral law", - the feeling which he called "Gefühl der
Achtung" 88). The feature in question is what we may
call the 'cognitive function' of acts of approval. It
is because of this feature that judgements of approval
or disapproval are classed by some ethical writers as
(factual) judgements about a certain 'public' state of
affairs, and not as judgements about (or expressions of)
"feelings" which have no validity except for the person
who feels or expresses these feelings.

I have already pointed out that approval is possible,
and mostly occurs, without a previous statable judgement
having been arrived at. We may now restate this in form
of the stronger assertion that, so far from acts of
approval or disapproval presupposing a judgement about
the moral value of another person's action, such judge-
ments presuppose acts of moral approval or disapproval,
as acts providing the insights which they only formulate.
This may be understood more clearly, when considering
moral approval and disapproval as 'cognitive acts'. By
'cognitive acts' I mean every act of awareness of some-
thing through which this something is given as independent
(and valid independently) of the individual condition of
the person cognising it. The contents of such acts can
then become the subject-matter of a judgement (i.e. the
subject-matter of acts of predication, formulation, etc.)
which claims some corresponding degree of general validi-
ty. It is the characteristic of "emotive" and "subjec-
tivist" theories in ethics, that in them approval is not

88) cf. note 43) on p.110.

recognised as a cognitive act, but is classed with feelings and emotions which are not cognitive.

The distinction here in point may be demonstrated as follows:- In directed feelings (such as love, liking, envy, etc.) a correspondence between an object-quale and an act-quale can be noticed, just as there is such a correspondence between acts of approval and their objects; and the correspondence in both cases partakes of the type of "intelligibility" discussed before. But in the case of those feelings all that is intelligible is that to a quale (a) in the object (O), say,"likability", there corresponds a quale (a') (liking) in the act through which this object is perceived. The way, however, in which 'a' belongs to 'O' is only known in the form of individual and factual knowledge, not as a connection of essential necessity. Thus an apple may be given to me as desirable, a certain face as attractive, a certain colour as repugnant. Then there are adequate responses, intelligibly related to each of these qualities. But it is never intelligible to me why, for instance, apples are given as desirable and not rather cherries, or why pink is repugnant and not blue, etc. 89). Feelings of this kind, though they are cognitive in the sense that I recognise through them what I (personally) like, hate,

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89) G.E.Moore seems to hold that this is also true of what he calls "moral sentiments". He says that there is a "class of actions which excite moral approval, or of which the omission excites moral disapproval", and he continues: "Why this moral sentiment should have become attached to some kinds of action and not to others is a question which can certainly not yet be answered" (in "Principia Ethica"; p.168). I hope to show in this chapter that, in a formal sense, this question evidently can be answered, and that this answer is to be found by an analysis of the "moral sentiments" themselves.

etc., are not cognitive in the sense that they inform
me of 'public' states of affairs which are what they are
quite independently of the fact that it is just I who
am aware of them.

For the opponents of any subjecticist theory in
ethics it is important that such 'public' character of
the object of acts of approval (as opposed to objects
of 'directed feelings') can be shown. I believe that
such evidence is phenomenologically available:-

It will be remembered from the preceding analysis
that among the essential constituents of the structure
of a morally valuable action there is, in a basic po-
sition, the awareness of a moral claim; and it will be
remembered further, that among the essential constituents
of the awareness of a moral claim there is the 'aware-
ness of a valuable state of affairs'. Now it is impli-
cit in the structures so far disclosed, and evidently
follows from them, that the value of this state of
affairs is given to me as independent, firstly, of my
noticing it, and, secondly, of everything that I may
decide to do about it. If this were not so, the claim
(being a "real" situational suggestion) that I ought to
bring it about, could not arise from it. If I had the
power of influencing the value qua value, I could, if
I did not wish to be bothered by perceiving a claim,
annihilate the value and thus get rid og the claim. But
it is a very elementary fact in our experience of such
values that we cannot do any such thing and that, accord-
ingly, the claim persists, however firmly we may be re-
solved to disobey it. We may formulate this element in
the awareness of moral claims by saying that the value
is given to us as 'publically valid'; and this is just

another way of putting the fact we had recognised before:
that a moral claim is given to the agent as (potentially)
addressing everyone in general, and as actually addressing
everyone who shares the situation of the agent.

Furthermore, we say (in II,9) that the constituents
of morally valuable action of necessity recur, in a
modified way, in the act of appreciation of this action,
the act of approval. Thus one of the basic constituents
of this act is the experience that the approved person
has been aware of a moral claim. Now it is evident that
it is impossible to experience that someone is (or has
been) aware of a moral claim without, by the very same
experience, being aware of that claim oneself. In other
words, it is essentially impossible for me to approve
of another person's action, without being myself aware
of the claim to which the other person has subjected
himself in that action. As we usually do not share the
agent's situation when approving of his action, we usual-
ly only experience the claim as potentially addressing
us, i.e. we know that if we were in the same situation
in which the agent is (or was) we ought to behave as
the agent behaved, viz. obey the claim.

From this it is clear that in the act of approval
there is essentially contained the recognition of a
generally valid value as attaching to the state of affairs
which we are called upon to bring about by the moral
claim. Once this has been understood, it is easy to see
that we experience the moral value which inheres in
actions aiming at establishing such generally valid
value, as likewise generally valid. It is a matter of
(material) understanding, and not of merely factual re-
cording, that the same moral value quale will inhere

in any act of submission to a moral claim (which I re-
cognise as such), whoever may perform it. For the con-
tent of this claim (viz. the valuable state of affairs)
is given (to me) as generally asking everybody to bring
it about, and the quàle of moral value is the expression
of someone's having subjected himself to the claim. The
moral value quale of an action is, therefore, given as
as "real" a quality as the red colour, say, of the petals
of a rose 90). And it is possible on grounds of this
cognitive element in the act of approval to proceed to
formulate proper judgements about the actions of persons
and their (moral) qualities, such as "He behaved very
tactfully" or "He is very honest". It follows further,
that it is possible that moral value judgements may con-
tradict each other just as much as judgements about
sounds or colours may.

The element of 'generality' ("the claim that appro-
val is rational and that it ought to be shared by others2)
involved in our acts of approval, has been clearly for-
mulated by J.Kemp in a recent criticism of Stevenson's
view on the subject 91). Kemp recognises that approval
(and disapproval) differ from liking (and disliking) in
that "moral approval and disapproval claim generality
and some form of fittingness that liking and disliking
do not". But while he, thus, successfully avoids the
Scylla of a pschologistic subjectivism, he does not es-

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90) Stephen Toulmin, in his book "The Place of Reason in
   Ethics", thinks to dispose of this "fallacious" con-
   cept in a chapter on "The Objective Approach" by
   classing it as a mysterious "non-natural" quality
   (pp.10-25). However, he identifies "natural" with
   "perceivable by the senses". His argument, therefore,
   breaks down as soon as this restriction of the realm
   or "real qualities" is shown to be arbitrary.

91) John Kemp, "Moral Attitudes and Moral Judgements", in

cape the Charybdis of "linguistic analysis". For, after
he has drawn very lucidly the distinction between liking
and approving, he proceeds to advance the following state-
ment: "... This is not merely a contingent fact about
moral approval and disapproval - it is not just a psycho-
logical fact that when people disapprove of an action
they also believe that the action is worthy of disappro-
val. The connection between the disapproval and the
belief that what is disapproved is worthy of disapproval
is a logical one. If a man said that he disapproved of
promise-breaking but he did not think that it should be
disapproved of, we should consider the latter statement
(if true) to be sufficient evidence for the falsity of
the former; we should say that he could not disapprove
oôfpromise-breaking and that his attitude to it must be
one, say, of dislike or contempt." As I have pointed
out before concerning linguistic analysis in general,
this seems to me to be stopping half way and mistaking,
what is an accidental consequence of certain conditions,
for these conditions themselves. If "the connection be-
tween disapproval and the belief that what is disapproved
is worthy of disapproval is a logical one", then this
appears to me to be a cosequence of the fact that the
connection between the approval quale of the act and
the moral value quale in the object is an essential and
necessary one. Kemp's statement, therefore, though it
appears to constitute a confirmation of what has here
been said about this connection, is of no direct rele-
vance to our investigation. For while he operates on
a "logical" level, the present enquiry moves on a pheno-
menological plahe.

The Philosophical Quaterly, edited by T.M.Knox;
July 1951, p.342.

17) Interrelations between Act-Person and Object-Person.

The recognition of the general validity of a certain moral claim as it is contained in acts of approval, has another interesting side to it. It establishes what we may call a 'common ground' between the person approved (object-person) and the person approving (act-person), this 'ground' being the claim (or the 'value of a state of affairs') which they both recognise as valid. As this recognition is essential to the structure of approval, such 'common ground' is underlying every act of approval whibh a person may perform. Or, put in the negative, wherever this ground is absent (i.e. not experienced) no act of approval can possibly be performed. And what is true of a single moral claim is also true of a scale of claims. We may, therefore, formulate the "law":- Approval is only possible if act-person and object-person share the same scale of moral claims, and only to the extent to which they do so. It should be noted that this law is a law about the experiential conditions which must be fulfilled for a person if he is to perform an act of approval. It does not assert anything about any two human beings "in fact" sharing the same scale of moral claims.

It is only with regard to such a common scale of claims that the talk of the 'more justifiable' action makes sense, which we employed before to elucidate the concept of 'responsibility'. Someone justifies his action by reference to these stahdards of his which, he must presuppose, are also the standards of the person to whom he offers this justification. For example, someone (A) is charged with having acted morally wrongly

when hurrying along the street and not stopping to
assist a person who had had, say, a minor accident. He
may then proceed to justify himself by saying that, at
the same time when the accident happened he was having
a serious haemorrhage and was hurrying to see his doctor,
for some reason unable to get a car. It then depends
upon the 'moral code' (= the scale of claims and its
order) of the person B, to whom this explanation is
offered, whether he will consider it as a sufficient
justification. Suppose that, according to B's moral
code, we should always first satisfy even a smaller
need of another person before satisfying even more urgent
needs for ourselves. Then the justification, though
perfect for A, will not be perfect for B. The actual act
of disapproval which was performed by B towards that
action of A was only possible by B's experiencing A as
acting under the same scale of claims, which, in fact,
however, was not the case. Being informed of A'S differ-
ent scale of claims, B will no longer be able to dis-
approve of his action, although he may change over to
disapproval of A's <u>standard</u>, or theoretically quarrel
with his moral code. But to disagree theoretically
with the order of moral claims that another person per-
ceives, is not the same thing as having experiences of
actual moral disapproval about his behaviour.

It may be objected to this that there are many cases
of common experience in which theoretical disagreement
with another person's moral code is accompanied by ex-
periences of actual disapproval when the other person
behaves according to his code. But, so far from con-
stituting an objection to what has been said, this fact
leads us to a further confirmation of it. It will be
seen that in these cases our actual disapproval only con-

tinues as long as we tacitly impute our own moral code
to the other person and assume that he only pretends not
to be aware of it. For, if there are means by which we
can convince ourselves of his not being aware of this
(our) code, our approval or disapproval would break down
the very moment that we adopt this conviction. Thus we
can be convinced that members of certain tribes or sects
who, say, destroy human life in order to keep evil
spirits off their tribe etc., are not aware of a moral
claim not to do so. And, accordingly, we are unable
to disapprove of them; for there is no common ground of
claims. We may, however, be able "to put ourselves into
their position", that is to say, to assume in theory a
common scale of values. But then we would not disapprove
but approve of their action, for it is prescribed by
one of the claims of the adopted code.

It is not possible at this point to deal with the
numerous objections which may be raised against the
view that the experience of a common scale of moral
claims is an essential precondition for the experience
of moral approval or disapproval. I think, however,
that most of these objections will be dispelled by the
following qualification of this statement.

The analysis of moral claims (in II,8) has shown
that we can discern in them a 'formal' and a 'material'
element, the 'formal' element being that we ought to
bring about some (valuable) state of affairs, and the
'material' element being the (valuable) state of affairs
which we ought to bring about. Now it is possible that
in an act of approval we abstract completely from the
particular nature of the state of affairs which someone
has brought about, and simply approve of the fact that

he did bring something about in obedience to a moral
claim. Such an act of approval I shall call 'formal
approval'. It is clear that the 'common ground' of
claims required for such approval need only be of a
'formal' nature: it is formed by the recognition of both,
act-person and object-person, that there has been a claim
which required the bringing about of some valuable state
of affairs, but it remains devoid of any indication as
to the particular nature of this state of affairs. The
contents of the claim are here given as an empty X, mere-
ly characterised as 'valuable'(for the agent). In this
sense we may formally approve even of an action which,
materially (i.e. with regard to the particular contents
which it aims at establishing), brings about the most
'dis-valuable' state of affairs we can conceive of, as
long as we experience it as having been done in submis-
sion to a moral claim. Formal approval thus is the most
elementary form of approval possible, and the underlying
formal 'common ground of claims' is the basic precondi-
tion for this as well as for all more 'material' forms
of approval.

Acts of approval, on the other hand, in which we,
in addition to the moral value of an act of submission,
recognise as valuable the contents which it aims at
bringing about, I propose to call acts of 'material
approval'. These acts are possible only when the con-
dition of a material 'common ground of claims' is ful-
filled, i.e. if we share not only a common world in
which there are 'ought's', but a world in which such and
such particular states of affairs are 'valuable', and
therefore ought to be brought about.

Acts of such material approval may be devided into

'complete' and 'incomplete' material approval, according
as the material grounds on which they take place are
completely, or only partly, common. In a case, for in-
stance, where some person of two morally required actions
chooses the one that seemed to me to be less requisite
in the situation than the other, but in which I am con-
vinced that to him it was given as the more requisite
one, my material approval will remain incomplete, and
for the rest I will be reduced to approving formally.

The application of this distinction does, I think,
solve the puzzle that we can approve of an action the
'telos' of which we experience to be perfectly dis-
valuable. And in the light of it the assertion that it
is never possible to approve without experiencing a
'common ground of claims' will be seen to be justified.

The fact, then, that the experience of a 'common
ground of claims' (be it 'formal' or 'material') is an
essential precondition of the experiences of moral appro-
val and disapproval, indicates the first interrelation
between act-person and object-person which I wanted to
point out: they are related to each other via the common
ground of claims on which they both stand.

There is, however, another type of interrelation
established by acts of approval (or disapproval) between
the two persons concerned. This interrelation presupposes
the one just pointed out, - it could not occur without
the 'common ground of claims'. It may be tentatively
formulated as a relation of comparison between the per-
son approved of and the person approving, with respect
to a scale of claims which both recognise as valid. But
let us approach the phenomenon more carefully.

When, in an act of approval, we experience another
person as actually having performed an act of submission
to a claim, we do, by that very act, experience that he
has been able to do so. We do, that is, not only re-
cognise what he does, here and now, but also, what it is
possible for him to do. For, it is evident that the ex-
perience of an actual occurrence necessarily includes
the experience of that occurrence being possible. This
self-evident fact, however, is of no little consequence
in our present connection, as will appear from the follow-
ing consideration:-

When we experience what a person does, here and now,
we cognise an ephemeral, transitory occurrence. But when
we experience, as we always also do, that this action
is possible for this person, we recognise something not
about the transitory occurrence but about the person who
brought it about. Through the ephemeral action we re-
cognise what I propose to call his 'moral ability' (or
'moral potentia'). And, as a further glance at the phe-
nomenon will show, when we approve of what a person does
here and now, we approve, at the same time, of him qua
someone who is capable of doing this.

Let us say, for example, that we have the notion
about somebody that he is extremely thrifty. If then
this person should, on some occasion, prove to be most
noble and generous, we have what we may call an expe-
rience of "surprise". And this surprise is about the
fact that he is capable of behaving like this, whereas
the fact that he does it only surprises us as an indi-
cation of this ability (or, as an 'actualisation of his
moral potentia').

This example may help to illuminate the point I
wish to make. In experiencing somebody's (moral) action
we take this action as an expression (actualisation) of
his moral ability; and there is a distinction between the
act of approval which is affixed to the transitory action,
and the experience, included in that act, which is at-
tached to the (more lasting) moral ability of which that
action is an expression. For this experience the name
"respect" will be introduced presently, and attention will
be given to the new issues which arise in connection with
it. First, however, we must attend to the interrelation
between act-person and object-person, established by
that element in the act of approval which is concerned
with the object-person's moral ability.

When I experience another person obeying a moral
claim which involves an extremely high degree of self-
denial, my approval will be very stróng; and together
with this approval I will recognise the level of his
moral ability as either "very high" (as in the present
case), or "medium", or "low", etc.. And in recꬾgnising
it as "high" (or "medium", or "low", etc.) I place it
into a relation not only to other people's levels, but
especially to the level which I occupy myself. This re-
lating of the object-person's level to my own, is not
an ꬾoperation which I perform consciously. It is some-
thing essentially contained in my recognising his level
as "high" (namely: higher than my own), or low (namely:
lower than my own). The sort of relation here in point
may be demonstrated by an example taken from the physi-
cal world:- If I stand on a certain level, say, on a
hill, and another person is on a lower level, say, at
the foot of the hill, then, in recognising the other
person as "lower" I cannot help recognising my own level

as higher than his. Both are really only different as-
pects of one and the same experience. Similarly, in re-
cognising the object-person of my approval as on a higher
level ("having done more than I would have done"), I re-
cognise my own level of moral ability as below his, and
so on. Thus we are always, in acts of approval and dis-
approval, implicitly aware of a relation between the other
person's and our own level of moral ability. Four types
of this relation can, I think, be distinguished: a) The
claim which the object-person has obeyed is given to me
as clearly above my own moral ability; b) The claim
which the object-person etc., is given as "probably" with-
in my power, but I am not certain whether I could get my-
self to obey it; c) The claim is the sort of claim which
I know I would have obeyed. Accordingly - if I am allowed
a metaphorical formulation in spatial terms - (a) and (b)
are cases in which my act of approval aims at a level
above me (clearly (a), or vaguely (b)), while in (c) it
moves, as it were, in a horizontal plane. A further
"direction", (d), will be added, if we take in cases
where I know the other person to have achieved with
great effort and struggle only the fulfilment of a claim
which I would have fulfilled with ease. Here the direc-
tion of the act of approval would be "downwards", on to
a level which I recognise as "below" mine 92).

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92) That there are such differences of level involved
in our acts of respect, contempt, etc., towards
each other, has been nicely stated by David Hume,
whose remarks on the subject are well worth quoting:-
"In considering the qualities and circumstances of
others, we may either regard them as they really are
in themselves; or may take a comparison betwixt them
and our own qualities and circumstances; or may join
these two methods of consideration. The good quali-
ties of others, from the first point of view, pro-
duce love; from the second, humility; and from the

The same phenomena, even better defined, can be observed in the realm of 'approval of standard'. For here any doubt whether I would have done, or not done, what the object-person did, is excluded. If the object-person does not perceive a moral claim which I do perceive, his level - which, in this case, would be a level of 'susceptibility to moral claims' - is clearly given as below me. Or if, in a certain situation, the object-person has been aware of a claim (of tact, say) which I have failed to perceive, his level - if I should discover my failure - will clearly be given as higher than mine; etc..

These "directions" of acts of approval add a new dimension of qualities to the catalogue of characteristics of these acts. Though they are not always capable of a clear cut differentiation (viz. whether my approval is directed "upwards", whether it proceeds in the same plane, etc.), acts of approval are never without this qualification. This implies that we never approve of another person without entering into a relation with him which furnishes an intuitive, i.e. unreflected, comparison between his moral level and my own.

With these "directions" we have assessed the second type of personal interrelation which is established in

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third, _respect; which is a mixture of these two passions._ Their bad qualities, after the same manner, cause either hatred, or pride, or contempt, according to the light in which we survey them. ...
The same man may cause either respect, love, or contempt by his condition and talents, according as the person, who considers him, from his inferior becomes his equal or superior. In changing the point of view, tho' the object may remain the same, its proportion to ourselves entirely alters; which is the cause of an alteration in the passions. These passions, therefore, _arise from our observing the proportion; that is from a comparison._"("Treatise";pp.389,390,585. My italics).

acts of approval. To the special character of this inter-
relation the next, and last, step of our analysis will
be devoted.

18) The Attitude of Respect.

The experience of another person's level of moral
ability, though included in, is different from acts of
actual approval. Its object is an 'ability' which is
given as (relatively) permanently possessed by the ob-
ject-person. The question of how two so different ex-
periences can go together in one act (of approval) is
solved when we consider that every 'act of submission to
a moral claim' (the object of approval) is, at the same
time, an 'actualisation' of the person's moral ability
('potentia', $\delta\acute{\nu}\nu\alpha\mu\iota\varsigma$), and as an 'artualisation' it dis-
plays this ability itself. And just as there is a sense
in which the ability to perform this act, and the actual
performance of this act, are here "one", so the expe-
rience of the ability and the experience of the actual
act are also a unified phenomenon. Further, just as the
ability can lapse into inactuality without vanishing as
an ability, so my actual experience of that ability can
disappear without the relation between my own ability and
that of the other person, which was actually experienced
in that act of approval, vanishing too. This relation
continues as a permanent "attitude". The name "attitude"
stands for an object of much controversy in recent years,
and it is only with hesitation that I introduce it here.
The more so as it is in the nature of a phenomenological
analysis not to have any access to what is not actually
experienced, and as "not to be actually experienced"

appears, indeed, to be the distinguishing mark of a
"permanent attitude". I hope, nevertheless, to be able
to show that there is some reason for introducing this
concept, even in a phenomenological enquiry. Before
attempting to produce what phenomenological evidence there
is for the "existence" of such attitudes, however, it
will be well first to throw some more light on those ex-
periences in which we are actually aware of them.

The material structure of moral action with all its
features analysed in the preceding chapters, is not
changed in any way when we now recognise it as the "actu-
alisation' of a moral ability. What is signified by this
term is not a new feature of its structure, but, as it
were, the "stuff" from which it is made. To recognise
something as an 'actualisation' is to recognise something
about its ontological status. Put in classical terms:
we recognise moral action as $\dot{\epsilon}\nu\dot{\epsilon}\rho\gamma\epsilon\iota\alpha$, and that is, a
$\delta\dot{\upsilon}\nu\alpha\mu\iota\varsigma$ is revealed through it. The same holds of the
act of approval, directed towards this structure. When
saying that through it we recognise another person's
moral 'potentia', we do not add anything to its material
structure, but only point out that through this structure
we have cognitive access to the object-person's moral
ability. Yet a distinction is possible between recog-
nising an actual occurrence and recognising the 'poten-
tia' revealed by it. Inasmuch as acts of actual approval
always also (implicitly) relate us to the object-person's
moral ability, they may be called "experiences of (actual)
respect'. The introduction of this term will be found
convenient as we now embark on a consideration of this
special aspect of experiences of moral approval.

Acts of approval viewed qua acts of respect reveal
two elements which have not so far been in the focus of

our attention:- (a) they relate us to the other person
qua a person of a certain moral 'potentia'; (b) in them
we recognise this moral 'potentia' as a (relatively)
permanent characteristic of a person, underlying, and
exhibited by, the act of submission of which we approve.

The recognition of the first of these features pro-
vides us with an answer to the old question whether we
approve of actions or of persons. The answer is that
we approve of both. We approve of the action (act of
submission) which, in our approving of it, is given to
us as an expression (actualisation) of the agent's 'mo-
ral potentia'; and of this 'moral potentia' we approve
as something which has enabled the person to subject him-
self to the moral claim. Since this 'potentia' is mani-
fest only in acts of submission, it is these which we
'aim at' in our acts of approval, though through them
we 'mean' the person qua someone who has been able to
commit himself in this wayy

Now the term 'moral potentia' does not denote any-
thing apart from the person and his activities. It de-
notes the extent to which his activities are carried out
in accordance with the moral requirements of his situa-
tions, the extent to which a person's 'auctoritas' gives
rise to the more valuable states of affairs; or, to put
it in a metaphorical way, it denotes the point in a
scale of moral claims (arranged according to the amount
of self-denial each of them requires) up to which a per-
son will respond by submission. The notion of this 'po-
tentia', again, is merely descriptive, not "metaphysical".
We do have a notion of someone's moral ability, though we
may have to correct it at times, according as he behaves
better or worse than we expected he would. This moral
ability is sometimes given the name "character", "per-

sonality", or some such name. All these names mean some ground within the person which underlies his acts of submission to moral claims. And we apprehend this ground in acts of respect which, in a similar way, underlie our acts of approval.

Like acts of approval of standard acts of respect thus are directed at some 'static', lasting ability (viz. the ability to obey moral claims) and not at something which we consciously do. And, as with approval of standard, the difficulty arises with regard to respect that in it we hold a person responsible for the level of moral ability to which he has attained, and yet we do not see how we are entitled to do so. If a person A is able to respond to certain claims by appropriate behaviour, and B is able only to follow claims of a much lesser kind, we respect A more than B, knowing (it seems) that B's minor moral ability is due to some "mismanagement" of his which he could have avoided. But could he? Is the "mismanagement" itself not due to the absence of that very ability the lack of which we suppose (when blaming him) to be due to the "mismanagement"? At this point the phenomenologist hands over to the metaphysician the weary task of dealing with "freedom" and "determination". No light is shed by phenomena into these puzzling depths. All the phenomenologist could do was to try and elucidate the actual act of submission and its structure which forms the object of actual moral approval. How it is that some of us are able to commit such acts in a certain situation and others not, it is not for him to explain.

The second element revealed in acts of respect is the permanency of the 'moral potentia' at which they are

directed. And this takes us to the last question which, within the limited scope of this essay, we may venture to tackle: respect as an attitude.

It must be admitted that, if attitudes are taken to be something of which we are in no way aware, then they are not phenomenologically accessible. But we need not commit ourselves to this notion of attitude from the start. For our problem is not: are there subconscious attitudes? or something of that kind. Our problem arises from the phenomenological fact that some experiences are characterised as 'actualisation of a permanent attitude' (e.g. the relation between my and the other person's moral level), or that some objects of experiences (such as the act of submission to a claim) are given as 'actualisation of a permanent ability'. It may be formulated as the question: How can we know from, or in, a transitory experience of a certain quality or structure (attitude, moral ability) that this quality or structure will continue to be (and has been before) what we now experience it to be, when we cease to experience it? There are two answers to this question. The first is short but perfectly relevant: Because these qualities and structures are given as the 'static' and 'permanent' fundamentum of the short and 'dynamic' occurrence in which they are functioning, or, more precisely, which is constituted by their functioning. The second answer is less short, but, I think, more illuminating.

At various times throughout this essay we have come across what may be called structures of 'phenomenological foundation': one phenomenon can be recognised as founded in another, such that it could not occur apart from this foundation. Thus we discovered the experience

of enjoying something founded in the experience of being
aware of it. We have not pointed out, however, the more
complex foundations, such as can be traced between my
perceiving the claim not to use another person's pro-
perty (without his consent), and the basic relation of
respect which holds between myself and that person. But
it is just this sort of phenomenological foundation which
may be used as evidence for the existence of 'attitudes'
(in a sense which, for the time being, must remain vague).

The foundation of the claim not to use another per-
son's property without his permission, in the basic re-
lation of respect for his personality (i.e. his 'aucto-
ritas' plus its rational application, plus his awareness
of his situation, including his rights and claims, etc.)
has so far only been roughly indicated in one of the
preceding chapters. It will be taken up again in the
last part of this paper (III,3). Let us, for present
purposes, assume it as existing. Then we may argue thus:-
In the course of our lives we are often aware of claims
concerning other people's property. And it can be said,
as warranted by frequent experience, that we are often
aware just of these claims and not of any 'respect' for
the 'personality' of the owner. And from that we may con-
clude that, as awareness of this claim is necessarily
founded in 'respect' for the owners 'personality', and
yet this respect has not been experienced, there is a
sense in which this 'respect' is "at work", although we do
not notice it consciously, being aware of its effects
only. Examples for this type of occurrence could be
supplied in great number. As I hope to indicate in the
next part of this paper, many of the moral claims we
perceive can be reduced, by way of elucidating phenomeno-
logical foundations, to basic interpersonal relations

(such as respect) which must be active "all the time", although we only sometimes become aware of them. Other everyday occurrences, such as asking a question, can serve as further examples. In asking a question I am given the other person as a 'personality' who can understand, weigh issues, arrive at an answer, etc.. Yet of none of these abilities of the other person need I be explicitly aware when asking a question in some ordinary connection. Thus, here again, a complex experiential substructure is in play in which our act of asking a question is founded.

To this the objection may be made that the simple fact that actions and reactions become habitual, so as to happen as soon as certain stimuli are given, is here wrongly interpreted as "evidence" for 'attitudes'. But this objection does not carry much weight, when we consider that the phenomenological evidence available is not confined to stating that we perceive claims, ask questions, etc., but that these experiences can be shown to be founded, in an intelligible and necessary way, in other experiences, without the presence of which they would not be possible. And, what is more, we are at liberty to present these connections of phenomenological foundations to ourselves with any actual experience we may choose. All that is required is to change from the 'intentio recta' (in which, for example, we were just perceiving a claim not to take someone else's typewriter without asking him first), to the 'intentio obliqua', and bring to the fore the experiential sub-structure which was implicitly "operating" when we perceived that claim. For these sub-structures are phenomenologically accessible, inasmuch as they are structures of pheno-

menological foundation. And although in the 'intentio
recta' we are not aware of all the elements of expe-
rience which go to make up our present situation, we
are always able to lift them into the light of awareness
by turning our special (reflective) attention on them.

It should be noticed that I do not maintain that
there is a clear boundary between what we are aware of,
and what is the 'sub-structure'. The nature of aware-
ness would not warrant any such contention. The boundary
is never distinctly assessable. There may be a sort of
awareness of the other's functioning as a 'personality'
to which we appeal when asking him a question, even if
this question is asked in a normal, everyday situation;
and there may be some sort of awareness of the owner's
'auctoritas' when, in a hurry, one removes an envelope
from another's writing table.

These short remarks are merely intended to show in
what sense there may be a phenomenological justification
for the talk about "attitudes", as distinct from actual
experiences. To do this we felt to be necessary, because
the phenomena of respect and moral ability (as attitudes
or permanent structures) had entered into the analysis
of actual moral approval. But, on the other hand, these
phenomena, though essential parts of the sub-structure
of actual moral approval, do enter into the contents of
this experience only as marginal phenomena. Therefore,
though not with the claim to have fully elucidated the
phenomenon of moral approval, we may stop at this point,
leaving it to others to rectify the account so far given,
and to add much that has been left unsaid.

19) Disapproval.

We have thought it advisable to postpone the discussion of disapproval until now, instead of combining it with the analysis of approval. For the object of disapproval - and the act accordingly - is not, as it might at first be thought, a structure fully comparable to that of approval. Philosophers are apt to look upon "approval and disapproval" as two analogous "emotions", the only difference between them being that the one is "positive" (a "pro attitude") and the other "negative" (a "contra attitude"). However, with the abandoning of this simplifying pre-conception important structural differences between the two "emotions" come to the fore.

These differences could, of course, not be noticed by an ethical theory which considers 'moral action' only as an observable and recordable occurrence (in the behaviouristic sense), or as something which has or has not certain effects; or by a theory which conceives of approval and disapproval as manoevres of encouraging or discouraging other people to do what we would like them to do. For here approval and disapproval are perfectly symmetrical, and what has been said of approval would supply us negatively with a perfect account of disapproval also. Thus, on this view, a certain action is approved of by me, when I try to encourage people to do it, and when I feel pleasure (or, more specifically: a "heightened sense of security") wherever it prospers, and it is disapproved of by me, when I try to discourage people from doing it, and when I feel pain (or: a particular sense of uneasiness) wherever it occurs. Such a solution, convenient though it is for writer and reader,

will not be possible in the present investigation.

The structure of moral action as we have investigated it so far, has been the structure of morally valuable action. We will now have to consider the structure of morally disvaluable action. One is given to us in acts of approval, the other in acts of disapproval. Looking at the two acts from some distance (as it were) they seem, it is true, to be strictly analogous. They are both adequate responses to a certain quale of an action. But on closer inspection we find that the two actions in which the respective quales are found, differ in rather important respects. While approval is directed at that particular act of a person (viz. the act of submission to a moral claim) by which he sets himself to bring about a certain valuable state of affairs, the object of disapproval is characterised by the very absence of this act. Actions which are the object of moral disapproval are, therefore, different in structure from the objects of approval; and it is this difference which it is our present task to assess.

The situational setting of morally disvaluable action is identically the same as that of morally valuable action. In other words: there is a basic structure which all morally relevant actions have in common. This structure we need not describe again at length; it is the being in a situation of a person, his being aware of a moral claim (with all that this awareness includes, e.g. the possibility of bringing about the valuable state of affairs), and his having 'auctoritas' to make decisions according to reasons which he, by the decision, 'sanctions' as motives. In short: in an act of disapproval of another person we are aware of him as a responsible agent who is aware of moral claims.

The structures begin to differ, however, in a striking way, when the person who is aware of a moral claim continues to do whatever he did before, though he recognises that he now ought to do something else. It is the conscious omission of an act of submission which we actually disapprove of. This raises the difficulty of determining exactly what it is that an act of disapproval aims at. For it is not at once phenomenologically clear whether the failure to commit oneself to the morally required course of action has itself the form of an act, to which a quale of moral disvalue could conveniently attach itself.

As a result of our analysis of approval it has become clear, that to be aware of a moral claim includes knowing that one ought to adopt a certain course of action, leading to - or being itself - a valuable state of affairs, and, at the same time, that we ought not to pursue whatever does not lead or leads less effectively, to this valuable state of affairs. In other words: the moral claim informs us of what is the morally appropriate behaviour in a certain situation and, at the same time, of what is morally inadequate. Now I think behaviour which is "worthy of disapproval" can most adequately be described as embarking on a course of action which one recognises to be morally inadequate. Such embarking on a morally inadequate course of action presupposes a decision to do so, just as much as morally appropriate behaviour does. It is this decision - the act of 'sanctioning' a morally inadequate way of behaving - to which the quale of moral disvalue attaches itself. This act of setting, or allowing, myself to behave in a way which I know to be less requisite in a situation than another, or not requisite at all, is given to us as an act which

is performed although the person was challenged, and although it was possible for him, to adopt the morally appropriate behaviour. This "although" does not express a theoretical addition which we affix to his action in thought, but indicates a feature which tints and permeates the whole of that action. It is an essential characteristic of it.

This seems to me all that need be said in order to characterise phenomenologically the basic respect in which the structure of morally disvaluable action (the object of disapproval) differs from the structure of the morally valuable one. The correspondence of a disapproval quale to this disvalue quale, as well as all the other features contained in act and object, are strictly analogous to those discovered in object and act of approval and they require, therefore, no further mention here. It will, however, be worth while, having pointed out the generic structure of disapproval, to find out the various differentiations of this structure which we may expect to correspond to the various differentiations of the generic structure of approval.

There is, to begin with, a clear recurrence within the phenomenon of disapproval of the difference between approval of action and approval of standard. It is easy to perceive this same difference in the case of disapproval: we may disapprove of a person who, though perceiving a moral claim not to behave as he does, continues to behave in this way. In this case we disapprove of his action. Or we may disapprove of the fact that a person does not realise that his behaviour is, or becomes, morally inadequate in a certain situation, i.e. that he fails to perceive the respective moral claim.

And here we have a case of disapproval of standard. In both cases our disapproval is based on the other person's being responsible for what we disapprove of in him; so, accordingly, the same difficulties as in the case of approval would arise if one attempted a theoretical understanding of the phenomenon of moral disapproval of standard.

While thus the distinction between disapproval of action and disapproval of standard is strictly analogous to the same distinction in the case of approval, we encounter more complicated correspondence when confronting the differentiations we assessed within approval of action with the respective differentiations within disapproval of action. It will be recalled that in the course of our analysis we distinguished three main types of objects of moral approval of action. There is, first of all, that kind of action in which a resulting situation which I would like to bring about (for myself), and a resulting situation which I am required to bring about by a moral claim, exclude each other, and in which I achieve the submission to the claim with a certain amount of self-exertion. Secondly (b), there is the same kind of action but with the act of submission being performed without any effort. And, thirdly,(c), there are actions in which there is no such exclusion between two resulting situations, but in which that which I would like to do is, at the same time, that which I ought to do. Type (b) and (c) can, furthermore, both be subdivided into either 'fully deliberate' or 'unpremeditated' action.

As to the amount of self-exertion employed in embarking on a morally required course of action, no de-

finite conclusion could be reached. It was suggested,
however, that corresponding to the increasing of the
amount of self-exertion required for an action, the in-
tensity of the moral value of the action thus achieved
decreases. This view, I think, will now receive some
confirmation by the fact that in the case of disapproval
we disapprove _less_ when someone behaves in a morally in-
adequate way although he exerted himself to do otherwise,
and we disapprove more strongly when someone proceeds to
disobey the moral claim without at all attempting to
behave as was morally required by his situation. For
the degrees seem here to be this: 1) Morally appropriate
behaviour without self-exertion (high moral value);
2) Morally appropriate behaviour with self-exertion (smal-
ler moral value); 3) Morally inadequate behaviour in
spite of counteracting self-exertion (small moral dis-
value); 4) Morally inadequate behaviour without any
counteracting self-exertion (higher moral disvalue).
In the case of morally appropriate action the presence
of self-exertion indicates that there was not enough
moral ability in the person to make him do the act smooth-
ly, whereas in the case of the inadequate behaviour the
presence of (counteracting) self-exertion shows that
there was at least enough moral ability in the agent
to let him try to behave otherwise.

The counterpart of the third type (c) of morally
valuable action is that kind of morally disvaluable action
in which the situation desired by me is precisely the
situation which ought not to be brought about, just as
in the "positive" case the situation I desire to bring
about is exactly the one I am morally required to bring
about. We have not, so far, throughout the whole en-
quiry, used the word 'valuable' for objects which are

experienced as providing satisfaction for one of my own
desires, inclinations, or interests, ohly (and for nobody
else's), but we may, for the moment, call such objects
'privately valuable'. Then, bearing in mind that
'valuable' as used in 'valuable state of affairs' always
meant 'publicly valuable', we may express the present
situation in value terms as follows: the counterpart
of that morally valuable action in which the 'privately
valuable' and the 'publicly valuable' situation melt
into one, is the morally disvaluable action in which
the 'privately valuable' situation which this action
aims at bringing about is at the same time given as 'pub-
licly disvaluable'. While in cases (a) or (b) it was the
failure of the disapproved person that he preferrred
pursuing what was given to him as 'privately valuable'
(only), disregarding the claim to bring about something
else which he recognised to be 'publicly valuable' (e.g.
he hurries on to catch a train though he sees a person
collapse in the street and no one else is about to help),
in (c) his action is morally disvaluable qua directly
aiming at bringing about what he knows to be publicly
disvaluable (e.g. sadistically inflicting pain upon some-
body). This type of action is generally held to be
attended by a moral disvalue quale of a greater inten-
sity (and, accordingly, by stronger disapproval) than
actions of type (a) or (b). Yet, though I myself believe
this to be so, I do not think that one can claim intui-
tive evidence for it, saying that morally disvaluable
actions of type (c) of necessity are more disvaluable
than acts of type (a) or (b). It may be remembered that
we could not detect any such regularity for the corres-
ponding type of morally valuable behaviour either.

As there can be moral value in unpremeditated action, there can be moral disvalue in it, too. Here, again, the structures are strictly analogous. The act of disapproval aims at a person's preferring the less appropriate (but, perhaps, more pleasurable) to the more appropriate course of action, and such 'preferring' can obviously happen in many different ways. It may be the result of a long deliberation which leads to a decision not to care for the moral claim; or a situation which requires some morally appropriate behaviour may offer itself suddenly, and disappear again, and I may have let it pass in a state of "undecidedness" whether or not I should do what was morally required; or I may be pursuing some publicly valuable aim, but in doing so I may encounter the opportunity to pursue some privately valuable aim instead, and in becoming aware of this opportunity I may realise that I have already ceased to intend what I had intended before; etc. . Whatever the situation may be in all these various cases, it always contains my awareness that it is myself who gives rise to, or allows to continue, the course of action which I knew to be (or to become) morally inadequate. In many cases there certainly is no conscious act of preference for the morally inadequate in the sense of deciding to embark upon it; but always when I find myself doing something morally inadequate, I know that an act of preference for this course of action has taken place, which no-one else but myself can have performed. Such awareness of my own having preferred the one course of action to the other is essentially contained in the object-structure of moral disapproval, and, accordingly, the act of disapproval essentially contains the experience that the (disapproved) person has himself pre-

ferred that which was given to him as morally inadequate
in his situation.

With regard to the element of respect in acts of
approval no counterpart can be found in acts of disappro-
val. The analysis here leads to the, perhaps surprising,
resulttthat disapproval too, is based on a basic attitude
of respect for the person disapproved of. We saw that
we respect a person qua responsible agent of a certain
moral ability. Now, while a "positive" act of submission
to a moral claim clearly exhibits a certain level of
moral potentia (though not necessarily the highest a per-
son is capable of), the "negative" failure to submit
does not likewise exhibit the absence of moral ability
in a person. To suppose that it did would be to mis-
understand completely our notion of a person's 'moral
ability'(or 'potentia'). This notion does not mean some
power "within us" which, according to its degree, up to
a certain point in the scale of claims invariably causes
us to subject ourselves to them, so that, if someone
fails to subject himself, we could safely conclude that
his moral ability does not go to this length. 'Moral
ability' denotes the range within which a person's moral-
ly relevant behaviour moves, the "district" within which
I "believe that I would have succeeded if I has tried"93).
According to this notion of moral ability it would be in
no way contradictory to say "He could have done it, but

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93) cf. Stuart Hampshire's "Second Interpretation of
    'can'" in his paper on "The Freedom of the Will"
    (in the Proceedings of the Arostotelian Society,
    Suppl.Vol. XXV, p.173ff). The difficulties which
    attach to these notions of 'moral ability' or'try-
    ing to behave morally well' (involving another 'abi-
    lity to try' which some people may have and others
    not, etc.), theoretically, we cannot consider here.
    It should be remembered that the present analysis

he didn't". It is, therefore, not possible to say that
in acts of disapproval we apprehend a lack of moral abili-
ty. The opposite is true: in all acts of disapproval we
presuppose a moral ability of the agent to do what he was
required to do. For if we did learn (somehow) that a
person was basically unable to behave in the way required,
we should cease disapproving of his action and start
lamenting over his ill fortune (viz. to be born without
moral ability) 94), or start "disapproving" of his lack
of moral ability, both of which attitudes are highly in-
volved, metaphysically, and, in any case, are not actual
disapproval of action in the sense here in question. It
follows, then, that actual disapproval of action, just
as well as actual approval of action, is based on an
attitude of basic respect for a person qua moral agent.
They both are 'actualisations' of the same fundamental
attitude which relates human beings to each other qua
responsible agents.

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is concerned only with describing certain elements
of "moral experience", which, when considered theo-
retically, may give rise to problems of extreme dif-
ficulty. Being pre-theoretical, however, the present
enquiry is also "pre-problematical".

94) Thus disapproval may turn into lamentation over a
person's character and, similarly, high approval of
a character may turn into admiration of it. But in
such a change from approval to admiration (or from
disapproval to lamentation) of a character we assume
a new attitude which is charactersied by our no longer
ascribing the admired achievement to the person's own
responsible activity. We may admire a moral charac-
ter as we admire a musical genius, or a piece of
painting. But then we do something different from
approving of it, for in this attitude the claim is
missing (which characterises all approval) that we,
too, ought to be like this. I think, therefore, we
should not use "moral approval" and "moral admiration"
as synonyms (as, for instance, A.C.Ewing does in his
book "The Definition of Good").

There is a further comparison between approval and
disapproval which throws, it seems to me, a revealing
light on a certain type of morally valuable action which,
though considered by some to be the fundamental type of
morally good behaviour, is thought by others to be highly
suspect; I mean here those moral actions in which the
thought that they will be morally valuable becomes part
(or the whole) of the motive from which they are done.
I should like to call attention to the interesting fact
that the form of morally disvaluable actions which forms
the precise counterpart of this type of morally valuable
action, is commonly held to be "unnatural", "perverse",
"satanic", "beyond the capacity of human beings", etc. .
This "negative" counterpart of actions which are done
from the thought that the will be morally valuable, are
actions which are done from the thought that, when done,
they will be morally disvaluable. Many moral philoso-
phers have conceived of this possible type of morally
disvaluable action, but declared it for so satanic and
inhuman that, on their view, it is doubtful whether it
ever occurs among human beings in this world 95); yet
some of them find it possible to hold, at the same time,
that the corresponding structure (which is described
merely by changing the expression "morally disvaluable"
for "morally valuable") in the "positive" field is the
proto-type of morally valuable behaviour of human beings,
and worthy of the highest approval. I, on my part, am
inclined to accept the fact that the type of disvaluable
action which corrseponds to such actions on the "negative"
side, is agreed to be "unnatural", as an indication that
they themselves are not devoid of similar properties.

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95) So, for instance, N.Hartmann in his "Ethics", and
    Ross in "The Right and the Good", p.163.

In conlcuding this series of comparisons between acts
of approval and disapproval it may be worth while to
draw attention to a "law", or, to put it less pretentious-
ly, to a striking regularity 96) which is found when com-
paring the approval for submission to a moral claim with
the respective act of disapproval for someone who fails
to subject himself to this claim. The regularity is this:-

The more highly we approve of an action the less dis-
approval is paid to its omission, and the less we notice
a certain action as worthy of approval, the more we dis-
approve of its omission. This may also be formulated
in terms of the degree of moral value and disvalue of
an action: The higher the degree of moral value of the
performance of an action, the lower the moral disvalue
of its omission.

Using the letters "V"
for "value" and "D" for
"disvalue", this may be
conveniently represented
by a graph: A and Z re-
present the two extreme
possibilities; for in-
stance: (A) We approve
highly of a man (say, a physician) who willingly sacri-
fices his life in order to develop (or test) a certain
new method of healing; but we do not disapprove of a per-
son who does not go to that extent of self-denial in order
that new remedies may be discovered for the diseases that

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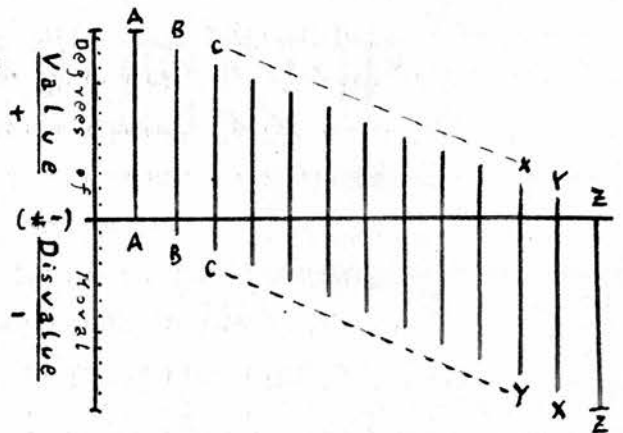
96) This regularity is demonstrated by Nicolai Hartmann in
his "Ethics". The following graph, though not to be
found in Hartmann's book, was used by him in his
lectures to illustrate this feature of (what he used
to call) the "realm of (material) values".

trouble mankind. And (Z) we do not attach any particular moral approval to somebody who respects the right of his father to live as long as he can, though that prevents him from inheriting a fortune; but we disapprove strongly of someone who fails to obey this very elementary moral claim. The other cases (B - Y) are infinite stages in between these two.

With the demonstration of this law our discourse on disapproval and its relation to approval has come to an end, and with it the whole of the descriptive analysis here undertaken. It only remains for us to supplement it by a few theoretical considerations.

III. PHENOMENOLOGY AND ETHICS.

1) Normative Ethics.

One of the main features which distinguish ethics from other branches of philosophy is its attempting to provide 'norms' (precepts) for the behaviour of human beings. Ethics is not only 'practical', dealing with human actions and intentions to act, but it aims at being 'normative', prescribing what courses of action we are to adopt in preference to others. Being normative, ethics would have to provide us with statements such as "A person, being in such and such a situation, ought to do so and so". Being philosophical, ethics has to arrive at these statements in an intelligible and, if possible, stringent procedure of reasoning, or by pointing out publicly recognisable facts, or by a combination of these two methods. It has always been a matter of controversy whether any such procedure can ever be used for establishing generally valid norms about how we ought to behave, because it is almost generally agreed that from what is no inference is possible as to what ought to be. In other words, it is still a matter of doubt and uncertainty whether there can be a 'normative ethics'.

The analysis put forward in this paper has been a phenomenological one. As such it has been concerned exclusively with 'what is'. Phenomenological questions, such as "Which is the structure of moral action?", "How

is it related to acts of approval?", etc., are never
(normative) ethical questions, such as "How ought we
to behave?", "Which actions should we approve of?", etc.,
and the fact that they may be dealing with ethically
relevant phenomena makes no difference to this. It seems,
therefore, difficult to perceive the connection between
the descriptive analysis carried out in this paper, and
normative ethical theory, or, to put it in logical terms,
the connection between 'descriptive' and 'normative'
statements. The consideration of this connection will
form the subject of this concluding part of the enquiry.
For, although there may be some value in mere descriptive
explication as such, it was not under this heading that
the foregoing analysis has been undertaken. It was the
state of the contemporary discussion of moral approval
(and connected phenomena) which led us to attempt this
contribution from a different, namely the phenomenolo-
gical, angle. And it therefore remains for us to de-
termine in what way phenomenological analysis can con-
tribute to normative ethical philosophy.

'Normative' statements are characterised by their
stating a 'norm', as opposed to stating a 'fact'. The
sentence "You ought to act according to the highest
moral claim present in your situation.", or the sentence
"One should prefer aesthetical pleasures to sensual ones."
are normative statements. No type of 'fact' could be
discovered to correspond to these statements, or to be
expressed by them. They are neither factual nor purely
logical. In short: they form a genuine class of state-
ments, specifically different from statements about facts.
What, then, do these statements 'mean'? - what is their
referent?

The answer to this has often been that they are
(a) disguised hypothetical statements, or (b) that they
are "emotive statements" (expressing an emotion, desire,
wish, aversion, of a person). As regards (a), this in-
terpretation of normative statements is, doubtlessly,
in many cases correct. Thus when I say to somebody "You
ought to take your medicine more regularly", or "You
really should stay in to-night and work", I formulate,
omitting an "if"-clause, what is really only a condi-
tioned normative statement ("hypothetical imperative").
Such normative statements, given in full, would run:
"If you want to get rid of your rheumatism, you ought to
take your medicine etc.", or "If you want to pass that
examination, you really should stay in etc.". These
normative statements can be made invalid (for the re-
spective cases) by dismissing the condition under which
alone they are valid. Thus, if I want to keep my ill-
ness for some time, as it may help me to avoid some un-
pleasant journey, or if I no longer intend to take that
examination, the respective norms for my behaviour have
become invalid.

There are, however, normative statements which are
not so obviously related to a condition under which alone
they are valid. Thus when I say "You ought to be more
kind to X; I know that your remarks hurt him", or "You
should not take this typewriter of X's without first
asking his permission", a condition of the validity of
these statements is less easily traced. In other words,
if the person addressed in these statements should ask
why he ought to behave in this way, reasons are not at
hand. We may answer "Well, because it belongs to him
and not to you", or "Because that is how everyone ought
to behave", or something to this effect. But such answers

only restate what one has said before, or, at the most,
relate it to a more general normative statement (such as
"All property should be respected"); but they do not pro-
vide a condition under which the normative statement is
valid.

It has therefore been argued, that such normative
statements (which cannot be traced back to factual con-
ditions) are not capable of rational justification, but
are expressing (emotional) "attitudes" of an individual
towards the behaviour of other individuals. These
attitudes are conceived of as "dispositions" to feel
certain emotions on certain occasions. And, like some
other emotions, these emotions are not "reasonable"
(i.e. we could not give any reasons, why we feel them).
They are just there, and their origin and differèngeoc-
currence in individuals, only allows of a causal expla-
nation in terms of education, environment, habits, drives,
etc.. In this way normative statements have come to be
interpreted as "emotive statements" (or statements in
"emotive language"), encouraging other people to do,
or discouraging them from doing, what we would like to
see done, or avoided, respectively.

In criticism of this account of normative ethical
statements as "emotive", it must be pointed out that
normative statements, though not themselves referring to
any existing state of affairs, are based, in a phenomeno-
logically intelligible manner, on statements in which
certain states of affairs are recognised as existing.
These statements have come to be called "value-judge-
ments"; but as this term is not unequivocal, I want
to characterise them as "statements about value-states-
of-affairs" 97). The position which I wish to maintain

as against the "emotive theory", is that all normative
statements (of the kind discussed) are but the practical
applications of that type of knowledge which is expressed
in statements about value-states-of-affairs. By 'prac-
tical application' I mean: the formulation of that know-
ledge in terms of a possible future action of a person.
Such formulations, naturally, cannot be about any cor-
responding state of affairs; but they are about certain
(general) value-states-of-affairs, applying these, "hypo-
thetically", to an action which may possibly happen.
The meaning of "You ought to ask him first before you
take his typewriter." is equivalent to "If you ask him
first etc., your action will be bringing about a (more)
valuable state of affairs.". It is clear that such a
statement is "hypothetical" in a sense completely differ-
ent from the one previously discussed under (a). The
present statement does not say "If you wish to bring
about a valuable state of affairs you ought to do so
and so.". It is not "hypothetical" in the sense of
pointing towards a condition (wish we are at liberty
to dismiss) under which a norm is valid, but only in
the sense that the particular state of affairs about
which it is made does not yet exist. This "translation"
of normative statements into statements about (possible)
valuable states of affairs can be performed without
any loss in meaning, and it dissolves the mystery of
"normative statements" to which nothing factual corres-
ponds, i.e. which have "no meaning" or referent.

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97) By this term I try to give an equivalent of the
German term "Wertsachverhalt", or, simply, "Wert-
verhalt". The distinction between "Sachverhalt"
and "Wertverhalt" would then be rendered by the
English "state-of-affairs" and "value-state-of-
affairs" (= state of affairs containing value quales).

Normative statements, then, though certainly not
descriptive, are what we may call 'addressive' state-
ments. For they formulate and address to a certain per-
son (or to a number of persons) the moral claim which
we perceive to be present in his (or their) situation.
And as the claim, qualified as an 'ought to do', results
in a self-evident way from one or more value quales which
are present in a situation, a normative statement (which
always is an 'ought to do'-statement) is based on, and
results from, the recognition of such value quales 98).
I think, therefore, that the question of normative state-
ments in ethics can be reduced to the question of our
recognition of value quales in situations. If the
existence of such quales and our cognition of them were
established, then it would seem to me to be perfectly
easy to understand how normative statements can derive
from them. It would then be clear that these statements,
though not themsleves descriptive, are based on recog-
nitions of certain value-states-of-affairs, and that,
in fact, they are nothing but the 'practical' formu-
lation of these.

2) The Formal Norms of "Rightness" as Supplied by the Analysis of Approval.

If the interpretation of the nature of normative
statements as given in the preceding chapter is correct,
it will have to be admitted that our analysis supplies
us with a certain group of normative statements, although
proceeding purely descriptively. In this analysis we
have attempted to assess the essential conditions of
morally valuable action, and of the cognitive acts
through which we become aware of this value and of the

structure in which it resides. In both cases it has been the formal structure only which has been the object of analysis, i.e. we have ascertained that there are such things as 'moral claims', 'valuable states of affairs', 'acts of submission to a moral claim', 'quales of moral value', etc., and that certain essential interrelations hold between them. But we have never given attention to the particular material contents which "fills" this structure in every individual case of actual moral behaviour. For it is only to the formal structure that that particular intelligibility attaches, which, as we pointed out in the introduction, warrants a strictly universal validity of what is (descriptively) being stated about it.

From this formal structure, then, it must be possible to obtain certain formal norms about moral behaviour. For if it is a matter of intelligible necessity that moral value is inherent in actions which contain acts of submission to a moral claim, we may simply put this knowledge in the form of a generally valid formal norm:- "You - we, everybody - ought to subject yourself to a moral claim whenever there is one arising in your situation.". Similar formal norms obtained from the formal structures revealed would be "Always act so as to bring about the most valuable state of affairs you are aware of.", or "Always obey the higher of two moral claims in a situation.", etc., All of such norms we may term 'norms of the formal (moral) rightness of an action'.

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98) The foundation of all normative statements in statements of a non-normative (theoretical) type has been clearly demonstrated by E.Husserl in connection with his critical discussion of logic as a "normative discipline"; cf. "Logische Untersuchungen" (1901), I,1.

They prescribe in general how we ought to behave, without
taking into account the individual situation in which we
may be and quite regardless of any contents that we may
aim at bringing about in our actions. Yet, though formal,
they clearly are ethical norms, and they partake of the
strictly universal validity of the intelligible structures
which supply us with them.

How, then, has it been possible here, to ascertain
what ought to be by merely describing what is? It has
been possible not because phenomenology provides some new
method of inference from 'facts' to 'norms', but because
no such method of inference is required. The formal
norms here obtained are themselves part of the material
described. They are nothing but formulations of the
various aspects and elements of moral claims in practi-
cal terms. Put in other words, it is possible to arrive
at 'ought's' by a mere investigation of 'what is', be-
cause 'ought's' themselves are, and thus become descrip-
tively accessible. If our analysis has established any-
thing at all, it certainly has established that there are
experiences of 'ought's' (moral claims). It seems to me
that the presence of ought's in a situation is just as
basic a feature of it as the presence in it of sounds
or colours, or of identity and change. For 'ought' is
as irreducible a quality and as essentially required for
a 'human situation' to be constituted, as other elementary
qualities and categories. However, far be it from me to
assert that everybody who perceives some or all of those
other qualities in his situation, always also perceives
'ought's'. I do not assert anything about any number of
people who are aware of moral claims. So, in order to
make clear what I do, in fact, assert, it will be well
to introduce the follwoing qualification, not of the

validity, but of the applicability of the formal norms
of morally right behaviour.

The norms, prescribing which kind of behaviour is
morally right, are ("categorically") valid only within
an experiential frame which has the required characte-
ristics. That is to say: being unconditioned and abso-
lute as a norm (i.e. not requiring the fulfilment of any
"if"-conditions in order to be valid), it is conditioned
as regards the realm of its application. It should be
understood here, that limits of application are not
limits of validity. In the case of a person whose (ex-
perienced) situation is completely devoid of moral claims,
the norm is not "invalid", but inapplicable - just as a
geometrical principle is not "invalid" but inapplicable
in the dimension of time. The qualification made here
is, therefore, not one of the validity of the norm; it
only points out a condition of its application:- The
situation of a person must be possessed of the value
quales and claims analysed above, otherwise the attempt
to apply the above norm becomes impossible.

Taking this into consideration, it may be said that
the norm, however absolute within its realm, rests on
uncertain grounds. For, even if the structure (of si-
tuation, action, norm, etc.) is in itself coherent and
intelligible, nothing has been said about the number of
cases in which this set of experiential conditions is
actually fulfilled among living human individuals. We
cannot be certain that this number is not exceedingly
small and that the fulfilment of these conditions may
not even be confined to those only, who furnish descrip-
tions of them. Even admitting that this would not de-
tract from their inherent necessity and validity, it
would limit the application of the norm to these few

individuals only; and this, it must be agreed, would then be of little relevance for a general theory of ethics.

Now, it is one thing to find an unconditioned (formal) criterion of morally right or wrong actions, and it is another to assess where the conditions for the application of this criterion are given. It is certainly true that to recognise this criterion and its function in a certain experiential frame, does not mean to recognise in how many cases, and where, this experiential setting actually occurs. This may be compared to recognising certain essential relations that hold within a Euclidean triangle. For in this case too, no recognition of how many drawings of triangles exist on the earth, and where they exist, is included. But this comparison may also serve to demonstrate an important difference between the two cases: With a triangle it is easy in any single case to assess whether this is a case where those essential relations obtain, and where the laws about them apply, or not. But this is not so with the essential relations within a moral situation. For here, while we can never be in doubt which criterion to apply when this type of situation is given to a person, we may very often be in doubt whether this situation is given to him or not. This is so because a situation is something which only exists in the mode of being experienced by a person. And, although it is true that we always experience another person as living in a situation basically resembling our own - and, therefore, without hesitation apply that moral criterion - , it is also true that we can be mistaken about the way in which the other person experiences his situation. It is the task of phenomenological analysis to describe and understand, what it is like to experience another person as living in a situa-

tion like my own. But it is the task of other empirical
investigations to ascertain whether what we here expe-
rience is "really the case". If by such investigations
it should become clear that we were mistaken in our
approval, for example, because the object-person acted
in a trance, then this does not mean that any element
in the whole interrelated act-object structure of appro-
val is changed or lost, but only that this whole struc-
ture should not have been"operating" in this case. Just
as, when we mistake a wax-figure for a person, nothing
is changed or wrong in the act of 'seeing a living per-
son', but we discover later that this act was not right-
ly applied to that object.

These remarks about experiencing something as not
what it "really is" would themselves require detailed
phenomenological comment for their full justification.
It would have to be shown that when we say "I discovered
that what I took for a living man was really just as
wax-figure" we mean by "really" that our experience of
the living man was not confirmed but contradicted by
later experiences of the same object. "Reality" of
òbjects (as opposed to what we suppose them to be) is
itself a phenomenological concept, capable of elucidation
in terms of coherent systems of experiences. Thus, in
cases of misapplied approval, we may say that we dis-
covered that, "in fact", the person was acting in a
trance. And by that we do not mean that we have some
special means of finding out what is "really the case",
apart from our experiences; but only that there are
other types of experiences (including the "empirical
investigations" of scientists) possible with regard to
the same person, which may contradict our experience of
approval of him, or, at any rate, some of the sub-ex-

periences essentially contained in the act of approval, -
for instance our experiencing the other person as having
perceived a moral claim in his situation. Such expe-
riences may consist of our discovering that the person
does not reply tó questions, or that the pupils of his
eyes do not respond to light, etc.. Under the over-
whelming weight of such counter-experiences we may be
forced to dismiss (i.e. to declare invalid) the initial
one. However, further elaboration of this point would
take us too far afield. Suffice it here to have indi-
cated the phenomenological sense in which we may dis-
cover that our approval was "misplaced", or in which
we may say that we cannot be quite certain whether the
conditions on the grounds of which we approve and dis-
approe, are "really" fulfilled in the case of the other
person.

We must then distinguish between the validity of a
certain norm or criterion, and the difficulty of empi-
rically ascertaining whether the conditions for its
application are given, and where they are given. I be-
lieve that there are various means of overcoming these
difficulties, and that there is reason for assuming
that many acts of approval and disapproval which we per-
form in our society, are not mistaken, - the main reason
being the consistency of large sets of different expe-
riences which we have about the same person and which
go to support our acts of approval and disapproval to-
wards him. But it is not within the limits of this
paper to discuss this question any further.

Having thus clarified the position of the formal
norm and distinguished it from difficulties which may
attend the attempt to apply it properly, we are still
left with the question: What is the theoretical rele-

vance of that purely formal principle within normative
ethics? The answer to this question is that this norm
provides us with a perfect insight into how we should
behave (formally), without giving the least indication
as to what we should do (materially). Thus its relevance
is great, or non-existent, according as we consider
either of these questions. Ethical theory is called upon
to provide an answer to both of them. Phenomenological
analysis, granted that our descriptions and reasonings
have been substantially correct, can supply it with one
of these answers; but it seems to provide no means of
discovering the other. This is true, at any rate, about
the analysis of moral approval as it has been carried out
in this paper. We may conclude, therefore, that the
ethical relevance of this analysis lies in its elucidat-
ing the formal nature of morally valuable as well as
morally disvaluable action.

In this conclusion the question how we can obtain
any ethical certainty as to the material contents of
moral claims, their order and validity, has been left
unanswered. Nor need we here remark upon any of the
multifarious attempts that have been made to answer
this question. But it may be pertinent, at the end of
this paper which has applied the phenomenological method
to ethically relevant phenomena, to give a brief indi-
cation of the way in which this same method may also be
employed in the search for the second of those answers.
To this question I shall, therefore, devote my final
chapter.

3) On the Phenomnological Elucidation of the Material Contents of Moral Claims.

Comparing the two ethical issues which we have indicated by the terms 'formal' and 'material', it will appear that the material part of ethics is of a more vital importance with regard to the general desire for stable and reliable codes and standards. For, while it may be more readily agreed that we "intuit the nature of rightness" in the sense just expounded, and while we rarely dispute the structure of formally right action (though we are seldom aware of all its implications), we do not arrive equally easily at an agreement on one single moral code as the one which is "evidently valid". It is in the field of material ethics that the never ending flow of arguments is advanced to advocate one or other moral code, and that theories as to the foundation of these codes are in perpetual conflict with each other.

Now, I think that in this part of ethics also the phenomenological method can be of value. There is a sense in which material norms can be confirmed or confuted by descriptive analysis. This method, it is true, would only be applicable to elementary claims, - to the realm of "unnachlaßlichen Pflichten" in Kant's terminology. It would not, for instance, enable us to determine whether aesthetical pleasures are "higher" or more "worth while" than sensual ones. But even in the more elementary realm of material contents of claims, evidence and confirmation are still much in need. And it is here that phenomenology may contribute its share towards a firmer recognition of material moral norms which

are generally valid. The following outline confines
itself to sketching the phenomenological procedure that
would have to be applied for this purpose in the case
of one example.

The fact which justifies such attempts at phenomeno-
logical elucidation of the material contents of claims
which we perceive in certain situations is, that all
(not only moral) claims that we perceive are 'actuali-
sations' of certain, more or less basic and permanent,
attitudes. We have already toughed upon the difficult
phenomenon of one experience being founded in another
more basic one. We must now present it to ourselves
to such an extent as will make intelligible the proposed
phenomenological procedure in the field of material
ethics. An example from the sphere of 'solitary' si-
tuations may here serve as a preparation.

It is possible for a person, one day to make a de-
cision to have a short walk every morning before break-
fast, and to carry out this decision every morning, with-
out realising later that he is carrying out this decision,
and without even remebering that he once made it.
Or, if someone has once committed himself to the hobby
of counting all the numbers on motor-cars or locomotives
which he may encounter, he will, henceforth, count these
numbers – and even espy them where they would not catch
someone else's attention – although on all these later
occasions he will not be at all aware of the fact that
he once decided to do this 99). And yet, all his many
acts of attention to these numbers and of counting and

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99) As for the "reality" of "inactual mental life" see
    the detailed analyses of Moritz Geiger in his
    "Psychologie des Unbewußten" (contained in Husserl's
    Jahrbuch, quoted before).

comparing them with each other, are consequences of that decision. They are, like the walks of the first person, actualisations of a permanent commitment. They would cease (allowing for a certain element of psychological delay) as soon as we abandoned that decision and detached ourselves from the commitment.

We do not enter into many such commitments by way of a consciously made decision. But we may step out of all of them whenever we please (though not always without acting morally wrongly in doing so). A commitment of this kind is, above all, our desire to continue our existence; and from it, there follow further sub-commitments (which also may never have started by a conscious act of decision), such as our commitments to take meals at certain times, to wash, to abide in places which are supplied with oxygen, etc.,etc.. All these commitments "go without saying". Yet, though we grow into them, their nature as 'commitments', i.e. as something which must have the support of the ego-centre and from which this support may be withdrawn any moment we choose, becomes clear when we realise our possibility to disallow or to discard any of these commitments. To take the most striking example: I can withdraw the support of the ego-centre from the (most basic) commitment to continue to exist. Then very many things that were relevant before, and which entered into my situation in the form of very many claims, such as: now to eat, wash, sleep, to turn off the gas-tap when I smell gas escaping, etc., at once become irrelevant 100). These claims,

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100) It is interesting here to notice that _moral_ claims would not be affected even by as basic a decision as this. They are essentially rooted in my situation qua _social_ situation. No decision, however fundamental, that I make within my solitary situa-

though they will continue to arise because of my psychological constitution, have no longer any appeal to me; they are thus revealed as 'hypothetical claims', and that is to say: as valid only on grounds of certain commitments which form the sole ground of the normative appeal which they have for me. The commitment (as the fundamentum) is very rarely present in our awareness of the various individual claims. But it can be brought into awareness at any time, and if this is done, the relation of foundation between the individual claim and the general and basic commitment (as its ground and fundamentum) is apprehended and understood immediately. To bring about such understanding is, in our present language, to elucidate (phenomenologically) a relation of 'phenomenological foundation'. Thus if someone smells gas and feels the urgent claim to detect and block the source of its escaping, and I draw his attention to the fact that this claim only arises because he desires to continue his existence, he will (very likely) agree that this is so; and if he does, he has understood explicitly a structure of phenomenological foundation which "was there all the time" and which "caused" numerous similar claims to address him, but of which he had not been aware before.

It is a similar procédure of adducing the experiential foundations of what someone actually experiences at a certain moment, which I had in mind when speaking of phenomenological methods as applicable to the issues of material ethics. In the discussion of "attitudes", earlier in this paper, a foundation of moral claims concerning another person's property, in a basic attitude of

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tion about my own interests and intentions, can render these claims invalid which arise in connection with the interests and intentions of others.

'respect' to this person has been mentioned. This example may be taken up now for demonstrating the procedure in question. The way of demonstrating it will be to apply it, sweepingly, to these material claims and to perform such elucidation of their experiential "roots" as will lead to a phenomenological confirmation of the ethical validity of these claims.

Suppose I am in urgent need of a typewriter, and there is one next door, but I distinctly perceive the claim not to use it, as it is not my own but, say, (in a boarding-house) that of a certain gentleman whom I hardly know at all. Then this claim "not to use that typewriter" contains in itself its 'reason', and this 'reason' is given together with the claim, namely: "'because' it is somebody else's". But this is as far as my being aware of the ground for that claim goes (in the sort of average situation we are thinking of here). As to this claim and its valuable contents (viz. not to use someone else's typewriter), it is possible that I argue to myself, or to somebody who is with me, in the following fashion:- "Why on earth should I mind this (so-called) moral claim. After all, we learn that it is nothing but convention that makes us feel it, and we hear that there are primitive tribes who do not have the concept of property at all; in fact, there are no 'ought's', really, but only a material of data perceived by the senses; etc.". This is the place of the phenomenologist to point out that the claim is of a more solid origin than that.

In order to achieve this he will start by showing that the claim is rooted in (i.e. arises 'because' of) an attitude which can be called 'respect for the domain

of rights of another person', and which is "at work"
all the time, though rarely consciously known. That
there is such an attitude he will be able to demonstrate
by reference to more elementary and familiar actualisa-
tions of it. Thus we make room in a narrow passage for
another person to pass, or, if he bars our own way, we
ask him to move aside and do not push him away like a
thing; we knock at his door before entering into his
room, hesitate to read his letters in his absence, even
if, for some reason, this may be extremely necessary,
and we do not touch or dispose over parts of his body
without his consent, whereas we feel no such resistance
when intending to touch, say, a dog; etc.,etc. . In all
these cases the same attitude of 'respect for another
person's domain of rights' is instanced (i.e. actualised).
And no perusal of them will fail to bring to the fore
this basic attitude, of which the example we started
with was only a special case (actualisation).

Yet, the process of phenomenological elucidation
does not stop at this level; for this attitude itself
can be shown to be founded in another one, which is more
fundamental still: the awareness of the other person
qua 'personality'. By 'personality', as will be remem-
bered, we signified that complex structure of 'awareness
of a situation', plus 'auctoritas', plus its (more or
less) rational functioning (i.e. functioning according
to intelligible and justifiable motivations), etc., which
forms the "nucleus" (sit venia verbo) of a person qua
responsible agent. Thus being aware of someone as a
'personality' includes being aware of him as someone
who is related to his situation in formally the same
way as I am related to my situation. Thus I know that
certain parts of his situation are characterised for him

as 'domain of my personal disposal', or as 'belonging to me', as objects of his interests, likings, aversions, etc.. I am aware, furthermore, of his relying on his property, affixing certain interests on it, building plans upon it, and so on.

Only on the grounds of such awareness can the <u>awareness of possible interference</u> with the domain of another person's disposal constitute itself; and only when thus apprehended as an object of possible interference, my awareness of this domain becomes awareness of it qua a 'domain of his <u>rights</u>'. For 'rights' in this connection stands for 'that which is not to be interefered with'. The notion of 'possible interference', which thus forms the essential precondition for our experiencing something as 'the domain of somebody's rights', is itself capable of phenomenological elucidation by means of a further recourse to my awareness of <u>my own</u> domain of interests. Here I experience myself as master over certain sets of things and states of affairs, one of which may, for present purposes, be exemplified by the domain which I know as 'my body'. With regard to the movements and location, for instance, of my body I know myself to be the only and essentially unconditioned master over it. And it is in the interference with these, my own, acts of disposing over my own body, through other persons, that the experience of 'my rights' has its experiential origin. From here it is transplanted into the other person, according to the basic fact, discussed before, that he is given to me as someone like myself. And once this element of 'right' has modified a certain domain of his as a 'domain of his rights', the link to the actual perception of material moral claims with regard to a thing which lies within this domain (e.g. not

to demolish it or take it away), is easily perceived.

This rough sketch of the experiential "genesis" of moral claims concerning other people's property may not have succeeded in elucidating the relations in question to a satisfactory degree. But I think it may have succeeded in indicating the type of procedure which it was meant to instance. And if, as we may assume for the moment, such procedures could be carried to a perfectly satisfactory degree, so as to show, for instance, in a self-evident manner, that moral claims of the above kind only arise on the ground of our experiencing the other person as 'personality', etc., - then the following conclusions might be drawn as to the relevance of this procedure to normative material ethics:-

In relating a special material moral claim (of which we may doubt, as to its origin, whether it is not just "a convention" etc., and which thus might easily be discarded) to a basic experience as to which such doubts are not possible (e.g. my own experience of someone's interfering with what I experience to be under my personal disposal only), the occurrence of this claim is placed into a fundamental experiential setting and thus given a firm and stable basis. This relation being of an intelligible nature, it will then be impossible for a person who does have the elementary experiences, to disown the special experiences of individual moral claims which have been shown to be a perfectly valid consequence of them. And as the basic experiences here in point are hardly absent in anyone who is a normally developed human person, the possibility of demonstrating claims as rooted in them would be of no little importance.

This importance, however, does not lie in any new and generally valid materially normative statements which this demonstration might yield, but only in the fact that it <u>confirms</u> certain moral claims which we do, in fact, all the time experience in our situations. It elucidates them as essential consequences (or ingredients) of the experiential structure which constitutes our 'being in a situation', and of which we can become explicitly aware, if we reflect upon it.

The ethical relevance of the phenomenological method in this (material) field may, therefore, be formulated thus:-

Phenomenology is not itself directly normative (it does not establish any new material norms), but it is 'confirmative' of norms (which are already given). By such 'confirmation' "illegitimate" claims can be eliminated from the moral code, and "legitimate" ones can be recognised as generally valid, - wherever the basic situation from which they spring is given.

This last clause, introducing an experiential condition of the material contents of moral claims, may seem a grave deficiency to those who still desire for "absolute" norms and principles which would be valid even if no human being existed. To them the phenomenological confirmation of our experiences of certain moral claims must appear to be a small achievement for a branch of philosophy which is 'practical' and 'normative', and whose norms should derive from grounds that are independent of any factual conditions in this world.

But the number of ethical philosophers who claim, or even desire, to establish norms of such a priori validity seems to be decreasing. Formulations of the task of ethics become more and more careful. And perhaps we are approaching a point where it will be recognised that even "normative ethics" is nothing but an attempt to understand our own experiences.